

# Five Aspects of the Five Ways - 4 of 4 ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 How did Buddhism and Buddhism in the Middle Ages differ?

00:00:05 Early Buddhism sort of divided things up this way.

00:00:10 It said, this is what we tend to identify with,

00:00:13 physical body, pleasant versus unpleasant,

00:00:19 thoughts, habit forces, and consciousness itself.

00:00:26 But if you divide it up, and then you subdivide,

00:00:30 you can take the physicality of your body,

00:00:32 and they didn't have modern chemistry,

00:00:34 they didn't have the periodic table of the elements,

00:00:37 what they had was the four classical elements,

00:00:40 earth, water, air, and fire.

00:00:43 They would break the experience of body into those elements.

00:00:48 That was a subdividing.

00:00:51 So if you divide it all up, then you'll see it's just this stuff,

00:00:55 and there's not a thing called a self here.

00:00:58 My modern reworking of that is the focus in.

00:01:02 I take what I would consider to be the core sense of self,

00:01:08 which is feel, which is sort of related to the Vedana,

00:01:14 and the image talk, which are definitely related to the Sanjna.

00:01:19 But it is possible to have a broader definition of self,

00:01:23 body, mind, self.

00:01:25 I find that through feel-image-talk,

00:01:30 you can get a sense of the unconscious forces.

00:01:36 So anyway, same idea, but it's a little different,

00:01:41 because feel-image-talk, all three of them are sensory events

00:01:46 that can be monitored in time.

00:01:50 So I find that if you can separate them out,

00:01:55 then the somethingness of self goes away.

00:01:59 And when they get conflated or tangled together,

00:02:05 then you get the illusion of self as thing.

00:02:08 So the focus in is my reworking of finding a spiritual self

00:02:16 in the sense of becoming free from the limited identity

00:02:20 with thought and feeling.

00:02:23 My reworking of that divide and conquer,

00:02:25 but instead of using the five aggregates,

00:02:29 I just use the three subjective sensory elements.

00:02:35 So that's one way to...

00:02:39 one strategy for finding a spiritual self.  
00:02:42 Focus out is based on more of a Zen way of working.  
00:02:49 So if you're having to work all day  
00:02:51 and you want to experience a merging with your environment,  
00:02:55 well, focus out.  
00:02:57 Anchor in touch, sight, sound.  
00:02:59 Feel-image-talk, it contracts.  
00:03:01 Touch, sight, sound expands.  
00:03:03 Easy to do, well, not easy, but natural to do  
00:03:07 as you're doing physical tasks.  
00:03:09 Physical tasks, all about touch, sight, sound.  
00:03:11 So you get the Confucian ethical values of working  
00:03:18 with the Taoist spiritual paradigm of merge with the outside world.  
00:03:25 So my focus out reworks that strategy.  
00:03:30 Focus on rest is a reworking of the absorption practices of early Buddhism.  
00:03:37 The idea there is you discover a restful self,  
00:03:41 actually a restful self in a restful world.  
00:03:45 I do that.  
00:03:46 The restful self is, instead of feel-image-talk,  
00:03:49 it's peace, blind, quiet.  
00:03:51 The restful world, instead of touch, sight, sound,  
00:03:53 it's relaxation, light, silence.  
00:03:57 So this forms an attenuated experience of self and world,  
00:04:01 not quite the absolute no-self and no-world of the source,  
00:04:06 but moving in that direction.  
00:04:08 After all, the absorption practices are never claimed to be nirvana,  
00:04:13 but they're sort of moving in that direction.  
00:04:16 So the focus on rest is a reworking of that paradigm.  
00:04:21 Focus on positive, well, you're actively manipulating feel-image-talk.  
00:04:27 Clearly, this is related to things like the Brahma-viharas,  
00:04:30 the loving-kindness practice in such early Buddhism.  
00:04:33 It's also related to the deity yoga practices of much later Buddhism,  
00:04:38 the Vajrayana, what came after Mahayana.  
00:04:42 From my perspective, it's basically concentration, clarity, and equanimity  
00:04:48 in subjective space developed by actively manipulating subjective space  
00:04:53 as opposed to passively observing the way we do with focus in.  
00:04:58 So certainly, if you are manifesting positive feel-image-talk,  
00:05:06 I don't know that it will necessarily turn you into a money magnet,  
00:05:11 but it will turn you into a people magnet.  
00:05:13 That I can guarantee, that people will be attracted to you  
00:05:19 and that people will want to be with you  
00:05:22 and find you a source of comfort and inspiration.

00:05:28 A Catholic priest once asked my teacher, Sasaki Roshi,  
00:05:32 what his take on Christianity was.  
00:05:35 And he said, well, it's about crucifixion and resurrection.  
00:05:42 I totally believe in crucifixion and resurrection.  
00:05:46 Roshi said that, okay.  
00:05:48 The priest is all happy, oh good, it's fun to see you.  
00:05:55 You believe in resurrection?  
00:05:57 Absolutely, I totally believe in resurrection.  
00:06:05 And he does, and crucifixion, okay.  
00:06:08 But his idea of crucifixion is that you get crucified by the source.  
00:06:22 You get pinned and torn apart, stretched and nailed  
00:06:28 by the forces of expansion and contraction.  
00:06:31 The somethingness within you dies,  
00:06:33 but then is resurrected as positive feeling,  
00:06:38 which you talk of better self,  
00:06:40 because you could go to the source, you could die.  
00:06:43 And it's like born again, but big time born again,  
00:06:47 not the little time born again.  
00:06:50 It's all about crucifixion and resurrection.  
00:06:53 So focus on positive in its most advanced forms  
00:06:59 actually is the new life that comes from the death  
00:07:06 that occurs through focus on change.