

Total Happiness – 5 of 5 – The Activity of Teaching ~ Shinzen Young

00:00:00 The activity of fostering extraordinary happiness in others I call teaching.

00:00:14 Just by the fact that you do this practice, you are already a teacher in my very broad

00:00:20 formulation.

00:00:22 Because I distinguish three levels of teaching.

00:00:27 The first level of teaching I call subtle teaching.

00:00:30 As the result of doing this practice, we change.

00:00:33 Particularly people who have known us notice it.

00:00:37 But as it gets stronger and stronger as the months, years, and decades go on, everybody

00:00:44 notices it.

00:00:46 If only at some subtle subliminal level, just where you're coming from has this impact on

00:00:53 people.

00:00:55 That's a huge sermon to the world.

00:00:58 So everyone that practices from the absolute beginner to the master who can look at you

00:01:07 and put you in a trance, teaches at the subtle level.

00:01:12 Then the next level of teaching I call the explanatory level.

00:01:17 Somebody asks you a question about what you do and you can give a coherent description

00:01:26 of what you do.

00:01:27 Sandiptiko dhammo.

00:01:29 That means that the dharma is crystal clear.

00:01:33 Somebody hearing a clear description, a model of this practice may think, ooh, that sounds

00:01:40 desirable.

00:01:41 Even if you're not trying to convince them it is desirable.

00:01:45 Just you being able in words to coherently describe what you do, I call that the descriptive

00:01:52 level of teaching.

00:01:53 The explicit level of teaching, you're saying, hey, I'm going to teach you techniques, I'm

00:01:57 going to teach you concepts, I'm going to show you how to apply this in your life in

00:02:02 specific if you have questions or you need encouragement, come see me and

we're going

00:02:07 to have a sequence of lessons or I'm going to be giving a sitting group that you can

00:02:14 join and you can talk to me about your practice.

00:02:17 I'm running retreats.

00:02:19 You're explicitly now a teacher.

00:02:23 I like to distinguish within the explicit teachers certain special subcategories of

00:02:30 explicit teachers.

00:02:33 First there's the paraprofessional.

00:02:35 A number of you are paraprofessionals.

00:02:38 At a retreat you can do all the explicit teaching that I just mentioned.

00:02:42 You put out your name to be a facilitator.

00:02:46 So that would be a paraprofessional.

00:02:49 Professional means you're a full-time.

00:02:51 You live perhaps by alms, Dana in other words.

00:02:57 The Christian term is alms.

00:03:00 Or you have a different fee structure but you're a professional.

00:03:07 That's what you do.

00:03:09 There's a certain subclass of professionals that are capable of confidently and competently

00:03:18 dealing with the issue of classical enlightenment.

00:03:22 Particularly can deal with that issue if a person happens to have a sudden enlightenment

00:03:27 experience.

00:03:28 You have to know what to say in those cases.

00:03:31 Not every professional teacher can or for that matter is required to be able to deal

00:03:39 with that issue.

00:03:40 At least not in the Vipassana tradition.

00:03:43 Zen is maybe a little different story.

00:03:47 There is a watershed between teachers that can lead you to enlightenment by teaching

00:03:52 you and teachers that can really deal with the issue of what happens if somebody does

00:03:57 get enlightenment.

00:03:59 That's a whole other, from my perspective, that's a special skill.

00:04:06 Also to deal with what very occasionally happens.

00:04:11 Doesn't happen often.

00:04:12 It's only happened a few times in my many decades career.

00:04:16 But there can sometimes be a thing where people get a sort of enlightenment experience that

00:04:22 has a mixture of pathology with it.

00:04:28 It's straddles enlightenment and a condition called DPDR, derealization depersonalization

00:04:35 disorder.

00:04:37 This special class of teachers can deal with that issue too if it should come up.

00:04:44 So let's just call them masters for now for lack of any other term.

00:04:51 Among masters there is a very, very, very special class of master.

00:04:59 That's a Buddha.

00:05:01 Because it was asked, well what's the difference between a Buddha and an arhat?

00:05:06 Arhat's fully enlightened, fully purified.

00:05:09 What makes a certain arhat a Buddha?

00:05:14 The answer is where there was no path, he discovered a path and made it available to

00:05:24 the world.

00:05:26 That's the traditional formulation.

00:05:28 I'd modify that a little bit.

00:05:31 I would say a single Buddha is a master who discovers something new and important about

00:05:43 enlightenment.

00:05:45 As a result of that, there is widespread and profound positive change in the direction

00:05:54 of human history.

00:05:56 Not just change the course of a few lives in a good way.

00:06:01 That's a Buddha.

00:06:02 I'm not at all sure that the next Buddha will be one person.

00:06:08 The next Buddha may be a team, a team of enlightened scientists, for example.

00:06:15 If we think of Buddha as meaning discover something that has not been known in the past

00:06:20 and that is deep enough and powerful enough to change the course of human history, that

00:06:26 might turn out to be a team effort.

00:06:29 Might, who can say?

00:06:32 This then gives us a map of total happiness.

00:06:37 This is where we started.

00:06:40 Ordinary happiness for yourself.

00:06:45 Then we talked about extraordinary happiness for yourself.

00:06:53 Then we talked about how these lead to service to others, ordinary happiness for others,

00:07:05 and extraordinary happiness for others.

00:07:08 Under extraordinary happiness for others, I mentioned teaching.
00:07:12 There's one other category and that is supporting teaching.
00:07:19 That's Dana, right?
00:07:20 The Dana, the teacher Dana.
00:07:22 When you support teachers, you support their efforts to bring extraordinary happiness to
00:07:28 others.
00:07:30 So that then gives us, I don't know if you can see this from where you are, but this
00:07:38 is the details filled in.
00:08:08 So, now we know at least two things.
00:08:38 One, we know that mindfulness is cultivatable to any degree.
00:08:50 We also now have an idea of a lot of very wonderful things that can result from mindful
00:08:59 awareness.
00:09:00 Things that mindful awareness fosters, looked upon under the simple concept of total happiness.