**SEPT NEWSLETTER**

**TUESDAYS at 6:30 PM Central Time**

**Dharma Talks and Meditation via ZOOM**

# **Please Join Us Tonight (10/13)** - Click The Current URL:

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/78575258609?pwd=V2lxeWgyTVhCQ3lwNWNza1hrcEtEUT09](https://shoutout.wix.com/so/51NJF9RrP/c?w=Fc9gW5eNyHETE8ZPAsFjquyhARsqkjhRwyzoSq5NcXc.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cHM6Ly91czA0d2ViLnpvb20udXMvai83ODU3NTI1ODYwOT9wd2Q9VjJseGVXZ3lUVmhDUTNsd05XTnphMWhyY0V0RVVUMDkiLCJyIjoiZjUzMDZiZmEtNmY1Mi00ZjA3LTM3MTAtMjc3OThlODIxYTdlIiwibSI6Im1haWxfbHAiLCJjIjoiZmU3ZGMzNDctYzBkNy00MTBmLWE0YWQtOTA4ZmFmOGNhNWI4In0)

Meeting ID: 785 7525 8609

Password: 8FoldPath

**Thursday nights at 6:30 PM central time**

EightFold Path Series

URL: [https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72202248588?pwd=ZzRYQ1BPRTBib2RqZkozNTlxSmNnUT09](https://shoutout.wix.com/so/51NJF9RrP/c?w=5gmwShdFJwWhAcni8wFbDr2rpaun8w2-ThiaWbx6j4Q.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cHM6Ly91czA0d2ViLnpvb20udXMvai83MjIwMjI0ODU4OD9wd2Q9aHR0cHM6Ly91czA0d2ViLnpvb20udXMvai83MjIwMjI0ODU4OD9wd2Q9WnpSWVExQlBSVEJpYjJScVprb3pOVGx4U21OblVUMDkiLCJyIjoiZjUzMDZiZmEtNmY1Mi00ZjA3LTM3MTAtMjc3OThlODIxYTdlIiwibSI6Im1haWxfbHAiLCJjIjoiZmU3ZGMzNDctYzBkNy00MTBmLWE0YWQtOTA4ZmFmOGNhNWI4In0)

Meeting ID: 722 0224 8588

Password: 8FoldPath

**There will be NO Dharma talk on October 6th or October 8th**

**Perspectives**

by Kristie Grasis

We, humans, tend to see things from a particular perspective, but that's an illusion. We rarely see things as they are. When something happens, we immediately start making judgments. We overlay it with our past, our history, our thoughts, and our ideas. What if we were able to step back and take in the broader view. Would that be helpful? Would that be skillful?

What do I mean by our perspective?



We, humans, tend to see things from a particular perspective, but that's an illusion. We rarely see things as they are. When something happens, we immediately start making judgments. We overlay it with our past, our history, our thoughts, and our ideas. What if we were able to step back and take in the broader view. Would that be helpful? Would that be skillful?

What do I mean by our perspective?

Say I was to put a small wooden table in the middle of the room. Would we all agree to its use? It's a place for children to sit and write. No, it's a coffee table. It's a workbench. What if I told you that it wasn't a table at all?

*What do you mean, Kristie, of course, it's a table?!*

My dog does not see it as a table. From my dog's perspective, it's a place to lift his leg. A termite has no concept of furniture. A termite would see it as a food source buffet. It's the same object, but its worth, its use, and its very essence depend on our perspective.

Another example, let's take that same table and put two kindergarteners on either end of it. If you were to draw the letter "M" on a piece of paper and place it on that table, one little person would see the letter "M," but the other would see the letter "W." That's just here in America. Let's add a Greek Kindergarten Exchange student to the mix. She's going to see the letter "S" (∑) – because this is Sigma in the Greek alphabet. The kids might argue over it. Each knows that the other is "wrong" because, of course, they are right. "W," "M,""∑"- who's right? The truth is that they're all correct. They are all right that the other person is WRONG. And they can argue for hours about it, hold tight to their perspective, and become frustrated that the other person isn't listening.

That's what happens when we dig into a belief. It brings us frustration (dukkha) when we can't make others think as we do. In this scenario, the wisest person in the room will step back, circle, and look at it from all perspectives. An astute person will see there is truth in what EACH child is saying.

Softening our beliefs, not abandoning them, but just understanding that they are only valid from our perspective, allows us the freedom and space to grow. It will enable us to release any Dukkha caused by trying to "convince" others how "wrong" they are. And if we can come at things from a softer, more understanding, broader view, it allows space and freedom for others to do the same.

If the child who sees the "M" says, "I can see your "W." I also still see my M, but look, it's both." That puts the other kids at ease, so perhaps they can see different perspectives too. Maybe not, but it allows them the space to have the opportunity. It sets the conditions.

A real-life example. I have a family member who was murdered in 2010. He was a law enforcement officer who was shot in the neck. When I think of Gregory Favors, the man who murdered him, I am right when I say HE was wrong. Murder is wrong. I'm right!

But when I find myself thinking that way, I can sense the constriction, and I feel the anger and dukkha rise. If I take a moment to broaden my view and see things from Mr. Favors' perspective, I'm thinking he didn't wake up that morning and say I'm going to kill a cop today. I can see that there were probably circumstances, things that happened in this man's life that brought him to his horrible decision that evening. When I consider things from this different perspective, I can feel my heart opening with compassion for Mr. Favors.

Please keep in mind compassion does not automatically translate into forgiveness. It's not a free pass on the anguish this man caused my family, but I can feel compassionate that there were probably many things that went wrong in this man's life that led him to murder. When I can come at it from a place of compassion, rather than a place of anger and hatred, I feel more open, spacious, and I FEEL more at ease. From this place of open spaciousness, I can become part of the solution. By setting the intention to volunteer as a prison chaplain, I can set the conditions to perhaps spare some other family from burying a loved one and prevent some other man from a life behind bars.

Our perspective is just that, ours. We might be 100% right "that" is an "M," "that" is a table, "murder is wrong," but holding so tightly to these beliefs will only bring us suffering.

Gil Fronsdal translated the last line of the Magandiya Sutta as such: "Those who cling to perceptions and views wander the world offending people."

Thanissaro Bhikkhu's translation differs slightly: "Those who grasp at perceptions & views go about butting their heads in the world."

I love how the Pali language can bring dual meanings. Perhaps we can merge the two. "Those who hold tightly to their perceptions and views go through the world butting their heads and offending people."

I invite you to look at your perspectives, perceptions, and views. You may be right in what you're thinking, but instead of clinging, see if you can allow room for other opinions. Notice the freedom and ease that it brings when you set different conditions for the world.

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**A Word from our**

 **Sangha Director....**

As this unprecedented season of social distancing continues, and we continue to be unable to meet in person, I would like to remind those of our sangha who are local to remember that our physical building is still available if you need a quiet place to get away, meditate or just be. Please reach out to me so that we can make sure it is unlocked for you. For those who are not local, I am ever grateful for this time because we have been able to expand in ways we had not considered and reach so many of you. I wish you all continued peace in this season.

With Metta,

Lanee Hughes

Sangha Director

[sanghadirector@msinsightmeditation.org](https://shoutout.wix.com/so/51NJF9RrP/c?w=pbXwcuwkhqCBQhqYd-0VSUPozCsylU3uozRBSqIHWEE.eyJ1IjoibWFpbHRvOnNhbmdoYWRpcmVjdG9yQG1zaW5zaWdodG1lZGl0YXRpb24ub3JnIiwiciI6IjQwZDM0ZDIxLTFjNzgtNGIzYS1hYTNlLTVhNGRlMzQyOWM2NyIsIm0iOiJtYWlsX2xwIiwiYyI6ImZlN2RjMzQ3LWMwZDctNDEwZi1hNGFkLTkwOGZhZjhjYTViOCJ9)

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Lanee Hughes

Sangha Relations Director





With Gratitude.....

I would like to thank all of our Sangha members who so graciously answered the call for donations of both time and funds. We are all grateful for your generosity.

**Reopening amidst COVID19 Update**

Although we have been cleared by our governor to reopen our center, out of an abundance of caution, the board has decided to remain closed until the state of Mississippi has seen a decline in average weekly positive cases/deaths for at least two weeks. Unfortunately, we are not there yet. There has been some talk of hosting outside Dharma talks now that the weather has gotten cooler. We'll keep you posted.

MIM is offering multiple ways to stay connected to the Dharma and the Sangha. Our Facebook page has been churning out daily contemplations. Dharma talks and guided meditations can be found on Our Youtube channel. We are now offering Dharma talks through Zoom. I am always available through email (or a phone call if needed).

I encourage you to lean into your practice. Be safe, stay well, and I hope to "see" you on Tuesday evenings (via Zoom).

With much Metta,

Kristie

[13367 Chris Dr, Gulfport, MS 39503, USA](https://shoutout.wix.com/so/51NJF9RrP/c?w=4l5cBlJ3tcfDLR7RENKhxcq2CbRd-VOpgygvJyRzuno.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cHM6Ly9tYXBzLmdvb2dsZS5jb20vP3E9MTMzNjcrQ2hyaXMrRHIlMkMrR3VsZnBvcnQlMkMrTVMrMzk1MDMlMkMrVVNBIiwiciI6IjY1ZDE2MGY1LTQyN2EtNDE0ZS03ZTkzLTQ0ZDg2NGM5NmE1MiIsIm0iOiJtYWlsX2xwIiwiYyI6ImZlN2RjMzQ3LWMwZDctNDEwZi1hNGFkLTkwOGZhZjhjYTViOCJ9)

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[Mississippi Insight Meditation](https://shoutout.wix.com/so/51NJF9RrP/c?w=nfjdIG4Mf49IL6Q9wkhQda62mi5l0dzbidVVKV2AJzU.eyJ1IjoiaHR0cDovL3d3dy5tc2luc2lnaHRtZWRpdGF0aW9uLm9yZyIsInIiOiI2NWQxNjBmNS00MjdhLTQxNGUtN2U5My00NGQ4NjRjOTZhNTIiLCJtIjoibWFpbF9scCIsImMiOiJmZTdkYzM0Ny1jMGQ3LTQxMGYtYTRhZC05MDhmYWY4Y2E1YjgifQ)