

## 7 DHAMMA PRACTICE

10<sup>th</sup> May 2000

I've been a monk for long time now and the whole purpose of my monastic life is not to build monasteries or to go out and teach. It is to practise Dhamma.

Dhamma is something that we all need to have a feeling for. At the start we think we know what Dhamma is and then with more faith and practice, we develop more wisdom and understanding until finally full penetration of the Dhamma is achieved. Dhamma is *ehipassiko*, it beckons us to ‘come and see’, and then it keeps leading inwards. It keeps drawing us in. It’s one of the amazing qualities of the Dhamma that the more you listen to it the more it draws you in, the more it takes hold of you as the most important thing in life, the most important thing in many lives. You can’t resist its invitation to come in, investigate, and get deeper into the Dhamma. That’s why it’s also called *opanayiko*, it keeps leading us onwards.

### The Goal of Dhamma

The more we practise the more we find out about the beauty of the Dhamma, and the release that is in the Dhamma. I call it release because that’s how it feels at every step of this path; with every progress that we make in this practice of Buddhism we feel more release from difficulties and burdens. As far as the mind is concerned it gets better and better. With our bodies it gets worse and worse, but we can’t do much about that! But at least, if the mind is getting better and better, that gives us something to look forward to in our practice. It’s an *opanayiko* practice. It’s leading onwards. Where does it lead? It leads onwards into that beautiful peace, that beautiful happiness, the freedom of the mind. It’s very important to know that the goal of the Dhamma is freedom.

Often when people get upset and distressed, they come and talk to the monks about their problems and difficulties in life. But with some people, you can see that it’s not going to get any better, because they are not practising. They are not following a path that leads to the freedom of the mind. In fact many people are walking a path that is full of entanglements, a path that is going to lead to more problems and difficulties.

You know it is going to happen that way because they are making more complications and more attachments in the world. That's the path that leads to suffering. When people come to see the monks and they are suffering because their husband has died, or their child has died, or they are very upset about something, it makes you question why they have those attachments in the first place. You already have them in this lifetime, but don't do it again. You may want to get married or have relationships, but isn't it enough to look after this body and mind rather than trying to find fulfilment in those things when there is always going to be separation at some stage?

When we understand the Dhamma we understand the practice of letting go, the practice of renunciation. The practice of freeing the body and the mind from the entanglements of the world is a path that is going to lead to more and more happiness, more and more peace, more and more feeling of ease, and to more and more wisdom. That is one of the other aspects of this Dhamma: it is to be seen by every wise person for him or herself. That's *paccattam veditabbo viññūhī*.

I sit up here and teach this Dhamma which you can agree with or not, You can accept it or reject it, because either way it doesn't really matter. The only thing a teacher can ever do is show the way. Whether people want to listen to it or not that's really up to them. I can't apply force. The point is that everyone has to find out for him or herself. So my job is to point it out and encourage you to try it. I have to use as good a sales pitch on *jhāna*, insight, and Enlightenment as I possibly can, because these things *are* possible for human beings. I have to try and encourage everyone that it is possible, that each one of you can achieve this. Once I convince people of that, then people put forth the effort – that's the 'going onwards'. And it *does* create these beautiful states of mind and feelings of freedom. It also creates wisdom. The more one practises the more one understands this mind and this personality with all its hang-ups: all it's seeking for happiness, all its problems of ill will towards itself and towards others. You see all of that as pure craziness. If you have a moment of ill will towards anyone, towards yourself, or towards living, you are crazy. You are insane because you are just hurting yourself; and you are creating misery for your own 'self'.

## **Opening the Mind to Truth**

Adult people look after their own *kamma*. If we get angry at the weather, it's not the weather's fault. If we get angry at the nail because it bends when we try to hammer it into a piece of wood, it's not the nails fault. That is life! Welcome to life. People who argue with life are in denial – denial that things go wrong, denial that they are not in control. People usually say that they are in control. They say life goes the way they want it to go, but that's not the truth of life. By that I mean the world outside, the of weather, trees, nails, and books. That sort of world is completely beyond our power and our control. Even though we have a little ability to manipulate the world, don't get sucked in and think that you are in control. If you do that it's called attachment.

Attachment is what we think we control. When we realise we don't control anything, then we are free from attachments. We can just float and flow rather than be burdened by all these things; this is the wisdom that comes when we meditate. The more we practise the Dhamma, the more we understand. There is a sense of the opening up of the mind to truth. But with that opening of the mind to truth, we have to be very careful because *everyone thinks they are wise*. So many people in this world go around thinking that they are very knowledgeable and smart. Hardly anyone admits that they are foolish.

That's really strange isn't it? Many people who come to the Buddhist Society in town think that they are experts on Buddhism. That's why they come and argue with us sometimes. Maybe they've read a book and then they come and argue with a monk, who has been living the life for thirty years. They really think that they can outwit a monk! So this is it, everyone thinks that they are experts. Why? Because of illusion or delusion. It is something that a person just cannot see; they think they're wise. That's the reason this whole thing about wisdom – what it is and what it isn't – is so difficult to get a handle on.

I've always kept one of the beautiful sayings of the Buddha in mind. The Buddha said to Venerable Upāli, and his foster mother Mahāpājapatī Gotamī, "Whatever *Dhammas* you know lead to *nibbidā...*" This beautiful word *nibbidā* means revulsion from the world, pushing us away from the things of the five senses. It leads to *virāga*;

dispassion or fading away, which leads to *nirodha*, cessation, the ending of things, which leads to *upasama*— this is perhaps the most beautiful term in the list – the peace and tranquillity. This in turn leads to *abhiññā*, a really deep and profound knowledge, which leads to *sambodhi*, enlightenment knowledge, which leads to *Nibbāna*. “If it leads to those seven things;” the Buddha said, “Upāli, Mahāpājapati Gotamī, you can know for certain, and be absolutely sure that that is the Dhamma.”

That’s the teaching of the Buddha; that’s wisdom. I always check myself to see that whether what I teach, what wisdom I think I have, produces the goods. Does it lead to *virāga*, the fading away, to cessation, to deep peace, to profound knowledge, Enlightenment, *Nibbāna*? If it leads to those things it’s called wisdom. If it doesn’t turn you away from the world, if it just creates more entanglements with the world and you think that the world is a wonderful thing, then it’s not *nibbidā*. If you think you can get rid of your attachments and cravings, and then live in this world and have a jolly good time, that’s not *nibbidā*. *Nibbidā* is what sees the problem.

It’s not that life out there is suffering; it’s ‘me’ experiencing life as suffering. There is also this dualism of subject and object, and it all comes together as *dukkha*, suffering, the first noble truth. That’s how the Buddha became the Buddha, by seeing that truth, seeing that there is no little corner of *samsāra* where he could hang out and have a good time. *It’s rotten to the core*. That is what the first noble truth means. That truth leads us to *nibbidā*. It leads to a complete turning away from the world. It does not lead to turning away from part of the world and then cherishing another part but to turning away from the *whole* world – turning away from the world outside and also turning away from the world inside.

Once that happens, *nibbidā* automatically leads us to *virāga*, the dispassion towards the things of the world: you don’t care what people say about you; you don’t care so much about your body, its health or vigour, about the things that you eat, or whether the coffee runs out. What’s the big deal? There is always some tea, there is always some water, there is always something to drink. Seeing this one understands *virāga*.

Wisdom leads to dispassion, it leads to the ending, the cessation of things. There are

many people in the world who write big books about Buddhism and many write silly books about Buddhism. There are also people who write the forewords to those books and say what wonderful books they are. It's just silly people supporting each other. None of it seems to lead to *virāga* and *nirodha*, to that peacefulness of mind, the *upasama*. Achieving those peaceful states of mind is a sure sign of wisdom.

### **Real Peace**

If wisdom arises, its whole purpose, its whole job, its whole function, is to alleviate suffering. It's just like taking a pill. If it is the right pill, you take it and the ailment goes or the pain lessens; that's how you know if the pill is suitable for the ailment or not. If it is wisdom and you can spout it around the coffee table, talk to your friends about it, write books about it, but if it doesn't make you peaceful, if it doesn't liberate you from suffering, what's the point of it? In fact it's not really wisdom at all. It's what we call *papañca*, proliferation. It's just conceit. This is why the wisdom that liberates one is the only wisdom that is worthwhile. This is what the *Dhamma* does to you once you really become wise. It leads to peace and tranquillity; it takes you to *jhānas*, to real peace.

People sometimes just don't know what peace is. They think peace is when they can get their own way and do whatever they want in this world. 'Leave me in peace!' What do they mean by 'leave me in peace'? Is it so that they can watch their television, so they can have relationships, and make a lot of money? That's not peace in the world. Real peace is not the peace outside but the peace inside the mind. It is the mind that can be tranquil, that can be silent. It is the beautiful peace in the mind. Sometimes we can hear that peace outside, especially in a quiet monastery like this, on an evening when there is no wind, no rain, when words seem to echo in the silence. That's the beautiful peace that Dhamma leads towards. It's wonderful to be able to turn to the peace of nature, to the quietness of a monastery such as this.

I often turn to the memory of the quietness I experienced in some of the deep caves in which I have meditated, because they really meant something to me in my life as a monk. I have been fortunate to go to places in Thailand where there are forest monasteries up in the hills that have deep caves. I was able to spend hours in those

caves, so dark, so silent, just having wonderful meditations there. That external silence seems to remind me of what I'm supposed to be doing. It seems to be pointing in the direction of the inner silence. That's the reason I taught at the weekend that one of the ways to help one's meditation is to recall, at the very beginning of each meditation, the places or times when one was very quiet. Bring those places and times of tranquillity into the mind's eye by using the function of memory. Dwell upon that time when you were tranquil, when the outside world was very still and peaceful. If you can dwell on such a memory you will find that your inner mind will also become tranquil. It's a way of reminding yourself what the goal of all this is. It's about wise peace, the freedom of the mind from all this noise, all this doing, grasping and craving. Once you can bring that into your mind's eye at the very beginning of the meditation, it sets the tone and it becomes much easier for you to find your way through the meditation. It makes it easier to find a way through the hindrances and achieve the goal: the great peaceful, blissful states of meditation.

Whenever you get stuck or lose your way in your meditation just remind yourself to bring into the mind the times when you were peaceful, and that will stop the restlessness of the mind. It will stop the doubt; it will stop the wandering mind. As you recall the goal, you remember that the whole purpose of this monastic life, the whole reason behind it, is to see that Dhamma which releases you. This brings that tranquillity, that freedom, which brings peace.

Even though a person may not be Enlightened, or even a Stream Winner yet, there is still something about Enlightenment, the peace of Enlightenment, that they can understand and that gives the whole path a direction. I always remember what this path is all about. What are we here for? We are not here to build the best monastery in the world. We are not here to make beautiful huts. We are not here to have good friends. We are not here to write books. We are not here to become famous as the best Buddhist teacher in Serpentine. We are not here just to make good *kamma*. *We are here to become liberated, to be free from samsāra, to find what the Buddha found.* There is a thing called wisdom, there is a thing called truth, there is a thing called Enlightenment, and that's on offer in this monastery for whoever has the courage to take it up.

What if you make that your goal, and keep it in mind? You know that the goal embraces peace, silence, tranquillity, and freedom. These are all descriptions of *Nibbāna*. You may not be able to describe *Nibbāna* in words but you can feel some of its qualities intuitively. Sometimes you just need to rely upon that. It's something inside you that knows what Enlightenment is all about. There is something inside you that even knows what *jhānas* are all about, because most of you have been monks and nuns many times before. It is reminding you and, once you can bring that goal to mind, it shows you what the Dhamma truly is. It is something that the Buddha said was *sandīthika*, that which can be experienced in this very life. Not to rely on a belief of what's going to happen in our next life but to experience it now. It's *akālika*, or timeless, that's why we don't need to change the teachings to fit into modern Western culture, whatever that is. The Dhamma of the Buddha, the heart of it all, is literally timeless. It is eternal and for anybody, in any age, in any era, presented clearly and accurately. It will always resonate with people because it's talking about the mind and the body. They might change depending on their genes, the culture might change, but the mind, the heart, doesn't change that much, it's basically the same.

Essentially it's the problem of the 'doer' and the 'knower'. Once one sees this and understands, one understands why the Buddha's teaching is so timeless. One understands how the Dhamma reaches across twenty-five centuries, from ancient India – that strange culture, so different from ours – to our modern society. There is some commonality, something which strikes us, resonates with us as being important, and that's this Dhamma quality. The meaning of the word Dhamma – as the Venerable Bhikkhu Bodhi so beautifully put it in one of his books (*The Great Discourse on Causation* published by the Buddhist Publication Society) – is looking to the heart of the matter where everything comes from, the source, the essence, the ultimate, the law, the rule behind everything. The *atthā*, the meaning, on the other hand is the consequences of that Dhamma, how that Dhamma works out in the world. But here we are looking at the Dhamma, the heart, the source; this is what wisdom is about. It is about the core, finding that wisdom given by the Buddha. The Buddha gave us a practical path to find this out, he gave instructions, and it's always the case

that if you follow those instructions, they're going to lead to the goal.

### **Less Choice – More Freedom**

The Satipatṭhāna Sutta says this path leads in one direction only; if we continue walking this path we will have to arrive at the goal. It's just a matter of time! That's a powerful saying, a wonderful teaching. The trouble is though, we sometimes get off the path. We don't keep going because we haven't got enough faith, we haven't got enough confidence. However, we should remember that if we keep walking just a little bit further then we find a little bit more happiness. That's the beauty of the path: it's a happy path. At every stage of the path we get a prize, we get more happiness, more peace, and more understanding. That's what makes it a gradual path that leads us on and on and on, *opanayiko*. It doesn't lead us on because we think we understand more; it leads us on because we get more happiness, more peace, more freedom, more joy, and more bliss. This is the great thing about the Dhamma: you don't need to look so far into the distance to gain some benefit or to get a taste of *Nibbāna*.

How can I make myself more peaceful and happy today? How can I let go of more and keep my virtuous conduct pure? Don't break any of the rules or precepts, be more restrained, keep the monastic rules of getting up early in the morning to meditate. Even if you are tired just meditate; it's better than falling asleep. At least by getting up you are doing something, you are creating energy. If you are going to get up, you might as well do it properly by meditating. In the beginning, keeping the monastic rules means giving up so much of what we want to do.

People sometimes ask me, "Why are these rules the way they are?" The purpose of the rules is to stop you having to think. If you had to make up the rules for yourself then there would be more thinking, thinking, thinking. 'We should do this' or 'We shouldn't do that'. The more rules there are, the less choice there is for us. The less choice there is for us, the more freedom we have. The more freedom we have, the more peace we have. Those of you who have to go to the hardware stores now and again to get things for the monastery know what it's like if you have to get different types of nails or different types of screws. When there is too much choice it makes

things really complicated. It's so easy when there is only one thing you have to get.

I really feel for people who live in the world. If they want to get a toothbrush there are a hundred different types to choose from: different styles and different types of bristle or handles. Goodness knows how difficult it is to make choices in this world now, and because there are so many choices, there's less freedom. So it's wonderful when there's not much choice. You know you just have to get up in the morning and that's it. You don't have to think about it. You know you only have to eat what's there. You choose from what's there and that's it. If you had a menu, imagine what it would be like. If instead of having *dāna* we had a supporter who owned a couple of restaurants and they sent the menu out every morning so we could order up whatever we wanted – imagine if I gave you the menu every morning and you had to choose what to eat. It would be terrible having all those choices and decisions to make.

It's very wonderful not having to make decisions. It's nice being on retreat: you don't even put the food into your own bowl; someone else does it for you. I've noticed when I've been on retreat – especially during the rains retreat – how I actually enjoy my food much more because someone else has put it into the bowl for me. I think it is because I don't have to go through all the hassle of choosing. Someone brings the bowl up and I just eat what's there. That's choicelessness. It means more freedom, more happiness, and more peace.

One of the reasons we have all these rules is to give us freedom from having to make decisions and to avoid arguing about what we should do. It's already been arranged and decided, and that makes life so much easier, so much freer. We can use our mind for more important things than deciding what to eat or deciding how to do things. That's also the happiness of hierarchy. When someone else tells you what to do it makes it easier; you don't have to think about it, you just do it. You know what it's like when you get into that complaining mind, 'I don't want to do this. Why does Ajahn Brahm always ask me to clean the toilets? Why can't I do something else?' 'Doesn't he think I can hammer a nail into a piece of wood like anyone else?' 'I only want the really nice jobs.'

It's really strange, but one of the jobs that I really wanted to do once I became a monk

was to dig the earth, to get a spade and just dig into the earth. As soon as I became a novice I couldn't wait to become a monk so that I could stop digging and doing all that sort of stuff! It's was very strange, but I realised that it was because I couldn't do it that I wanted to do it, it was just the perversity of desire. As a monk you don't have to do those things, because it's already decided what you can and can't do, and that's it. That gives a certain sense of peace, a certain sense of happiness, the happiness of the purity of one's precepts. One is letting go of the 'doer', this person who always wants to control and manipulate, who wants to decide what's right and what's wrong, what should be done and what shouldn't be done, blah, blah, blah.

### **An End to Coming and Going**

That 'doer' inside of us creates this critical mind – the judgemental mind, the faultfinding mind – it creates so many problems and difficulties for us. Because of this 'doer' we even judge beautiful people and create enemies out of them. Even the great *Ariyas*, we can hate them and have ill will towards them, criticise them and put them down. It's bad *kamma* to criticise *Ariyas*. Nevertheless because of stupidity, or rather because of the judgemental mind, the mind that is always under the control of this 'doer', we can even criticise the Buddha, even curse the Buddha. That's because this doing mind hasn't really been seen for what it is. It is just a tyrant and a stupid tyrant at that.

The more one meditates and practises restraint through the precepts, restraint of the senses, restraint of the inner commentary, the more one gets into the peaceful states of mind. Then one can see what this thinking mind is all about. After a while you just don't believe it any more. This is the way it goes: it can criticise your best friends, it can love people who are fools, it can praise idiots and find fault with the wise; that is the perversity of the thinking mind. That's why I don't trust it any more. Once you see it for what it is you realise how much trouble it has caused you. So just shut up and be quiet!

In this monastery, people often think that they want to go here or go there, but wherever you go you take 'you' with you. You'll go from one place to another but you will find out that whatever habits and character traits you have here, you'll still have them somewhere else. Whatever obstacles you find here you'll find elsewhere.

'The monks here, or the teacher, are stupid, and you know they are not really up to scratch'. You'll go somewhere else and they'll be the same. That's because you have the same defilements. It's not because of the teacher, it's because of the way you see the teacher. It's not the other monks but the way you see the other monks. It's not the place, it's the way you see that place. You will take this wherever you go until you can be free from all of that.

When I was the second monk in Thailand, many years ago, if people came to me and said they wanted to leave, I would say, "Well if you really want to go, now is not the best time. Because if you really want to leave and you are just following craving, that desire, and those attachments, what you should really do is stay. This is a really great time for gaining wisdom; you can really make a lot of progress towards Enlightenment". When you really want to go that's the time to stay, because when you stay you are going against the stream of the mind – you really want to go but instead you stay and call the mind's bluff. Then you actually win; you have a great victory. It's only a matter of days or weeks or months, it doesn't take that long, and then the desire to go has completely disappeared. You don't want to go any more, and if you don't want to go there's not much point in going. That's the way I tried to keep people in the monastery for long periods of time. It's not a joke, because there is a lot of truth in it. The only time you should go is if you don't really care if you go or not. That's the right time to go because then you are not following your critical, thinking mind. That's *attā*, that's self, that's ego. If you believe in that, that's attachment to all those ideas.

There is a great sense of peace when you surrender, give up, let go, and renounce. Just go according to the Eightfold Path, the path that leads one in the right direction, to *Nibbāna*. Just surrender, give up to it, and patiently wait. If you do that you'll find out it's the right path. You don't have to believe because the more you surrender the more freedom you feel and the more peaceful you feel inside.

Sometimes it feels as if there is a raging tyrant inside, pushing you from pillar to post. How many times have you run away? How many times have you followed that stupid thinking mind? How many times has it led you by the nose, as if you were a stupid cow? Many, many times! And then sometimes you just say, "That's enough, I'm not

going to be led by you, I'll be led by the Dhamma instead, led by the Eightfold path. That is what I'm going to do. That's it!"

I made a determination when I was a young monk that I would never leave any monastery unless I was asked to go somewhere else or because of my conduct, I was asked to get out. I have never asked to leave or go anywhere. I've kept that resolution for all these years, and I've been a monk now for over twenty-five years. I only came to Australia because I was sent over here by my teacher and I only ever go anywhere because I am asked to go. I recommend that practise to any of you who have got the courage to keep it. It's a hard practice; it takes a lot of trust, a lot of confidence, a lot of courage.

But it's a beautiful practise to do. What it means is that instead of following your own mind you're surrendering, renouncing, giving up, letting go. You will find meditation becomes easy because that's the very thing that creates meditation: the letting go of the thinking mind, the letting go of the controlling, and the letting go of the manipulating. Isn't that what happens in meditation? You're in one place and you want to go somewhere else. You're with the breath and you want to get to a *nimmitta* or you're with 'present moment awareness' and you want to get something else. There's always that movement, that wanting something else, that wanting to be somewhere else. It's the coming and going called restlessness.

One of the stories that I remember from Zen Buddhism was when Lin-Chi, the founder of the Rinzai sect of Zen Buddhism, had just been to another monastery and returned to pay his respects to his teacher. The teacher replied by punching him in the stomach, so you are very lucky this is not a Zen monastery. I remember the teacher said to Lin-Chi, "When is there going to be an end to all this coming and going?" If you've just come back from another monastery, when is there going to be an end to all this coming and going? What is coming and going? Coming and going, going and coming – you should be fed up with it after a while.

So, it's nice to be able to make an end to all the coming and going in the mind – coming from this state of mind to another state of mind. Just shut up, give up, let go

and surrender to the path. Surrender to watching the breath; surrender to *ānāpānasati*. “Too hot, too cold!” “Too early, too late!” “I’ve been working all day, I’m too tired!” Shut up! Just watch the breath. I love doing that because I’ve got a rebellious nature inside me. It must be from growing up in the sixties.

It’s amazing what happens when you rebel against what should be happening, against being too tired, too hot, too cold, or too sick. You’ll prove to yourself that you can do meditation whenever you want. In the middle of the night when you wake up and you’ve only had an hour’s sleep, you can get up and meditate and get into a nice meditation even though you thought you wouldn’t be able to. You’ve been working all day – sit down and get into a *jhāna*. You’re really sick with a fever, even lying on your side – watch the breath and get into a *jhāna*. You can do that. When that happens it proves you cannot trust the seeking mind but that you can trust the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the *Ariya Saṅgha*. This is what we mean by going for refuge to the Triple Gem. It means we find that we can let go whenever we want. That’s what meditation is: abandoning, letting go of the controller, letting go of the doer, being content, and allowing peacefulness to grow in the mind.

We’ll never get peaceful by coming and going, we only get peaceful by staying still. ‘Staying still’, ‘not coming and going’, that’s a metaphor for not doing so many things. Simplify your life, make it as simple as possible, so that you don’t have much to look after. See if you can unburden the mind, simplify the mind so that you don’t have much to think about. Just stay with the breath; make it your friend and just be with it until it becomes so peaceful and beautiful. When it’s peaceful and beautiful you know that is wisdom. It’s wisdom that leads to things like *upasama*, calmness and tranquillity. The Buddha told Upāli and Mahāpājapati Gotamī, that if something leads to *upasama*, then that is the Dhamma.

That’s the teaching of all the Buddha’s. So if it leads to peace you know you are on the right track. If it leads to restlessness, if it leads to irritation, if it leads to ill will, or to a fault finding mind, then you know you’re going in the wrong direction. Don’t follow that direction; it’s going to lead to more suffering for you, stopping you from enjoying the fruits of the path. So understand that the Dhamma is that which leads to

wisdom. And you know it's wisdom if it leads to peace. You know it's peace because it shuts up the doing, thinking mind, and there is contentment. That's the reason this path leads to more and more contentment. If you follow the path, if you follow virtue, it leads to contentment.

### **Freedom**

You are so content keeping eight precepts, and then all the precepts of a novice or a monk. You're so content having no money, not having to deal with that any more. So content not having a wife, children, or parents. So content just being alone, free from all those burdens. So content just with the precepts of a monk, content to be free, because these beautiful rules free you from all of those entanglements. Free because this mind has completely let go of this world, with all its problems and difficulties. Free because you can dwell in the present moment whenever you like. You can drop everything. Free because you can drop the body and dwell in the *jhānas*. Free because you know that life, *samsāra*, is limited.

These are the freedoms of the Buddha. These are the freedoms available to each one of you, the peace and the wisdom that gives you great joy and happiness. That's what this monastic life is all about, that's what Buddhism is all about. So please remember what the path is, what the goal is, and just check yourself to see if you're following a wrong path that is creating attachments, ill will, irritation, and activity or whatever. If you know you are walking in the wrong direction, change. It's really up to you.