

DHARMA -- CLOSE, BUT NO CIGAR

[As for me personally, I continue to pack and at the same time hunt for a home to move to. LOL. Meanwhile, winter inches toward spring. Just for reminders, here is what packing looked like when I packed what perhaps is the largest astrological library in the world, a few years ago. I went to and became a part of the permanent collection at the University of Illinois Library system.]]

The dharma path for each of us is very specific. Sure, it starts out broad and general, but over time it narrows to our specific needs. General dharma teachings (books, teachings, etc.) can perhaps get us into the ballpark of something like a major realization like "Recognition," recognizing the nature of how our mind works, but the actual recognition for each of us is very individual.

I liken it to riding the bus. A bus route can take us to the bus stop close to general area of the dharma where we can recognize how the mind works, but from that bus stop to our house we have to individually go by foot.

That last block or two to recognition requires us to find our home and it is here that the value of a guru comes into play. Just being in the general area is not close enough to finding our particular home if we have never been there before. As they say, a miss is as good as a mile, so walking that last mile requires expert training. We all can ride the bus and get off somewhere in the city near thousands of homes. Yet, finding the way to our particular home (which we have never seen) requires some kind of map or at least an

address. Only a guru can provide that. This is not so because I say it; it is true because literally all of the advanced (pith) teachings say so.

You might think that if we have come all this way by boat train, or plane, and arrived in the neighborhood of realization, going that last mile would be easy. But we can be as lost nearby our destination as we can be from afar. Recognition of the nature of the mind's nature can be as close as the nose on our face, but yet we still cannot see it, not realize it. That is the problem.

It's like a mother with a newborn child guiding the baby to the nipple and helping it to latch on. The guru or dharma teacher can help us realize the nature of our own mind and once that happens, we can go on from there by ourselves.

“As Bodhicitta is so precious,
May those without it now create it,
May those who have it not destroy it,
And may it ever grow and flourish”

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