

**Dharma Talk at Buddha Center, Second Life, 31 May 2010**  
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**Manifestation**

There used to be an old-time band leader in the 30's, I believe his name was Ted Lewis, who used to begin his show with the question, "Is everybody happy?" So I begin my show with, "Is everybody breathing?" And if you are, are you aware of it? So are we awake? Because the A-B-C exercise is not designed to put you to sleep, but to wake you up to what is here and now, to put you in touch with all that is around you in the now.

C: Peacefully awake

Yes. Peacefully awake. I like that; that's a very nice way of putting it. Peacefully awake is a very nice way of putting it. Because most of the time for most people when they are awake their belief system dictates that they need to be tense, concentrated. Effortful, on their guard... You know how we're taught a very young age it's a jungle out there. So we prepare ourselves by putting on our armor. We go out there expecting to be attacked.

That is the source of most of the suffering, the maladies, the types of psychosomatic illnesses and conditions that people develop. And they don't realize that they can be as was said before, peacefully awake. Be out in the world, be totally relaxed and yet totally alert awake, in tune with what is going on in the now and be much more capable of handling any problems that might come up than they would if they were stuck state of tension and stress and anxiety separation. So may you all remain peacefully awake until it's time to fall asleep, and then peacefully sleep. Because there is a time for being awake, and there is a time for being asleep. The problem that comes in is that when we're awake many of us are still asleep, meaning we're still dwelling in dreams, the daydreams being created by our minds, our thoughts and then when we try to go to sleep we stay awake. The mind just doesn't stop working and so we either lie awake with anxious thoughts running through our heads, or we sleep and have fitful dreams. So we're not awake when we're supposed to be awake, and we're not asleep when we're supposed to be asleep.

There's an old Zen saying, "When sitting, just sit; When walking, just walk; Above all don't wobble" And to me that means that you attend to whatever it is that you're doing in the moment. That when you're awake you don't focus on all of the thoughts, daydreams, schemes, anxieties that are going on in your head. That you focus on what's in front you. You awaken to it. And then when you're asleep you allow yourself to surrender to that state of restfulness and peacefulness and physiological restoration that comes from a good night's sleep.

C: Maybe hard work helps in this situation also

What situation are you referring to? When you can't fall asleep? Yes, I agree. It depends, though, on what kind of work. How many people here have spent the day doing

some heavy-duty physical chore, physical labor whether it's growing a garden, or building something, and at the end of the day you're tired, physically tired...But I know from my experience and experience of many people that that I know,, friends, family etc. Have you ever heard the phrase, "Well I'm tired, but it's a good tired." That is a good tired. That is from the exertion of physical energy that was used to do or create or accomplish some kind of productive outcome. However, there are people who go to their jobs, I'll just use the idea of a desk job. They don't spend a lot of physical effort. but they expend a lot of mental effort in worry, stress, scheming, planning, looking at all the contingencies and when their day is over they get dog tired, really tired. When they come home I never hear them say, "It's a good tired." It's always something that feels bad and also that typically keeps them up at night because they can't turn off the thoughts, the worry, the stress, and the effortfulness. So I agree with the commenter, physical labor, that kind of good tired where you become one with whatever task it is that you're performing you not worrying about it you not stressing about it you're just working that's what the Zen master who created that phrase: "Above all, don't wobble." When you're working just work. Don't worry about it, just do the work. And then at the end of the day, you stop so there's no wobbling. The wobbling is not a function of the task that you are performing; it's a function of how you're using your mind while you are performing that task. If you are doing something but thinking of something else or worrying about it...it's like what Seung Sahn Sunim, the famous Korean Zen master said about how the mind works. And he used the analogy of the snake. A snake gets around very well without legs, can go pretty much anywhere it wants to go, even some places where humans can't go. Yet it has no arms or legs. He said a lot of times what people do when they add their thoughts, and their worries, and their anxieties to whatever it is that's in front of them, or to what they're doing. He says it's like painting legs on a snake, because you don't think the snake can get around efficiently enough without legs. So we have to avoid the temptation to paint legs on snakes. They're get along just fine without them.

C: If you have done your best during the day when it comes to sleep you feel at peace and you just sleep

Absolutely agree. If you've done your best but what does it mean to do your best? What is your best?

C: It means that you have tried.

. If Master Yoda were here right now he'd whack you over the head with his light saber. Remember what Yoda said? "Try not. Do, or do not; there is no try" See trying is the problem. Trying is the wobbling. Trying is painting legs on the snake. That's what trying is. Just do. When you put yourself wholeheartedly into the task without the editorial comments, or the worries then you do the best job that you possibly can. You accomplish what you can accomplish. And at the end of the day, you feel that good tired because you haven't wasted and dissipated your energy on useless effort, on trying, on the mental machinations that keep us from experiencing and really feeling who and what we truly are. Which is available to us in every moment.

C: We do not need to feed the ego, just do.

That's a very good way of putting it. That's right. All of the worry and stress and painting legs on the snake that is feeding the ego. That is paying attention and indulging a little two-year-old who's throwing a tantrum. And you know what happens when you indulge a tantrum. You stop it for the moment and then the next day it gets worse or happens again. But we do that with our egos all the time. And what's the way out of indulging it? It's A-B-C: shifting your attention and transcending that thought and worry-based consciousness, thought and worry-based dominated consciousness.

Your doing is based in your being, and if your being is pure and in alignment with your true nature and all that is, your source, then the doing becomes perfect. It's also a question of not attaching to the outcome of whatever it is you're doing. Because when you attach to the outcome what you're doing is creating time and space between where you are now and where you want to be, or what you want to accomplish. And the truth of who and what you are is that you already have everything right now. That's the whole point of spiritual practice. To come to the realization that we already are perfect as the Buddha said, look within. You are the Buddha." As Jesus of Nazareth said, "The kingdom of heaven is within you." Not in the past, not sometime in the future. Right now, right in this moment. The key, though, is that you can only realize that in this moment. It's not something that you could work toward. The only thing that takes work in terms of effort is understanding. Seeing, understanding, and then releasing those ego mechanisms that block us from really feeling who and what we truly are. Which is perfect right now.

The art of manifestation. How do you bring into your life those things, those material things that you want to have in your life? Anybody here seen the movie "The Secret?" "The Secret" talks about the law of attraction. The idea that it is proposing is that we are like magnets and that the universe is the source of all of the things that we could possibly want, and that if we only learn how to magnetize ourselves the right way we will attract into our lives all the things that we want. Whether it's money, a new house, a new car, a better place to live, a different country, the dream relationship that we've been waiting for, all of that.

C: Do you believe in it though Jim?

Like any like any good politician I'm going to hedge my bets. I'm going to say yes and no. Because when I saw "The Secret" I thought well this is this is a nice way, it's a very kind of exciting way of introducing people who have really no spiritual leanings or sensibilities, or very little to some of the inner workings, so to speak, of the Universe. But I had a big problem with that movie and the way these principles were presented. Can anybody take a guess as to what my problem with "The Secret" was?

C: We already have everything

Very good

C: Greed

C: When everything is okay you don't need anything else.

C: It was materialistic oriented

Absolutely true. That was my biggest problem with that movie. Don't get me wrong I think it's wonderful and it's nice and it all got a lot of people excited and looking towards a more spiritual direction. But seriously, that movie was based 95% if not more, in the idea of material gain. Now, is there anything wrong with having material objects, material wealth, material abundance? Absolutely not. The problem comes in when people are preaching the idea that those material objects or that material wealth is what is going to make you happy. That you want to get these things because then you'll be happy. And that the happiness is to be found in those objects, those objects of acquisition.

So the commenter hits the nail on the head: It is the attachments.

Exactly. I thought about that for a long time and as is my usual way I'm always trying to take teachings and bring them more in alignment with the way I see things working with Spirit, with the true way of the universe. And so I put together a presentation which I am going to turn into a video on the real secret which is really no secret at all.

This video is entitled "The Power of Intention-The Law of Projection: How to Live a life of joy and abundance just by being yourself, or, "What's the Big #%\$&#&\*!@! Secret?" and I will be sharing with you from this video over the coming weeks.