Course on Meditation (Stopping & Deep Looking)
November 21, 2010 – February 20, 2011

Verse 5

Looking deeply into the heart of reality
to see the true nature of things,
practicing vipashyana enables me to let go
of everything I am searching for, my desires, and my fears.

Alternative version:
Looking deeply into reality,
to see the true nature of all dharmas,
meditation helps us to let go,
of all seeking, wishing and fear.

Reflections:
Ending a year and starting a new:
- what nourishment did 2010 offer
- what were the challenges
- how do I aspire to continue

Reflections on the Reading:
- how do I learn from the past without pursuing the past
- how do I plan for the future without losing myself in the future

Reading:
Discourse on the Knowing the Better Way to Live Alone
(also part of material for week 2)

web: www.dpweb.org
email: shstaff@dpmail.net
2499 Melru Lane, Escondido,CA
(760) 291-1003 ext 100

Discourse on Knowing the Better Way To Live Alone

I heard these words of the Buddha one time when the Lord was staying at the monastery in the Jeta Grove, in the town of Savatthi. He called all the monks to him and instructed them,
"Bhikkhus!"
And the bhikkhus replied,"We are here."
The Blessed One taught, "I will teach you what is meant by 'knowing the better way to live alone.' I will begin with an outline of the teaching, and then I will give a detailed explanation. Bhikkhus, please listen carefully."
"Blessed One, we are listening."

The Buddha taught:
"Do not pursue the past.
Do not lose yourself in the future.
The past no longer is.
The future has not yet come.
Looking deeply at life as it is
in the very here and now,
the practitioner dwells
in stability and freedom.
We must be diligent today.
To wait till tomorrow is too late.
Death comes unexpectedly.
How can we bargain with it?
The sage calls a person who
dwells in mindfulness
night and day
'the one who knows
the better way to live alone.'

"Bhikkhus, what do we mean by 'pursuing the past'? When someone considers the way her body was in the past, the way her feelings were in the past, the way her perceptions were in the past, the way her mental formations were in the past, the way her consciousness was in the past; when she considers these things and her mind is burdened by and attached to these things which belong to the past, then that person is pursuing the past.
"Bhikkhus, what is meant by 'not pursuing the past'? When someone considers the way her body was in the past, the way her feelings were in the past, the way her perceptions were in the past, the way her mental formations were in the past, the way her consciousness was in the past; when she considers these things but her mind is neither enslaved by nor attached to these things which belong to the past, then that person is not pursuing the past.
"Bhikkhus, what is meant by 'losing yourself in the future'? When someone considers the way his body will be in the future, the way his feelings will be in the future, the way his perceptions will be in the future, the way his mental formations will be in the future, the way his consciousness will be in the future; when he considers these things and his mind is burdened by and daydreaming about these things which belong to the future, then that person is losing himself in the future.
"Bhikkhus, what is meant by 'not losing yourself in the future'? When someone

considers the way his body will be in the future, the way his feelings will be in the future, the way his perceptions will be in the future, the way his mental formations will be in the future, the way his consciousness will be in the future; when he considers these things but his mind is not burdened by or daydreaming about these things which belong to the future, then he is not losing himself in the future.

"Bhikkhus, what is meant by 'being swept away by the present'? When someone does not study or learn anything about the Awakened One, or the teachings of love and understanding, or the community that lives in harmony and awareness; when that person knows nothing about the noble teachers and their teachings, and does not practice these teachings, and thinks, 'This body is myself; I am this body. These feelings are myself; I am these feelings. This perception is myself; I am this perception. This mental formation is myself; I am this mental formation. This consciousness is myself; I am this consciousness,' then that person is being swept away by the present.

"Bhikkhus, what is meant by 'not being swept away by the present'?

When someone studies and learns about the Awakened One, the teachings of love and understanding, and the community that lives in harmony and awareness; when that person knows about noble teachers and their teachings, practices these teachings, and does not think, 'This body is myself; I am this body. These feelings are myself; I am these feelings. This perception is myself;

I am this perception. This mental formation is myself; I am this mental formation. This consciousness is myself; I am this consciousness,' then that person is not being swept away by the present.

"Bhikkhus, I have presented the outline and the detailed explanation of knowing the better way to live alone." Thus the Buddha taught, and the bhikkhus were delighted to put his teachings into practice.

Bhaddekaratta Sutta, Majjhima Nikaya 131