

DHARMA -- THE THREE R'S

I see there is a lot of misunderstanding about the difference between what is called "Recognition," "Realization," and "realization;" let's see if we can clear this up somewhat.

"Realization" with a capital "R" stands for "Enlightenment," what the Buddha achieved, and the path toward enlightenment is lined with the process of realizations with a small "r". The Buddha became Enlightened through the path and process of realization.

It is important to understand that "Realization" (ultimate Enlightenment) itself is a process and not a state. Just as breathing is a process of staying alive, so Realization is the process of realizing the true nature of the mind continually.

On the other hand, "Recognition" of the nature of the mind is a realization (with a small "r"), but it is NOT Realization in the sense of being Enlightened. Recognition is just what the word says, recognition as to how the mind works so that we can begin working with it. Before that, we don't know how. We "Recognize" what has to be done and how to do it.

To repeat, "Recognition" is a realization (small "r"), but it is not "Realization." Until we recognize how the mind works, we can't travel far on the path of realization toward Enlightenment. And this is because we don't understand how to do it. We should all be able to recognize that we have not recognize how the mind works; otherwise, we would have worked it by now.

This is why so much emphasis is made on recognizing the true nature of the mind. Without “Recognition” as to how the mind works, we are just spinning our wheels. If we can recognize the nature of the mind on our own (without a guru) wonderful! It’s just that ALL of the great siddhas, Mahasiddhas, and enlightened gurus agree that without having the nature of the mind pointed out to us by an authentic teacher, we will never be able to recognize how the mind works. We have to let that seek in and acknowledge it as the truth.

Otherwise, we would already have done that many lifetimes ago. Yet, we haven’t. That’s the point: we need help. What’s the shame in that? If we don’t raise our hand or bother to seek out and get help, that is our choice and no one else’s.

“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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