

On Complexity and Diversity and Being Awake and Open

Dear Friend,

Eclectic is good. It is a wise response to the diversity of this reality we inhabit (that we are, of course). Buddhist texts say the Buddha gave 84,000 teachings. He was trying to reach as many people as possible from as many angles as possible. He recognized the diversity of humanity. I can relate to your concerns about patriarchy. I know that I am a male, but it is clear to me what horrendous damage patriarchy has done to all humanity across the millennia. It is a basic lack of comprehension of the reality of men and women. It is a disease that we must find a cure for.

Yes, when you look deeper you see greater complexity. But instead of being overwhelmed, trust your inherent Buddha nature (or whatever term you want to use for your inner spiritual essence), and look even deeper. The complexity of the interconnection of all reality flows together in amazing harmony, as if an ocean of wisdom and loving kindness.

Hope you had a good walk with your friend. I am sure you will find the teacher you need when the time is ripe. The Buddha was pretty clear in where truth lies - in one's own inner nature - their Buddha nature. Once you touch that realization and breath that insight, you are on the path. I think teachers get critical at the advanced stages, guiding the practitioner into subtle realms and overcoming remaining obstacles and obscurations. Ultimately, the teaching is clear "nothing to do, nowhere to go". Our true nature is right here and now and it is wondrous. We just need to clear away the mists that veil our direct experience of this reality and we are home again in the oneness. I keep a quote from Pema Chodron (from Taking the Leap) by my computer at work to help me keep returning to being present in the moment. It says

"Openness is Like the Wind

Basic wakefulness, natural openness, is always available. This openness is not something that needs to be manufactured. When we pause, when we touch the energy of the moment, when we slow down and allow a gap, self-existing openness comes to us. It does not require a particular effort. It is available anytime".

That natural openness has many other names for Buddhists : pure consciousness, primordial consciousness, dharmata, tathata, Buddha mind, suchness. Whatever you call it, it is always right here and now. We just need to remember to open to it and the rest unfolds by itself.