

Noble Eightfold Path

In

Early Buddhism

Myth 7

When you
reach the end
of the path,
you let it go.

MN 22

“This raft has been very helpful to me. Why don’t I beach it on dry land or set it adrift on the water and go wherever I want?’ That’s what that person should do with the raft.”

Divine madness

- The idea is to teach others that life is an illusion
- To stop your followers from getting attached to you
- To be a living example that “there is no self”
- But does it really work?



Divine madness

- The Enlightened person has transcended traditional social norms.
- These people have existed in all societies.
- Mental disease? Village idiot?
- Divine madness is typical for people, who want "the fruit of religion", but not its obligations.

Divine madness

- This so called higher wisdom is for people who are willing to commit to their path.
- The “breakthrough” comes quickly if you follow this path. The guru will “shock them” into understanding.
- You can/should indulge for example in alcohol and sex.

But what does the Buddha say?

“Person who has these qualities
can expect growth, not decline.

A faithful individual doesn't decline.
(*saddho*)

An individual with a conscience
doesn't decline. (*hirīmā*)

A prudent individual doesn't
decline. (*ottappī*)”

But what does the Buddha say?

“An energetic individual doesn’t decline. (*āradḍhāvīriyo*)

A wise individual doesn’t decline. (*paññavā*)

A loving individual doesn’t decline. (*akkodhano*)

A kind individual doesn’t decline. (*anupanāhī*)”

But what does the Buddha say?

“An individual with few desires
doesn't decline. (*appiccho*)

An individual with good friends
doesn't decline. (*kalyāṇamitto*)

An individual with right view
doesn't decline.” (*sammādiṭṭhiko*)

But what does the Buddha say?

“Whoever has faith, conscience, prudence, energy, and wisdom when it comes to skillful qualities can expect growth, not decline, in skillful qualities, whether by day or by night.”

AN 10.67 Paṭhamanaḷakapānasutta



Right view (*sammādiṭṭhi*)

“Wrong view is non-Dhamma; right view is the Dhamma.”
(AN 10.114)

Some features of right view

“When, friends, a noble disciple understands the unwholesome and the root of the unwholesome, the wholesome and the root of the wholesome, in that way he is one of right view, whose view is straight, who has unwavering confidence in the Dhamma and has arrived at this true Dhamma.” (MN 9)

Consequences of right view

“Monks, I do not see even a single thing because of which, with the breakup of the body, after death, beings are reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly world, so much as right view.”
(AN 1.313)

Consequences of right view

“These beings who were ill conducted in body, speech, and mind, abusers of noble ones, wrong in their views, acting in accordance with their wrong view, on the dissolution of the body, after death, have reappeared in a bad destination, even in hell;

but these beings who were well conducted in body, speech, and mind, not revilers of noble ones, right in their views, acting in accordance with their right view, on the dissolution of the body, after death, have reappeared in a good destination, even in the heavenly world.”(MN 4)

Consequences of right view

“Monks, just as the dawn is the forerunner and precursor of the sunrise, so right view is the forerunner and precursor of wholesome qualities.” (AN 10.121)

“Monks, I do not see even a single thing on account of which unarisen wholesome qualities arise and arisen wholesome qualities increase and expand so much as right view.” (AN 1.307)

Consequences of right view

“... right view slants,
slopes, and inclines
towards Nibbāna.”
(SN 35.241)