

## **THE PATH IS ABOUT LETTING GO**

By Pierre Zimmerman

To practice letting go, it is necessary to understand how attached we are to the notion of being a solid separate entity that needs to protect itself continuously from others. We struggle to secure ground under our feet, dig in our heels and stand proudly. When we view our life as something to possess and own, we become completely attached to the mental snapshot of our identity and feel threatened by its potential loss. We stake out our territory and then realize we have to spend a lot of energy protecting it.

*How do we deepen our approach to letting go?* The starting point is to realize that it happens in the present moment and is therefore an ongoing process, based on understanding impermanence. It is difficult to pretend that change can be stopped or that we can hide from what we know deep down to be true. Once we realize that we have fabricated a false and fixed identity based on fear and delusion, we hopefully can find another way to relate to our self. It is as if we have been trapped in a house with dirty windows, so dirty that we have not been able to notice the world out there, beyond the white fence, the lawn....

We become aware that as we let go of one thing, we find ourselves becoming attached to something else. We might be able to let go of some material possession only to become attached to a philosophy of simplicity. It is hard to let go of fixed ideas, emotional hooks, spiritual pretensions, and righteous indignation.

So we practice noticing, and let things take their course. It is a very tender and humble process. It is like peeling an onion, there are poignancy and humor, tears and relief in this struggle, which doesn't need to become a major battle. We can yield and make adjustments to the natural arising and dissolving of our ordinary experiences. We downsize our opinions, moral judgments, and fixations and then let go of the letting go. This is the way to keep the mind big, spacious and balanced!

Sunday Dharma Meditation, PZ-3/15/20