

Putting Out Fire

David Bowie 1982

See these eyes so green? (Green → Jealousy → **Greed**)
I can stare for a thousand years.
Colder than the moon, it's been so long.
And I've been putting out fire with gasoline.

See these eyes so red? (Red → **Anger**)
Red like jungle, burning bright.
Those who feel me near pull the blinds and change their minds.
It's been so long.

Still this pulsing night, (Blind Passions)
A plague I call a heartbeat.
Just be still with me.
You wouldn't believe what I've been through.

You've been so long. (Timeless Depth)
Well, it's been so long.
Well I've been putting out the fire with gasoline,
Putting out the fire with gasoline.

See these tears so blue? (Blue → Sadness → **Ignorance**)
An ageless heart that can never mend.
These tears can never dry.
A judgment made can never bend

See these eyes so green? (Greed)
I can stare for a thousand years.
Just be still with me.
You wouldn't believe what I've been through

You've been so long. (Timeless Depth)
Well, it's been so long.
And I've been putting out the fire with gasoline,
Putting out fire with gasoline.

Been so long. (Awakening)
Been so long.
Well it's been so long.
Been so long.
I've been putting out fire.
Been so long ...

Putting out Fire

By Thich Nhat Hanh

Saving your House

When someone says or does something that makes us angry, we suffer. We tend to say or do something back to make the other suffer, with the hope that we will suffer less. We think, "I want to punish you, I want to make you suffer because you have made me suffer. And when I see you suffer a lot, I will feel better. "Many of us are inclined to believe in such a childish practice. The fact is that when you make the other suffer, he will try to find relief by making you suffer more. The result is an escalation of suffering on both sides - both of you needs compassion and help. Neither of you needs punishment.

When you get angry, go back to yourself and take very good care of your anger. And when someone makes you suffer, go back and take care of your suffering, your anger. Do not say or do anything. Whatever you say or do in a state of anger may cause more damage in your relationship. Most of us don't do that. We don't want to go back to ourselves. We want to follow the other person in order to punish him or her.

If your house is on fire, the most urgent thing to do is to go back and try to put out the fire, not to run after the person you believe to be the arsonist. If you run after the person you suspect has burned your house, your house will burn down while you are chasing him or her. That is not wise. You must go back and put out the fire. So when you are angry, if you continue to interact with or argue with the other person, if you try to punish her, you are acting exactly like someone who runs after the arsonist while everything goes up in flames.

The Buddha gave us very effective instruments to put out the fire in us: the method of mindful breathing, the method of mindful walking, the method of embracing our anger, the method of looking deeply into the nature of our perceptions, and the method of looking deeply into the other person to realize that she also suffers a lot and needs help. These methods are very practical, and they come directly from Buddha.

Whenever you are not standing, sitting, or lying down, you are going. But where are you going? You have already arrived. With every step, you can arrive in the present moment; you can step into the Pure Land or into the Kingdom of God. When you are walking from one side of the room to the other, or from one building to another, be aware of the contact of your feet with the earth and be aware of the contact of the air as it enters your body. It may help you to discover how many steps you can make comfortably during an in-breath and how many during an out-breath. As you breathe in, you can say "in," and as you breathe out, you can say "out." Then you are practicing walking meditation all day long. It is a practice, which is constantly possible and therefore has the power to transform our everyday life.

Many people like to read books about different spiritual traditions or to perform rituals but don't want to practice their teachings very much. The teachings can transform us no matter what religion or spiritual tradition we belong to, if we are only willing to practice. We will transform from a sea of fire into a refreshing lake.