AN 5.157 — Inappropriate Talk

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.157

16. The True Teaching

Inappropriate Talk

“Mendicants, it is inappropriate to speak to five individuals by comparing that individual with someone else. What five?

It’s inappropriate to talk to an unfaithful person about faith. It’s inappropriate to talk to an unethical person about ethics. It’s inappropriate to talk to an unlearned person about learning. It’s inappropriate to talk to a stingy person about generosity. It’s inappropriate to talk to a witless person about wisdom.

And why is it inappropriate to talk to an unfaithful person about faith? When an unfaithful person is spoken to about faith they lose their temper, becoming annoyed, hostile, and hard-hearted, and displaying annoyance, hate, and bitterness. Why is that? Not seeing that faith in themselves, they don’t get the rapture and joy that faith brings. That’s why it’s inappropriate to talk to an unfaithful person about faith.

And why is it inappropriate to talk to an unethical person about ethics? When an unethical person is spoken to about ethics they lose their temper … Why is that? Not seeing that ethical conduct in themselves, they don’t get the rapture and joy that ethical conduct brings. That’s why it’s inappropriate to talk to an unethical person about ethics.

And why is it inappropriate to talk to an unlearned person about learning? When an unlearned person is spoken to about learning they lose their temper … Why is that? Not seeing that learning in themselves, they don’t get the rapture and joy that learning brings. That’s why it’s inappropriate to talk to an unlearned person about learning.

And why is it inappropriate to talk to a stingy person about generosity? When a stingy person is spoken to about generosity they lose their temper … Why is that? Not seeing that generosity in themselves, they don’t get the rapture and joy that generosity brings. That’s why it’s inappropriate to talk to a stingy person about generosity.

And why is it inappropriate to talk to a witless person about wisdom? When a witless person is spoken to about wisdom they lose their temper, becoming annoyed, hostile, and hard-hearted, and displaying annoyance, hate, and bitterness. Why is that? Not seeing that wisdom in themselves, they don’t get the rapture and joy that wisdom brings. That’s why it’s inappropriate to talk to a witless person about wisdom.

It is inappropriate to speak to these five individuals by comparing that individual with someone else.

It is appropriate to speak to five individuals by comparing that individual with someone else. What five?

It's appropriate to talk to a faithful person about faith. It's appropriate to talk to an ethical person about ethical conduct. It's appropriate to talk to a learned person about learning. It's appropriate to talk to a generous person about generosity. It's appropriate to talk to a wise person about wisdom.

And why is it appropriate to talk to a faithful person about faith? When a faithful person is spoken to about faith they don't lose their temper, they don't get annoyed, hostile, and hard-hearted, or display annoyance, hate, and bitterness. Why is that? Seeing that faith in themselves, they get the rapture and joy that faith brings. That's why it's appropriate to talk to a faithful person about faith.

And why is it appropriate to talk to an ethical person about ethical conduct? When an ethical person is spoken to about ethical conduct they don't lose their temper … Why is that? Seeing that ethical conduct in themselves, they get the rapture and joy that ethical conduct brings. That's why it's appropriate to talk to an ethical person about ethical conduct.

And why is it appropriate to talk to a learned person about learning? When a learned person is spoken to about learning they don't lose their temper … Why is that? Seeing that learning in themselves, they get the rapture and joy that learning brings. That's why it's appropriate to talk to a learned person about learning.

And why is it appropriate to talk to a generous person about generosity? When a generous person is spoken to about generosity they don't lose their temper … Why is that? Seeing that generosity in themselves, they get the rapture and joy that generosity brings. That's why it's appropriate to talk to a generous person about generosity.

And why is it appropriate to talk to a wise person about wisdom? When a wise person is spoken to about wisdom they don't lose their temper, they don't get annoyed, hostile, and hard-hearted, or display annoyance, hate, and bitterness. Why is that? Seeing that wisdom in themselves, they get the rapture and joy that wisdom brings. That's why it's appropriate to talk to a wise person about wisdom.

It is appropriate to speak to these five individuals by comparing that individual with someone else."