

It is useless to start from a general picture of Buddhism and try to match our experience to that picture. Both will be fakes. We have to start from where we are.

From where we are, in this room, twelve feet square.

So, for example, when we chant the first vow “Beings, numberless, I vow to free them”, we should not create an imaginary multitude of beings, we should start from our actual experience. This Being when the bell first rang. This Being now. This Being a child. This Being at death. This Being seen by each person within time’s scattering, in love, or hate, or indifference. This Being in the heart of those now gone. This Being in the heart of those not yet come. I vow to free them.

And from these Beings, like encroaching daybreak, to all Beings.