

Enlightenment

At some point, enlightenment turns into a touchy term for me (and I suspect many practitioners) -- it turns into a stand in for judgements about one's own (or another's) spiritual advancement, the quality of understanding or emotional maturity, judgments about meditation experiences or even life experiences. One of the lojong slogans goes something like "remember, this is not a competition" but the avaricious mind seems to relish turning thoughts of enlightenment in this direction. For this reason alone, it's very interesting to contemplate "enlightenment"!

It's probably built into the story of enlightenment itself when "enlightenment" is understood as something that happens to a person at some point in time -- the diamond sutra makes a shockingly lucid case against this. So love of enlightenment has to be about something which has never happened, something so simple it's not even a thing or an event. That "something" turns out to be everything (including our crazy dreams of enlightenment :)).

Understanding this -- bringing it into my life -- does feel like a progression or evolution.