



Real Freedom, by Ajahn Amaro

"Most of the time, however, we find ourselves moving away from that point. That's our habitual reaction to the world -- grasping after things or running away from things. I remember, when I was a very small child, often trying to jump into the middle of my shadow, but however hard I jumped I just landed on the shadow's feet. And I would run after my shadow and then jump -- but where would I land? Just in the same place all over again. And this is what we do with our lives -- the things that we desire, it's like running after shadows. You try to catch hold, reaching for the desire so close, and then you grasp it and then . . .and you haven't really got it. Somehow it's not what you expected, it's different, not what you really wanted. And then to run from your shadow -- to be afraid, you keep turning around: 'It's still behind me, run faster, got to get away.' When we stop and look though, we realize: 'Well, it's just my shadow.' You can't get away from it, but there's nothing in it to be afraid of, it's just a shadow. So when we stop and rest in the stillness of knowing, we know in our hearts that all we desire, all we fear, are just shadows. There is no substance there -- nothing which can make us more complete and nothing which can threaten us. This is the real freedom of mind." -- Ajahn Amaro