

Dragons on the Eightfold Path

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Wise Speech

4 Parts of Wise Speech	In practice, noticing unwise tendencies towards:
Negative: Abstaining from lying Positive: Engaging in speech or silence that is true	exaggerating for effect in telling a story “it’s for her own good” “it’s easier this way” hiding or protecting what you are ashamed of boasting that strays from grounded truth self-serving manipulation of the facts compartmentalizing truth silence that enables untruth
Negative: Abstaining from divisive speech Positive: Engaging in speech or silence that promotes harmony and community	gossip deliberately antagonizing speech any speech that creates an “us” and a “them” silence that enables division
Negative: Abstaining from abusive speech Positive: Engaging in speech or silence that is respectful	name-calling shaming baiting scolding silence that enables abuse
Negative: Abstaining from idle chatter Positive: Engaging in speech or silence that is meaningful	space-filling conversation TV/radio/internet as distraction conversation without clear intention or deep listening silence that enables distraction

In a clear, non-shaming way, the practice of wise speech is based on a determination to understand what is happening, before, during, and after we speak. What is happening in the body? What is happening verbally? What is happening emotionally? What are the antecedents and results of wise & unwise speech?