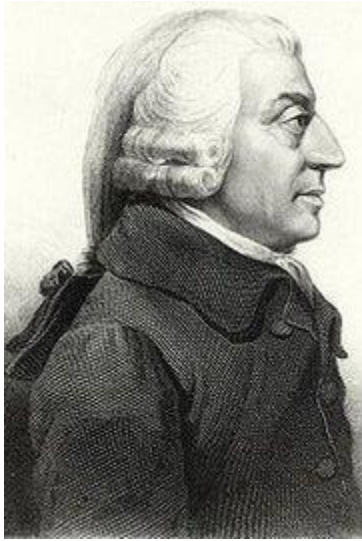


Finding Compassion and Kindness...



Adam Smith

I am reading a book I had never heard of until about two months ago. Title is "The Theory of Moral Sentiments," and the author is Adam Smith. Yes, the Adam Smith who wrote "Wealth of Nations" and jump-started the theory of economics flowing through capitalism today. But more than an economist, Smith was a philosopher. And if he hadn't read the suttas, he at least had a grasp on how habits and patterns affect our ability to dwell in the brahmaviharas.

I haven't finished the book yet, but I can summarize its thesis in two sentences...

We see others as we see ourselves, reacting to their joy or suffering as we would our own. It is through the colored glass of our habits and patterns that we see and react to others.

Sound familiar? It should. This is a fundamental teaching of the Buddha. It is our habits and patterns that affect how we live in and react to phenomena as they touch our sense bases and arise in our consciousness.

I recommend this book to anyone traveling the path. If you are not a big fan of the works of 18th century philosophers, never fear. The first three chapters are worth the effort of downloading a free copy of Smith's work from <http://goo.gl/pIH8I> (PDF).