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Film & Response: The Buddha

- 1) What events led Siddhartha to leave the place and seek answers to the “pain of existence”?

A: Siddhartha was the son of a very wealthy family but got raised by his aunt because his mother died soon after his birth. He had some special marks on his body which meant that he was predicted for a big role and was likely to become the leader of the country at one point. Siddhartha was a deep thinker since he was young and thought a lot about existence and life. He saw a farmer plowing which he has never seen before and everyone was celebrating the festivities but not him. He started to think about why pain existed and how everything is connected. His father was not very happy to see his son going in a different direction then he wanted him to go. He tried to make the life for Siddhartha as good as possible inside the palace to keep him there and follow his footsteps. The prince made 4 journeys out in the country and saw 4 signs which were predicted by the fortune teller in the palace. The first sign he saw was an old man walking through a village and that was the first time Siddhartha saw aging and learned that everyone in life will face that. The second sign was when he saw a very sick man and learned that everyone can become sick. The third sign was when he saw a corpse and he learned that everyone is mortal and will die. The last sign was when Siddhartha saw a man begging on a street. All those signs shocked him and he learned things he didn't know before which made him question so many things. Siddhartha left the palace even though he had a wife, a kid and a good life there but he just had to find his answers.

2) What challenges did he face in his quest to find enlightenment?

A: Siddhartha faced some challenges on his way to find enlightenment. One challenge was to leave everything behind he had, his luxurious and comfortable life but also to leave behind his family and the people he loved. The next challenge he faced after this was to find someone to teach him and give him the answers he was seeking. It was difficult to find someone because no one could give him the answers he was looking for. He was struggling and it wasn't easy for him to find what he was looking for. Another challenge he faced was temptation, because when he was meditating he was tempted by Mara, the demon of desire, who tried to distract Siddhartha. The last challenge I would say he faced was to understand reality, since he was raised different and hasn't seen much it was not easy to understand the nature of reality. Despite all those challenges, he still managed to achieve enlightenment.

3) Describe "the Middle Way" of peace and harmony he sought

A: The so called "Middle Way" is a concept in Buddhism which refers to the path of moderation as well as balance, which Siddhartha advocated on the way to achieve enlightenment. "The Middle Way" says basically that enlightenment lies between the extremes of self-mortification and sensual indulgence. It also means to have a balanced and mindful approach towards life and avoid certain extremes. When someone follows "the Middle Way" they can achieve inner peace, wisdom and harmony. So in conclusion "the Middle Way" is an approach to life, which puts emphasize on living in the moment with awareness and compassion. This ultimately leads to developing a deeper understanding of the nature of reality.