

2002-01-06 Four Noble Truths

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suffering, clinging, people, buddha, life, four noble truths, drum, understand, compulsion, buddhist, buddhism, cling, desire, practice, nice, sitting, framework, meaning, peace, offer

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

And then you can repeat the word calling response.

So, can you hear me in the back, okay.

So I will try to speak toe to

toe

some

some Buddhists

go toe

to toe.

Some

some Buddhists

Oh

go

toe

to toe

some

some Buddhists

Cha me,

Johnny

sang

cha me

at the

cha me

The the

the

duty, the

Saarinen

gotcha the

duty, the

duty

sang

me

the bee

Johnny

the the

gotcha me

the the

sun,

sadhana

cha me

Sangha

Domino,

Newton the

most

things are impermanent.

Have the nature of arising and passing away.

Those who can be at peace with this will be happy.

Whatever benefits that come from our use of this building, sitting and practicing here

may be for the benefit

of all beings everywhere. For all

beings that we meet and encounter, and for all the beings they will be using this building after us

need the field of goodness

which has brought us this building and created the space, the field of goodness that spreads on

down through the years and the generations.

They all beings be happy.

May all beings everywhere. Be free

So

welcome everyone. And next

Sunday, we're gonna have our opening celebration.

And

as part of that would be various things are going to happen and kind of ceremonial ritual a little bit. And

as we do that one of the things that's going to happen is we're going to

read the first discourse of the Buddha,

which is the sutra on sutra on

turning the wheel of the Dharma.

And it felt appropriate to

kind of the official kind of opening celebration, to let the words of the Buddha be the Dharma talk. And, in a sense, the first words that he gave the first teachings he gave, had been the core of Buddhist teaching. Ever since all of Buddhism can be understood

as an elaboration of those first teachings,

and specifically,

those teachings have to do with the Four Noble Truths.

And I know

some people think the Four Noble Truths are quaint or maybe relevant or simplistic or think that

easy to understand, but let's get on to something more profound.

And in my over 25 years of Buddhist practice, I've come to appreciate not only the profundity of the Four Noble Truths, but also the

the content the kind of

brilliance

of the Buddha formulating

the path, the religion Life for the spiritual life that he offered,

formulated from the point of view of the Four Noble Truths

because it focuses very directly points very directly at the core issue

to be resolved

for liberation

without anything extra,

that any extra metaphysics or belief systems or speculations or it's really a radically simple metaphysically free system,

or, or framework for understanding

our life.

And it's very helpful, I think, not to have metaphysics tied into a spiritual path,

because

sometimes it's very inspiring, but sometimes, it lends itself to what the Buddha called a thicket of use a quagmire of use. There's a lot of When it's met when metaphysical beliefs come into play,

they often sometimes kind of, don't quite match don't quite fit, they don't quite you start really looking into them carefully. They start falling apart for us. I've heard Christian theologians tell

Buddhist, you don't want to get involved in Buddhist

academic studies, because you'll lose your religion. Because many Christians who go into academic study of Christianity will find that some of the very tenets of Christianity begin to kind of unravel for them

as they really look at them under a kind of critical eye.

So in offering a spiritual path that has no metaphysical belief system, it offers some things radically simple

incense, some people could say

that it maybe it's not a religion at all.

Maybe it's not even spiritual practice at all.

In

the time of the Buddha, he was Known as the great physician position, the great doctor, the great surgeon, and the

similarity to to medicine

as for what the Buddhism would have had to offer, as I think it's also very helpful,

maybe it's more medicine than it is.

religion or therapy or,

you know, it's really good medicine. The Four Noble Truths is like the best deal you could take. And in fact, the Four Noble Truths are formulated based on the model, ancient Indian model, how doctors diagnosed illnesses

are looked at illness

to the framework in which doctors used so if you go to your doctor

and something ails you, maybe something really serious. And you go to your doctor and she says, well, nice to see you.

And you play chess. And you

say what not to do anything. Well just you know, like to know my patients a little bit and what's your golf score

and now You don't play golf. Oh, you know what kind of,

you know?

What's your favorite cookbook?

and television program like you

see what was on

when people watch I watched

last week

survivor

and you know, you only have 15 minutes. It's

a \$200 appointment. And it goes on and on. And, you know, these questions and you wonder, you know, and finally, you know, the 14 minutes you say, shouldn't you be interested in what ails me? And

to be interested in what ails us is necessary

if you have an illness, and if you don't have that interest interest in what ails you, someone doesn't have an interest. If the doctor doesn't have an interest, then you think something is wrong. So from the point of view of a spiritual life, the Buddha was a physician pointing to the very core problem,

which he defined as suffering

And according to what the Buddha had to offer, because other things to do, I suppose his spiritual lives with the Buddha is most keenly interested in

was how to live a life

where there was no suffering. And suffering free life is a pretty good thing. And the quest for that happiness

and that peace

that has no suffering

is what the Buddhist path is all about. Or at least half of it. The other half is offering that to other people, supporting other people and doing that

responding and compassion to the world suffering of the world. And

so if the goal is to be free of that suffering and discover the amazing grace, the amazing peace or happiness as possible, and

that happens,

then we have to understand the nature of that suffering.

And the first innocence responsibility that the Buddha offered to people on the path is the responsibility to understand their suffering. People come to Buddhism some people react and say, well, gee, you know, I came to get away from my suffering, I came to be inspired to get hope to get to get it, you know, anything but my suffering. I know people get angry. When you tell them, you have to pay attention to your suffering.

And they think it's an affront

because it's a personal failing, they have suffering or it's, you know, it's just not what's supposed to happen. And I've also known people who've been very inspired to come in into here, a Buddhist Dharma talk, for example,

because they really felt there was some fundamental

suffering, in life in society that going on in their experience, no one was talking about it,

or a lot of people denying it, putting it up.

And, and not really

calling it for what it is. And

hopefully, often, at least sometimes, witness Dharma talks are insisting that you have to really acknowledge and recognize

what is actually so.

Now there's a way of being depressed by it, not in a way being morbid about it. It is really recognizing and being honest, so that you can be your own doctor so that you can find what it takes to be free from suffering. So the first responsibility that Buddha said is the study of your own suffering, to get to know it. And that's goes from the most subtle

from simply

very, very mild irritation or complaining about how something is two phenomenally profound, psychological, personal traumas that can come sometimes from childhood trauma or tragedies or

there's all a whole realm range

of suffering. And the responsibility is to stop and look at it all.

Wherever it arises.

And I know in my own life, that in my practice, sometimes I've looked at some of the important suffering in my life and practice with it and all that and I've overlooked a lot of the subtle things, the subtle ways of complaining and being irritated. And if the practice is really going to be integrated throughout our life, it has to be in all those planes, all those realms. And in fact, sometimes by looking at the subtlety, the small things that irritate us and we complain about and annoyed about or resist things that often we overlook. It's often provides a wonderful door for dealing with the more important stuff laces for foundation for dealing with more important suffering we have which is sometimes too

difficult for some of us to look at directly, but you need to you need to create a foundation of peace and well being or dealing with things to be able to look at look at it.

So the doc the

Buddha, as a doctor first talked about our responsibility as our own doctors to in a sense Buddhism as medical school. Alright,

with as much more pleasant I hope

I had heard horror stories. Last week tweet I talked, I talked just ended yesterday. There were for some reason a lot of medical students there. I mean, this is this time of year they can get away. People don't get sick during holidays, or something. I don't know why they were free. But there were a lot of medical students. And every single one of them came and talked about the horrors of the stress. Long, long hours, isn't a paradox of being involved in the system, medical system is there to help people suffer less. And then we kind of grind them, you know, everything they're worth seemingly in this very training that they get to do that.

But Buddhism is kind of a medical school for us,

where we're being trained to be our own doctors, which requires that we from time to time, find out recognize what our suffering is. One of the sufferings we can have is secondary suffering or tertiary suffering, which is we suffer because we suffer.

We suffer because we suffer because we suffer,

or you know, some of us have seen.

And so you know, so you

know, if I stub my toe,

which happens,

and then I get angry with myself for being clumsy. That's a sec, that's a secondary suffering I've added on top of that.

And that self criticism is is

optional. But

it causes the suffering, the pain is the pain. And the suffering is the way we react and respond to the pain or the joy of life. And then I feel angry with myself for being clumsy. And then I'm embarrassed because I don't want to let you all know that I'm

angry with myself because I'm a Dharma teacher, I shouldn't be

so now embarrassed, which is,

you know, a tertiary form of suffering.

And then

I'm depressed because one more time I'm embarrassed

and then that's, you know,

Watch for

the fourth level once generation.

And then and then I get afraid because

I'm depressed

and then you know, on it goes. And so, we try not to do that. But of course we do.

And the practice is to see all that

and to find out where in that chain of reactivity, we can wake up, where we can stop adding the Buddhist languages, the arrows that cause more suffering.

So, in order to do that, the Buddha talked about the second

noble truth, the first noble truth

is a truth of suffering.

The second noble truth

is the truth of

the cause of suffering. And the cause of suffering, sometimes in popular books for understanding is defined by the Buddha to be desire. And what they do best ability to use the word desire because if you use the word desire You're in trouble. Because desires are a dime a dozen. They come really easily to most people. We're

kind of like, you know,

homo desirous.

You know, it's kind of like all we do. We want

we want something, we don't want something else.

And it's very easy. It comes kind of naturally.

So it isn't, you know, if we just want to be critical or

you know, the desire when trouble we wouldn't be human. But the Buddha didn't use the word desire, but he used the word thirst. The thirst is the cause of suffering. And thirst is kind of a kind of a physical kind of experience to be thirsty. It's kind of I think I took it I think it'd be a non technical term, anytime of the Buddha. It wasn't like any, you know, was like a, you know, technical religious term was just, you're thirsty and I translate it into a English, sometimes as the word

givenness,

which as far as I know, is not a technical term

to be driven, except in Silicon Valley

to be driven

or to act under compulsion.

When, when we no longer

when we were driven when we're kind of slaves or an automatic pilot, and are driven, this drives the desire. So it's not simply a desire or an aversion. But the desire the aversion has a compelling compulsion that's built into it.

We're not really free.

But the desire itself is what's flowing through us demanding that things have to be a certain way. And sometimes that compulsion can be phenomenally powerful.

Sometimes people

can't sit still. Sometimes they explode

almost because the power of their desire and their demands are such I mean, they Name it, you know, sometimes

lust can be that way.

Have you ever not been able to sit still because of lust?

I have, I could, I couldn't sleep one night because

of it, you know, restless tossing and turning, or feelings of aversion or anger, kind of their their compulsive way. And they're kind of taken over. And

so I think of driven is the cause of

the reactive

behavior that causes suffering causes us contract

to tighten up. And so part of the responsibility is to understand

the causes of it.

Understand this, this

form of, of givenness

or compulsion, as it drives our life.

And in saying this, I think it's useful to distinguish between popular American understandings of freedom and Buddhist understandings of freedom. And it's

a little bit simplistic,

but I think it's useful pedagogically to kind of make this distinction. And I think that the kind of popular American understanding of freedom is mostly freedom to freedom, right to freedom to bear arms to shop.

And, you know,

get out of my way, the rights of the individual to do whatever they want in their own home and their own property within, you know, in the pursuit of their own happiness.

And

it's certainly a very important freedom

in many ways,

but it can mask

compulsion

where we, we feel this tremendous compulsion to have

what we want. I want it I want it, I want it

and get in my way. I deserve it, but shouldn't be any limitations on me. And in extreme forms, it's actually kind of an

infant style

relationship to The world

and you're not really free.

If you simply taken away the limitations for your compulsion to, to have get free rein, at least from a Buddhist point of view, that's the case. And so from a Buddhist point of view, freedom is defined

as the absence

of compulsion. It's freedom from something, instead of freedom to do whatever you want. It's a freedom from something. It's freedom from compulsion from vividness.

So they become incense,

masters of our own lives. So in a sense, we become

in charge of our life. So there are a lot we're free in our lives, to act in wise and helpful ways.

So the second

noble truth is the truth of the cause of suffering, which is the what we need to understand and ultimately let go

to release that

If you understand this really well, and the hope is that

your encounter with Buddhist practice is not going to cause you to suffer more. which it is, unfortunately for too many of us, not always because, but sooner or later if you practice,

you're gonna be sitting there meditating, for example,

as an example.

And you're gonna say, gee, I'm not very concentrated.

That happens.

It's pretty common for human beings to find themselves not very concentrated. It happens to me all the time.

That's okay, then.

I'm a failure as a meditator,
a meditator someone who's supposed to be you know, this pristine,
beautiful concentration is able to every time I sit down is
supposed to be able to ride each breath and ride off into
the sunset
and And boy, am I ever I can never succeed at anything that I do.
Okay, is that better now? better for everyone? Much better, huh? Okay, so that was the mystery.
Sorry for those of you.
So what you have to realize here
is that it's gonna take us a while to know
how to use this place
and get everything right and kind of you know,
and you cannot we've all got to be patient for a while as we kind of sort through
you know all the little ways in which we want to adjust and make this place work for us. We'll be
experimenting over the next weeks with different ways of sitting and different ways of all kinds of
things. And
eventually, we'll experiment with different
color glass windows.
And but in the meantime, I certainly hope
that you don't suffer because of this.
Because

this is this is the you know, this is the very This is the one of the one of the difficult things to say. And one of the challenges the greatest one of the biggest challenges of Buddhism, I believe, and, and you can be misunderstood when this is said. So you probably will misunderstand it. But the idea is if you were about to say, you take it as a kind of a con you take it as a contemplative statement that you don't take as another reason to suffer about yourself and feel bad about yourself. But you take it as a as something to carry with you as a possibility to help you explore and understand your life better. And the challenge that Buddhist teachings is that you're responsible for your suffering

You're responsible for your suffering.

So one of the functions that a mindfulness practice is in the field of mindfulness practice, the practice itself, is to always turn the attention away from the so called object that bothers us

to what our own subjective experiences about that.

So if you don't like the sound of the traffic when we're sitting here,

training and mindfulness is certainly recognized with its traffic sounds, whatever,

and then to turn the attention back to yourself,

understand

if you're suffering about it, what's going on in you,

because it's really not necessary to suffer

around traffic sounds. It's not inherent in the nature of life that traffic sounds produce a version or clinging or judgment or resistance. Or comparison to what a real meditation center should be like or what

quiet when

a real meditation center in Asia

would have the neighborhood loudspeakers blaring away.

Playing

Madonna's famous song just like a virgin was a call

in Burmese Luckily, all over and over and over again

and we're not doing that.

Then the neighboring monastery next door to your monastery

will start chanting

Buddhist lists

out loud over the loudspeaker 24 hours a day for seven days. That's what a real monastery is like. Here in the West, we think it's supposed to be silent. So the responsibility to turn around and look and that's really dynamic and interesting and powerful work really be? What is going on with me? Where's the clinging? Where's the compulsion? Where's the thirst? Where's the judgment? What am I clinging to? And the Buddha enumerated a lot of things that we could cling to. He had various kinds of lists, they chant over loudspeakers. And he talks about clinging to ethics and religious practice.

And I'm sure that's a great relief to you, you know, you know, you're not to cling to those

was easy. But for some people, but that's a form that causes tremendous suffering for ourselves. to cling to our ethics is very, very powerful and important for Buddhism be ethical. And religious practice is essential part of Buddhism,

with a claim to it

is a form of a lot of suffering. And sooner or later most of us will do our practice, and suffer because of it will judge yourselves will

want things to be different. we resist how things actually are.

It's a little bit of a paradox that we have this wonderful system that's alleviating suffering, that we use it to measure ourselves in the paracels. To suffer more. That's kind of human nature. And, and luckily, the practice is self correcting. So that gets corrected with time and I thought I'd made phenomenal progress. In my years of practice. It wasn't what I expected progress to look like. But a year I made a lot of progress when I can get to through a retreat without getting angry.

Usually with myself.

So there's clinging to this claim to ethics and religious practices. There's also a clinging to the Buddhist word, his views with views that use that word implies kind of opinions and everyone knows they're not opinionated. It's the other people and

but I think it's much more if you really understand

Use the power, their power in our lives. It's much more subtle

than just simply our kind of views and opinions.

It's the can include

the signing on meaning

that we put on our experience.

And the meaning we put an experience is more often than not different than the actual experience itself.

And we tend to cling to that meaning.

What is that meaning?

What is it meaning that we're clinging, clinging to? What's that view that we're clinging to? meaning of what it means to be a good person meaning where it means to be acceptable person Meaning what? All kinds of things, the meaning of his particular experience,

meaning

this and that the room is quite full today.

So I could easily suffer

or looking at that say, Oh,

this means that

you guys aren't happy.

Because you feel crowded, that was probably true. But, but I could, I don't know that until you tell me but I find that meaning the actual, actual experiences through a missile,

what's the meaning that are assigned to that?

So we cling to meaning.

we cling to a sense of self, which is very closely related to sense of meaning. Because we have ideas what it means to be human being which means to be yourself, unless you through other other beings, other people.

clinging to it, a sense of self, I am something and I

have to defend it, hold on to it, build it up,

is a tremendous karma suffering.

And some people you can kind of imagine the degree of joy and happiness and peace that can come when a person can walk through life, without any need to defend themselves, prove themselves, hide themselves

be anything for anybody.

And then the fourth clinging is a clinging to comfort and sensual pleasure. It isn't that it's bad to have those things, but they clinging to it, the wanting it. And then the conversely the aversion and resistance to discomfort is one of the fundamental sufferings, the causes of suffering for human beings. And, in fact, it might sound kind of simplistic to say that, you know, we cling to sensual pleasure, you know, and, you know, it doesn't apply to me or applies to be only when I'm close to the refrigerator or something.

But the

more often, more often than probably we realize, the way in which we're responding to experiences in life is not to the new, maybe the meaning there or to the experience they're in, you know, in some more complex way, but it's very simple. Is this pleasant or unpleasant? So we hold on over a push away. Basically, one very simple premise is a pleasant or unpleasant. And some people are very attached cling to that very powerfully. People come to retreats, for example and say, Does practice

have to be, we have to sit with my physical pain. You don't have to sit with pain necessarily. Sometimes it's wise not to. But if every chance you get you avoid your discomfort.

You'll never discover the freedom from

freedom from compulsion. And to really learn how to be free you have to learn how to sit still, with equanimity or peace or non reactivity with whether things are pleasant or unpleasant. The third noble truth is the truth of the cessation of suffering.

The end of suffering, it's possible to

end this clinging

and it can be done in small ways.

And in fact, it's very interesting to study

how often this happens in our daily life. the cessation of clinging and suffering happens from About 10,000 times in the course of our daily life, but we often don't notice it. You might have a desire for the green light, or for the red light to turn green before you reach the intersection. And maybe you're not in a hurry. So you'll get anxious and really kind of, you know, praying that happens. And you don't even notice, for example, you've tensed up a tiny bit around

the traffic light.

And then whatever happens in traffic lights happens, and then you're off the next block. And you're no longer clinging to that traffic light being a certain way.

That desire has now been liberated, it's been finished, it's gone

away. And

I don't know if that's the best example. But there's a lot of small ways in which our degrees which our desires are clinging. It's actually released through the day because and to study that, to recognize that this stuff, can I kind of recognize that that's happening and to feel maybe the satisfaction or the peace in a small way? I have that no longer being here

to appreciate that

lends itself then

to,

certainly to understanding the relevance of the Four Noble Truths.

And then there's a big release

of clinging.

The biggest one is the experience of Nirvana or the deathless. They're radically, totally complete, letting go of consciousness itself. So that any remnants any small any, any, any form of clinging in the heart mind, are completely eliminated. And one of the great reasons I'm inspired by the Buddha and why I wanted to start with chanting this homage to the Buddha today is that the Buddha represents someone who is discovered this is fulfilled or realize this potential that's in the hearts and minds of all of us to be absolutely completely

liberated

from the causes of suffering within our own hearts and minds, to enter into the world and to walk To the world, without any

tendency

for ourselves to add to suffering to ourselves with the world around us.

We don't we there's no clinging. There's no

resistance, there's no hate, there's no greed.

This cessation of suffering.

The Buddha then said, are in the Four Noble Truths. The fourth truth is the Eightfold Path. And so the first three years of suffering as a cause of suffering, and there's a cessation of suffering.

It sounds very easy.

The fourth note, the fourth noble truth is a recognition that it's not easy to do with thoroughly and completely. And so we need to put together the conditions that support that happening. The Buddhist

eight step program And so it's right understanding and the right understanding is understood to be right to you is to really understand how the Four Noble Truths are a useful framework for understanding our life experience. Four Noble Truths are not meant to be truths and kind of kind of philosophical way or metaphysical way. But they're really true or useful, like a tool is true,

the truth or anything, you send me a true tool or something.

Something it's really useful. It's not any less or more true than the metric system is, you know, is a metric system. It might be more useful than the English system of measurement. But is it is it truer

you know, then using inches and feet.

It just, it's just a way of dividing up our experience. A category is a framework to make a lot easier for us to get through things. So in the same way, the Four Noble Truths are very useful frameworks for understanding our lives.

What the Buddha said

is that they're more useful and wiser to use those frameworks to use any framework of understanding your life that's based on the idea of itself

will never deny that there's a self.

But he said, if you use a framework of the self,

to find your happiness,

you're never going to ultimately find it. It's not useful for you. So if you're looking for the true self, or the infinite self, or the, or the, you know, trying to take self and merge the self with the cosmos, if you're trying to discover an independent self, or there's all these kind of ways in which we use the word self as being the agenda for our life is all about. And it's very radically radical teaching for the Buddha to say, any framework that you use, it has to do with a sense of self, using the idea of self as a framework for looking for yourself. Happiness leads you to greater, greater, but least keeps you in the world of suffering. And so the alternative framework that would offer was the Four Noble Truths. So to use that framework, this is the first of the Eightfold Path. I understand that framework.

The second is right intention

to have the right aspiration of good or good aspiration, to have the aspiration intention for our life to come in arise out of the goodness of our hearts. Then there's right speech or good speech, speech

that comes out of the goodness of our hearts. Then there's good livelihood that comes out of the goodness of our hearts, how we live our lives. How would we make a living, if we really is an expression of the goodness of our hearts, rather than other things that it can be an expression of,

then there's

good action or behavior. In general, if it comes from the goodness of our hearts, it helps lay the foundation conditions for doing this very, very radically transformative thing of letting go of, you can get in to our suffering and clinging.

And then there's

right effort or good efforts, efforts and engagement, which comes from the goodness of our heart. And then there's good mindfulness that comes also hopefully from a wholehearted effort to wholeheartedness the goodness of who we are. And then there's good concentration, same thing, ability to be focused and composed in the middle of our experience,

in a good way, in a good hearted way.

So the Four Noble Truths, I understand,

to be when the Buddha taught them to be an expression of His love.

That he had tremendous compassion

and love For the world and for us, and he chose not to avoid helping, but he chose to actually for 45 years, based on that compassion and love to engage in the world and offer the medicine that hopefully would help all of us with our own suffering. And this is what's continued now for 2500 years. And in doing that, and taking that pill like medicine, it tends to bring forth

the goodness

and the love in those who take the medicine. And I'm very conscious that as we sit here in this building, that we now have this insight meditation center, that we're sitting in a field of goodwill. The lot of people, infinite few people, we don't we don't even know directly

and on people, we do know people In this room,

I have contributed their goodwill in many different forms, and made possible for us to buy this. And to fix it up to the green which we have now, and to be here together as a group, and when I look out

and see this building,

and come and when I think of coming here,

I don't see physical

walls,

floors, as much as I see that it the whole place embodies goodwill, generosity, trust, practice, dedication and sincerity of many, many people.

Exactly time to stop so

maybe that's

so I'm very grateful for all of you and for being here and coming for our first day and if it was anything Awkward by being here for this first day. Please be patient as we kind of sorted out all the details and make it work as smoothly as possible. And next week we'll have the opening celebration. And it should be quite nice,

what we have planned

and

we'll we will probably will definitely rearrange the seating arrangements for that. So we can use both both else and probably the people speaking will be up there so we can see them from both sides, both rooms. And then afterwards we'll have an informal potluck. And, and

so please, you know, come and hang out and

the

couple of announcements I have this coming Thursday. We have our first Thursday evening sitting here and the Thursday evening sittings. have now been moved to 730. It used to be seven in Palo Alto, and we moved to 730. And this Thursday is the first Thursday of the five week introductory

course. And then after this particular introductory course the plan is to move the introductory course to Wednesday.

So the Thursday will always be just

regular sitting group the way it is rather than not, you know,

being bumped off every three times a year for the intro class. And,

and then

our first kind of one day event sitting

Ventus Richard Shankman, comes this Saturday to teach

one day, kind of a retreat,

teaching retreats a lot of sitting in practice, but also a bit more teaching than the usual one day sittings that I played. And then next Sunday is the opening. And then there was one mistake in the newsletter. Where I'm going to start we're going to start having half day sittings in Beginning on the one Wednesday, just on Wednesday mornings like one once in January and once in March and if they look like they're really working well maybe even do every week. And the first one will be the 30th of January. But the newsletter says the

30th of February

which never could ever come.

You've been waiting a long time.

And

so also if you can be a little bit patient because we like to make a few more announcements, I think, Diane, you were talking a bit about the parking

and perhaps so The those people who come regularly will kind of learn where the parking lots are, and use those so that people who don't come regularly don't know where they are.

You know, we'll find street parking and,

and also, you know, it's

and if you're, you know,

fit and all kinds of wonderful things, parking further away to help alleviate some of the pressure on the neighbors would be a nice thing. We don't want to be a burden for you, but if it works nice to do that, to incorporate that as part of your coming here.

It would be a good thing. There is

Caltrans trail trans train which is relatively close.

We also have a parking lot we can use down this street down birch, so we're over time both some of you will learn where these things are, will help out. The other thing is also an opening celebration next week

when the Buddha decided to go teach

He said, he was the god Brahma came and said, Please come and beat the drum of the death, beat the drum of the deathless. And the Buddha said, the doors of the

deathless are open. So

beating the drum of the deathless is a very strong kind of important statement in the Buddhist texts. And we're going to have a drum hopefully have a drum here to have a very amazing beating of the drum. But that requires getting the drum

and it's the Big Buddha drum

that they have at the San Francisco Zen Center in the hallway down next to the zendo some of you been there.

And what do we let us bring it down here?

We pick it up kind of Saturday afternoon 12th and bring it back Sunday after our event, but requires a truck and they said requires three strong people to carry it into the truck. And a lot they said you better bring in a lot of blankets, because you know they won't they don't want their friends Drum damage in any way. What if it's raining?

Well, if it's raining, we can cover it as long as we have a truck, it can't be picked up. And

so if anybody has something like that it's sunny a pickup or if it's not sunny a truck or anything if people can volunteer maybe should ask anybody who can help with that.

It's transporting it or helping.

So if it's, I think it probably won't fit

because it's the only big drum but it's also the stand

that it's on.

Okay. And then we need a couple of people to go with you. If you can do it.

You can help anybody else who might be available.

So when you talk to bill, and you will know we don't know. Yeah. Right. And, and then if we need to make an announcement again, tomorrow

taking it back and forth here one time, Saturday and then Sunday.

Well, it is I think it needs to be pretty similar because the it's a big drum and the rivets and the drummer is important as the drum part, so it has to have rivets in the same way.

You have to come and see.

It's like Taiko drumming.

So, yes.

Would be nice to bring some flowers

in a vase, but

I'm afraid of having too many.

So where can you be the flower coordinator? And anybody here wants to bring flowers next week? Why don't you talk to Diane, and let's not get more than

you know, maybe 10

Have something

to eat. I don't know, you know, there's be very nice to have flowers and, and,

and,

and you know everything that we have and I we actually almost no planning for this event.

So

when the person who presents Center has come down to do the drumming for us as well, when's the rehearsal going to be? Because of this incident, are they embarrassed every ceremony? They do because it's so complex. I said, I said, don't worry about that. Just Just know your piece. It's I said, I said, I don't know if this is, you know, a nice thing to say or what have you. I said to her, Well, it's kind of like we're kind of like the Quakers doing a ceremony. You know, it's kind of informal, but it'll it'll happen kind of in its own way. But, but if we have a few things like people to help set up and clean up the potluck and

all those kinds of things, so

Yeah, more or less the same schedule that once we come to come back to sit

at 925 you want to be here on time because we're not going to, that's not going to be a really long sitting. We've actually very short they've used a few minutes. And then we'll start in

with the,

with the various events that we'll do.

And then it might go longer than 1045 940 11 1130 this ceremony and talking to celebration.

So, yes,

children are most welcome at 925. I, you

know, we'll see what happens. Yes,

it's fine. It's fine.

So if there's anyone who would like to help next week, with any kind of new arrangements and making it happen smoothly, and No warm, welcoming way.

It'd be good if they could talk to someone to volunteer

who would like to be the coordinator for that.

Dave, you're not so much, Courtney. I think we that's focused on. Great. So

so many thanks and