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SPEAKERS

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So I would like to tell you a story from the sutta that has to do a lot of interesting themes. It has to do with a theme of balance. How do you find balance? Which is a very interesting kind of contemporary issue for a lot of people. It also has to do with a theme or the idea of protection. How do we protect ourselves? How do we protect others? protection is a kind of a shorthand for many other things like how do we take care of each other? and ties into questions of altruism? How much do we sacrifice ourselves for the benefit of others? And how much do we take care of ourselves at the expense of others, or whatever. And the issue of protection is very important one in the suttas in ancient India, perhaps in more in ancient times when the idea of being protected now we have police I suppose to protect us. This society is relatively civil in our culture. But in many places in the world and even places in our culture, the idea of how do you protect yourself is very, very important one and then people find all kinds of different ways to find self protection and protection. So you find that Buddha talks a lot about how do you protect yourself? How do you get healthy protection. And one of the things he says repeatedly is that the practice of mindfulness is a practice of protection to a protecting yourself. loving kindness, practice of love, is also a form of protection. It safeguards ourselves a way of caring for ourselves. So this story is story. I have two acrobats in Acrobat and Acrobat asst and they go around marketplaces and do their acrobatic tricks and then they guess they have a hat or a ball. And then people will throw their coins in. And that's how they make their living. So the Acrobat, the master Acrobat tells the assistant. Okay, let's climb up on that pole. And are you calling up on the pole or I'll climb up on the pole, and you stand on my shoulders and standing on my shoulders. Will you while we're doing our tricks, you know, on top of my shoulders, you protect me in this balancing act, and I'll protect you. And then that's why we'll do our tricks. And people will be quite delighted and we'll make lots of money and the assistant says no What's different? We'll certainly should climb up on that pole and I'll get on your shoulders. But I'll protect myself up there. And you protect yourself. And by protecting our individual selves, we'll protect the other one. And, and that way, people will be delighted with our show and we'll make lots of money. So, the

so the Buddha hears about this little story. And the Buddha says, That's right. in that circumstance, the circumstance that they're in in the being acrobats. The assistant is right, that it's better to protect oneself, find one's own balance, protect one's own balance, and if one protects one's own balance, then you're protecting the other person also. I can imagine this works really well with acrobats, where the idea of balance, finding your balance is something really you find for yourself. If you're gonna it's an internal kind of thing, where's your balance? So how do you find your own balance? How do you balance on a pole? someone looking from outside maybe see you wobbling a little bit. But to really find the midpoint where you really can be balanced, is an internal movement. So when we feel inside of ourselves, we find the center of gravity and things like that. And so the Buddha said is in that circumstance, that's right. And then the Buddha went on to say,

basically, Korea in translating the situation to people who practice, do manette minute meditation practice, spiritual practice, Buddhist practice and he says, I will protect myself. If you're interested in protecting yourself, then you should establish the four foundations of mindfulness. Practice the four foundations of mindfulness, which is the practice of mindfulness that we do here. So if you want to protect yourself, protect yourself. Then you pay attention to your body, which is the first foundation to mindfulness. You live in your body, you live through your body, you be careful with your body, not just simply in terms of getting enough exercise and eating good food. But you pay very careful attention to the movement within our body of our motivations or impulses or reactivity or emotions. We pay attention to the balance within our own body. We pay attention to the feeling tone, upon which so much also arises. We pay attention to our mental state, we pay to pay attention to the Dharma is to the inner processes that come into play, that either cloud the mind so we can see properly or eliminate the mind so we can see properly. We pay attention to these things and into paying paying attention to these things, we find our inner balance. So here we're translating this idea of the acrobats to ourselves, which works very well, I think because spiritual balance or deep inner balance for ourselves is something we have to take responsibility for ourselves. You can't expect someone else to find that balance for yourself. And see to find it in yourself. Unless, of course, you're so imbalanced. And you don't know how to find it for yourself, that you only find the balance by leaning against someone else. You know, they're not one way of getting a balance. Of course, if you're always leaning like this, then if you find someone else that believes the opposite direction, then you're balanced. But it's not really a very, very stable balance. Because if this person goes away, after all, we're doing death and dying this Friday. So when people go away, then you know, you'll follow so, but if you have this balance here, you if you find an inner balance where you're standing on your, on your own two feet very balanced in yourself, then you know, not leaning against something which is inherently unstable. And only you can find that and the Buddha suggesting you find that through the practice of awareness, by bringing the awareness within you, and paying attention to your body very deeply to your feelings, your mental states, these inner processes. Then the Buddha goes on, and he says, I will protect others. If you want to protect others. Then you should. So this is also interesting, right? So what's that? told you how to how to protect yourself? Now if you're interested in protecting others, your family, your neighbors, your society? What should you do then? What do you think the answer then is? You practice the four foundations of mindfulness And then he goes on to say, so you should establish mindfulness. Then he

goes on to say this very famous little sentence, protecting oneself. One protects others, protecting others. One protects oneself that the two are very closely connected. They're so intertwined, that they become the same thing or it can be the same thing, if we understand how to do it in a healthy way. Before I go on to read what the Buddha says about that, I'd like to make some comments about the idea of altruism taking care of other people. My impression, and I'm not really I haven't really been a student of this particular theme and Western Eastern society. But my my impression is that it doesn't really matter so much that this is true in terms of East in terms of India in terms of Western culture whatever, but I think the point can still be made.

I my impression is it is a very important or powerful strand of thought in Western culture, about the importance of being altruistic, sacrificing oneself for the well being of others. We have in the Christian tradition kind of monastic, especially a monastic like Saint Francis, coming maybe from from Jesus, the idea that you're the servant of other people. And this is such a, this is such a high value. That translates I think, a time so this idea that suppose a sacrifice yourself for the well being of others, that's really all that's really important, is helping other people. So the idea of being altruistic has a very high ideal in certain currents in western thought. And when Westerners study Buddhism or read about Buddhism, learn about it. They often try slate or interpret Buddhist teachings through that altruistic lens. And you find that often, Westerners who feel they have to sacrifice myself, I sacrifice myself for myself for the Center for the teacher for that whatever. Because somehow that's what's in their mind is kind of the whole point. And one, one very common Buddhist teaching that's taken as being a teaching for altruism is from the jataka tales, tales or the former lifetimes of the Buddha, where he's reborn as a animal, for example, or in various ways. And he sacrifices himself for the well being of some other animals by their being. So for example, he comes across the hungry lioness who's starving maybe as cubs, and you know, maybe about to starve to death. And so he cuts off parts of his own flesh, he offers his own life, let himself be killed. So this line is can can eat. And it sounds to us very altruistic. And that's how we read and interpret that kind of idea. So then I don't know much about Indian Indian culture. But I've read scholars of Indian culture, who have said that the idea of altruism, as it's understood in the West is a foreign idea in India and the idea that you would sacrifice your own welfare, for the welfare of others is somewhat of a foreign idea in that culture. I'm sure there's times that it happens. But it isn't that people aren't meant to be selfish either. But rather that the idea that one's own welfare and the welfare of others is completely intermixed, completely connected, inseparably connected from each other. So that someone who pursues spiritual Practice, like the Buddha to perfection is not being selfish. But that has been benefit to the people around them to the society into the world. I haven't heard it in recent years, but I used to hear a lot. People would say, Oh, my family, my friends are complaining to me or criticizing me. Because I meditate, that I'm being selfish. It's a self indulgent practice. You're kind of sitting with your eyes closed, and you're kind of focusing in on yourself. And that must be a very selfish thing to do. Anybody told any of you that? Know? Some people, yes. Now if you spend exactly same amount of time collecting stamps, or watching television, you probably wouldn't have been criticized the same way. But somehow with that part of our psyche, which is a part of our human behavior has to do with spirituality. If you do something which seems seemingly is kind of internal You've might get criticized for being self

indulgent, because I believe at this time to restaurant Western emphasis on spirituality involves being of service, the social gospel, in western spirituality that came out of the late 1900s was very, very important for Western psyche. And but is it self indulgent to can be self indulgent to do a meditation practice by oneself? And I certainly know, as a teacher, I certainly have recognized that in people on retreats and stuff. Occasionally I meet people who seem that the whole spiritual thrust of the Earth is narcissistic. You know, it's very self indulgent. But it's sometimes very hard to see that because there's a kind of internal focus when you do meditation practice. It's not automatically narcissistic. So we can't always see it. And sometimes it takes, you know, a few years of knowing someone say, but this looks a little bit off I can't happen that way. But the great majority, I don't think that's the case. So the

so in this law in this line of thinking, there's a very powerful verse in the Dhammapada, in the verses of the Buddha, that I think it's upset, upsetting perhaps to Westerners when initially here at the end, this is the line goes like this. Don't sacrifice your own welfare. For the welfare of others, no matter no matter how great don't sacrifice your own welfare. For others, no matter how great the others about welfare might be. So initially, that might sound like a very selfish thing to say. But I don't think at all the Buddha is implying you Shouldn't be concerned about other people's welfare and be engaged in helping other people. He's saying, well, you when you do that, don't sacrifice your own welfare in the process. And know that when the Buddha says that you have to understand that that he means the deepest spiritual welfare that you could have. What's the deepest well, who was the deepest treasure was the deepest well being, that your psyche can have for the Buddha that is awakening to become really deeply free to have the kind of experience of freedom of peace of love, that comes from deep spiritual practice. Now, why we say don't sacrifice that for other people's welfare? One reason is given by an analogy that appears in the ancient texts, if there's a group of people who are stuck in quicksand, or in the mud, and they're trying to get out of the quicksand and they tried to pull each other out. It doesn't work because If I try to pull you out in the quicksand, then I'll sink further down, then you try to pull me out and off, you know, you'll sink further down, it just doesn't work in quicksand. But if one person gets up on dry land, then that person can reach down and pull everyone else out. So that analogy is used and in classic Buddhism, to understand spiritual life, that if we're all lost in delusion, lost and in the world of desire and hate, then we don't have we're not on dry land, we don't have a sense of where our stability is our balances or our freedom is so that we can offer the greatest help for other people. So don't sacrifice your deepest welfare. For the welfare of others, no matter how great their welfare might be, because then you can't really do that work of really helping someone at the deepest ways possible. And when another way of understanding it is a way that you've all started, you've all heard of, I believe, you know, a lot of People who get engaged in the world for good intentions, and maybe it's a very good cause they're engaged in, but their motivation by which they're doing it or the emotional reactivity, but that's that they entangle with that activity. Makes it a mixed blessing that they're doing that kind of work. peacemakers who are filled with hate, you know, it kind of somehow doesn't quite jive. And sometimes, I mean, it was in the 60s in the anti war movement, the 60s, there's lots of women who report being completely discouraged by all these, you know, peace activist men, who back then were so sexist and so demeaning to the women who were involved, and how could they be? How could they, how could they even you know, how could they treat another

person the way they treated us as women in the peace movement? In the right, you know, so, you know, lots of better examples that I'm giving, I'm sure you can think of your own examples. So don't sacrifice your own welfare for others welfare no matter how great. How does that translate to people now who are upset about current affairs. It's very easy to be angry with current affairs. It's very easy to hate people out of what's happening in the world today. don't sacrifice your own welfare. Do the inner spiritual work that find your own balance, where you don't sacrifice your own well being. By becoming hateful by becoming angry by getting lost in your fear. In Buddhism, we put a very high value on doing the very careful and sometimes very difficult work, disciplined work of paying attention to our own hearts. So the well being of our own hearts that peace and love in our own hearts is not sacrificed. Because we're swept up in hate and anger and fear. It doesn't mean that we're not critical of what happens in the world. But the criticism doesn't have to translate to sacrificing the well being of our own heart. And in fact, perhaps from a Buddhist point of view, there's an unfortunate paradox or irony

in that, if we're opposing violence in the world, in our own heart, or have a violent intent, even he's not physically violent, we're still filled with hate. And we talk in ways which are not very respectful of other people. Then, you know, we're actually doing the very thing that we're criticizing other people of doing also. So you've heard that kind of argument before, I'm sure. So don't don't sacrifice your own welfare for the welfare of others, no matter how great and when you in doing that and take care of yourself, then please be helpful to other people. I've had to learn this for example, in my own family, being in though having a larger family and with families, you know, two adults and two kids One of my Achilles heels, is my sense of responsibility. So I just, you know, just whereas you definitely, it's your, if you have an erotic attachment to being responsible, right, especially when you and, and also kind of be part of that is all kind of, kind of sometimes we'll give myself to others at fault. And what I've learned in my family life is that, especially with young children, is that they're kind of like hungry ghosts. And, and it turns out that with reasonable people, it seems you could, you know, give and just there's an end to giving. But with children, it seems like there's never any end to how much our child you know, wants who wants attention or wants attention. So this idea of, you know, giving it some point, it just didn't work. And I realized that, that my own welfare was not being attended to well enough, but was very clear was as my own welfare became It was not being attended to well enough, then I wasn't actually able to be helpful to my family in the way that I really felt was appropriate also. And then when I learned to pull back and take care of myself better, or create the limits that needed to be made, it turns out that was helpful for my son. But it was also helpful because then I'm available in much, much more quality and higher quality way of responding to my family being with my family. And so the whole system works much better. When I was the kitchen manager at the monastery was a little bit different dynamic there, where it's not quite logical home is peculiar, forgive me for this and tell your story. And I was the kitchen manager and I could do everything better and everybody else in the kitchen. I've been there longer. I knew how You know, like, really good at multitasking and, and you know, I could make the soup and do three other things. In the amount of time it took me to explain to another person how to make the soup, which was very inefficient because I might as well just do it right and the three other things. And so I would, you know, run around, do all these things and they're supposed to supervise everybody else also in their jobs. And it took me about four months to learn that the whole kitchen of it

was a crew of maybe six, nine people or so maybe sometimes 1216 people in the kitchen, depending on what's going on in monastery. There's a big crew. I took me about four months, until about the end of my shift as the kitchen manager to learn that the whole kitchen ran a lot better. Everybody was a lot happier. If as the kitchen manager, I didn't do any work at all. And rather I went around and just made sure everybody else was happy. Do you need something? Can I go get the carrots from the walk in? Can I, you know, wash these dishes for you and make a little bit easier for me. And I just made sure everybody else's job went smoothly. And that was a hard lesson for me to learn. So how do we take care of ourselves? How do we take care of others by taking care of ourselves? And how do we take care of ourselves by taking care of others? So that's the question the Buddha wants to answer next in the story. And how is it that protecting oneself when protects others? And then he explains by the pursuit, development and cultivation of the four foundations of mindfulness. So with as we've talked about already, and then how is it that protecting others one protects oneself by patient harmlessness loving kindness and compassion it is in such a way that we're protecting others when protects oneself

what's interesting about patience happiness, loving kindness and sim sim and compassion is that these are all internal movements within ourselves their emotional or responses, motivational responses, intentions we have within ourselves towards others. It's not practical things he doesn't say, I put you should protect your protect others by you know, hiring bodyguards for them, you know, or you should protect, protect others by and, you know, insisting that they wear seatbelts. I mean that you should do those things, I suppose, with seat belts, at least. But he he saying the way you protect others is through something that arises within yourself. So, it's some finding a balance yourself finding your own capacity is very important here. And you don't find the healthy way the movement for harmlessness patience, loving kindness, compassion, through being centered, balanced at peace with yourself in some way to finding this place here. Otherwise, if you if you're not balanced or centered on yourself, it's too easy for the compassion, we have to be a fragile compassion to be assured that we should do to be a forced ideal that we put ourselves into, as opposed to something that arises naturally out of, you know, the goodness of our own hearts. So, in finding these things, harmlessness patience, loving kindness and compassion within ourselves, and then living that way, extending that to others. We're protecting them at least from ourselves, right? And how many times in your life, you know, looking back, do you wish you would have protected someone from yourself? It's not not to be, you know, it's pretty good. And then in protecting others that way, you also protect yourself. If you extend these good qualities to other people. Other people will treat you better. Chances are the tendency in this world is that if you meet other people with love with patients with non harming, that they'll treat you in return different way. There's no there's no guarantee. But it seems like that's the kind of way in which society tends to operate the most not just society, but I suspect all nations, if all nations practice compassion, loving kindness norming and when it goes for, that, patients probably the world it's the whole world will respond in different way.

So are there ways that you sacrifice yourself for the well being of others, which is not so healthy? Or the ways in which you can take care of yourself? It's actually helpful for helping you take care of other people. That's really the question here. And then the suggestion from the Buddha at least is that the

practice of mindfulness is one of the key ways of finding this way of being balanced. Only you could find your own balance that's healthy and reliable. And so if only you can do it, you have to have at least at least have the self awareness to notice when you're imbalanced and notice when you're balanced, if you're gonna take responsibility for that.

And the last thing I'll say is that Lesson I've also learned from my family life is that the family life changed how much freedom I had to do whatever I wanted to do with children, you know, sleeping through the night and other things. And so it required a lot of letting go. And letting go is a very central element of Buddha spirituality. The deepest developments of Buddha spirituality come from very deep, letting go. renunciation is a high ideal in the Buddhist tradition. Certain kinds of renunciation, letting go. What I learned is that, letting go only works if letting go brings joy. And there were times where I let go and there was reason Or I got grumpy or whatever. And that's what I came to understand is that then my task of mindfulness, the way to protect myself and to protect others, was to bring the attention in and explore why is it I wasn't didn't joy wasn't born within me, when I let go, maybe it was inappropriate, let go of those things. I shouldn't have let go in the first place. Or perhaps there was something I was still holding on to a different form different nature. What was it? What is it I really had to let go of in my heart, so that in letting go of x, I could find joy and happiness and peace. Part of what I've learned through meditation practice, is that through letting go in a deep way, there is

it's as if,

in the core of our psyche, peace and happiness that requires Nothing. So if I'm always needing something or wanting something or demanding something from my life I haven't, you know, then it tends to blind me or mask that deep inner at homeless. So because of that lesson, the idea of Oh, letting go only works if there's joy in it, can I find the joy that's possible? Because I know that it's possible to find joy, with needing nothing. Something like that. So all this is supposed to be, you know, trying to exemplify this idea of protecting self, we protect others and protecting others, we protect ourselves. So maybe that's enough for today. And you have any comments or questions? Yes.

You're talking about examples of

protecting yourself because

the western psyche an example in my mind, so that seems odd first time I see

for yourself first

and it's kind of obvious why.

Great, so they so here that's an example of being on the airplane. People outside couldn't hear in the outer room. So this example of the airplanes it's first seemed odd, but then it became obvious to see that the instructions are put the oxygen mask on yourself before doing the children. Especially the children first, right,

children. Yeah, that's a phone Are you Do looking at your own new start is very common in, in psychology and advice they give couples who do have children, because they forget about the marriage and the marriage both tech aspects of child but even in

the Muslim in the Jewish religion, you know there's Command or Control will give a certain percentage of money away. And the scholars and both groups will point out that percentage you shouldn't give everything away and give everything away that you couldn't be by giving up for yourself have a happy, comfortable lifestyle and you continue to do so it's kind of it's the universal, wise thing to do

is please

listen to these examples.

The fruit tree which only gives fruit after the ruse

received the nutrients

great, lovely. Yes.

of taking care of yourself and

the idea of setting an example of somebody else, because when you try to set an example to kind of demand something of somebody else seeing my knife

my use and the way I was raised

you kind of set example, example yourself.

Went to school, taking classes, but in doing South Asia, kind of the expect somebody else to do the same thing. And I have letting go. Great.

Great. That's a great, great point. Yeah, it's very dangerous to, to this idea of setting the example with the expectation that that example will know, other people will follow it. And it's a little bit maybe presumptuous to, to kind of expect someone. But there's example and there's modeling. So a lot of

people give give us a device to see as parents, they say, the way you teach children values is you model behavior, as it works better than and so I think modeling is one way. But I think the idea of protecting oneself take care of oneself. There's other ways in which that benefit other ways that benefits other people. Besides being an example, so if you take care of yourself, then perhaps you can stay calm in a situation that otherwise you would have been agitated. And by being calm, you can see what the right thing is to do to help the other person in a desperate situation. The what comes to mind right now is not a very good example. But when I was living at Green Gulch there was this little problem with once when I was there with little fires got started, we didn't know how. And one day I was coming out of the barn and thing was a dark and I saw a little spark of flame up in the hillside. And, and it required you know, because of the history, a little fires, it's doing something right away. And so I did something right away and people responded accordingly, it turned out someone was just Some very responsible person was just someplace up there having a cigarette or something. But it wasn't, it wasn't anything dangerous. But later I was told by people that I had gotten too agitated. I mean, the way they hadn't been useful for the whole situation I got very excited oh my god do something. And, and, you know, it helps would have helped everyone if I'd stayed calmer in that situation. So it's not just a matter of providing an example. It's also in protecting oneself was also then responsive to the situation around one in wiser ways. That's it. Okay. So I saw your head, yes.

giving to others, they got themselves. So anyway, We'll be

seeing the film about boy,

the British actor

who's very, very shallow, extremely self centered,

but somehow developed a relationship with a kid. And all of a sudden he gave himself not consciously to do so. But it gave yourself self esteem into his child. And in doing that, he found more happiness and joy himself. And so

if we have to be

great, great example. You know, I think that there's so much diversity in many different ways in which people develop a need to develop in ways in which people get imbalanced In the story here, the Buddhist comments on the acrobats, and he says in that so in that situation, the Assistant was right. That the way we protect each other were protect you is by protecting myself by finding my own balance is very particular says in that in that particular situation, that there's method there. And, and I certainly have met people who have, you know, known people in my capacity as a teacher, who I felt were so lost to themselves and so something like maybe this person, the movie, that I encourage them to go out and find work or do something that takes them that was actually giving involved in other

people because that's where the important developed personal development will happen and find joy and connectedness and many of the things that need to be found. So, I wouldn't want to say there's only one way but but you know, I think I believe this is a very important principle and even the singlish actor if he found in this movie that you know, even though he might become happy through helping other people is a principle. Once you find balance that way, he probably still needs to take care of himself in the way that we've been talking about today. So I love that I love that example and I think it's a very profound for some people to find themselves through service and out around Yeah.

A larger role and they give their all

for whatever it is it's a job or whatever domestic situation

eventually makes people around very uncomfortable.

However, they never requested that this person get into a situation

margin

relationships this type of

things can get when you don't take care of your own basic needs. They can be yes.

Yeah. Yes.

lever a strong

ideal of being crucified with Christ.

And even as a teenager, very devout about that

in for myself I found that that had to complete Huge because

I found that a very deep level that I cannot get away when I didn't have in the first place. And

it also kind of implied that there was a self finite self that could be, you know, they can be gone and there wasn't a lot of responsibility for personal discovery in that was more about aiming for something outside of yourself and transition that I've gone through as an adult. And why is that you teach really are meaningful to me is it kind of turns out on a sphere and it says, I'm an infinite and if I can take responsibility for who I am and in my all of these infinities

and allow those to live I have even more to give that if undeveloped person self that I thought had to die. That's it.

It completely changes the parameters for living. Not only does it freed me as an individual to continue a deep, deep exploration and the taking of responsibility and discovery, but it also there are those moments when I have the choice to

to give where it really does push, it's, you know, can I give this and there isn't that pattern that I might lose myself because I'm doing all this work discovering a greater self. And so the thing that is truly genuine. Are you talking about the resentment or the terror of the loss of self, it's just,

oh, I can lose myself.

I can lose myself, you know, for five minutes. Okay, there's a greater

beautiful, beautifully said. Thank you. by

example, come up to me last week that I hadn't been here in a while. And I was really looking forward to coming here last Sunday and my husband's been traveling a lot and I have to do this for myself, just so I made that understood.

One of the

message you'll need to get yourself home.

So I was literally leaving at nine o'clock

and it was my daughter asleep over

crying hysterically that she found herself in this pretty shaves it to her very shameful place and she was hysterical. And I just, you know, ran over. And at other times in my life, I would have felt very resentful. She came home and I was there for her. And she was just exaggerating for her it was just a horrible situation. And what I noticed was I felt such joy that I had the opportunity to be there for her because teenagers don't want to hear that.

She wanted to close by and then she apologized because she knew what she

might be able to come here. And I just completely let that go. You know, it didn't matter. So and then I thought more about it. Well, I took it to myself in other ways, but this is such an important role. That when something like that comes up, you let other things fall off.

Last one

and the relationship between

Don't do other Don't do it. Don't do unto others as you would have them do unto you. You say a little bit more.

Nothing comes to mind to me if that's what you're hoping to meet it comment on, but yeah. Anybody have any comments on the golden rule and yes.

I feel like we're being somewhat self congratulatory

this morning. He said again, look,

I'm feeling

as a member of the saga, we're being a bit self congratulatory. You Did even once said to another level, which is more of a social level

in suggested that there was a very strong strand

built into the culture of the United States of altruism. And I generally really question that, particularly in this entrepreneurial Valley, in which what you're saying is easily distorted into, take care of myself, and it will trickle down.

And

in many ways the country was founded on a freedom from not a freedom, freedom from things so that you are a rugged individualists to do it and want it translated as a sink as a single example as a country's into being the richest country. In the world, and the only Western democracy that doesn't look at healthcare as a right for everybody. And that's justified in all kinds of ways, in very gently alluded to how we, perhaps are being perceived by the rest of the world today and I took that to the, the inverse of the compassionate, generous country, because that is not how we are perceived in the rest of the world. We have the most power of any country in the history of the world. And we have almost no influence in the world. So translating the what you say, which is so clear on a interpersonal level or on a family level, to a broader societal level, I think it's an absolutely challenge to all of us and

that means Not Han, it always reminds us that we are our government. And I think that there's a real disconnect between what we're feeling about our personal lives and interactions in this room. And how that's perceived by the rest of the world.

Beautiful, I think it's great what you said. And I think that the anybody, I believe anybody who's sensitive to the conditions in the world, whether it's to family or local society, the wider society will understand that tremendous, almost imperative for letting go or for least for you know, and, and then the task is how to let go in such a way that it enriches us in a way that because Karen was talking about how do we let go and you know, live a life that is more in harmony with the needs of the wider society. In a way that also provides joy for us rather than resentment and all that that's really the task. And I think, the I'm fine to the fact that the Four Noble Truths which are really the central teachings of the Buddha, have no pronouns connected to them. So it doesn't say, you know, I suffer, you know, you know, or you suffer, just no pleasure suffering exists. And, and how I take that is that we should be sensitive to suffering in all directions, not just inside of here. And there's a certain kind of suffering that arises, if it's if, if our attention is fixated, just on ourselves, that self is a kind of suffering and pain. And that once we kind of lose the pronouns, then we've become sensitive to the suffering in all directions. If we're only aware of the suffering externally and not here, then it's imbalanced also. So I like to think of Buddhism urging people to be not self centered, not other centered. But what I call, I think a lot of people have called the so called stupid situation centered. In wire like situation centered is implies you connected to the whole situation. But the center of the situation for any individual person, guess where it is? It's right here. So your awareness starts here. And then it radiates out from here, with no boundaries inside or out. And then as you I think, one of the points you're making is that, like, are these like two that I heard for us is that the world, especially in a country like ours, in a society like ours, that often we're just often were required to let go, if we're sensitive to need around us, like Bonnie had to let go because of her teenage daughter. And that's what was required that time. And different people different color, different evaluations of where the boundaries of that letting go will be. But I think it's really essential that You know that we tune in to the world around us, and then learn how to live in ways that are compassionate and kind. And if it requires letting go, that we learn to do that in a way that's healthy.

So my hope as you leave this talk today is that you don't leave with answers but you leave with you leave with prime to think more deeply about all these kind of topics. And so may you all think about this for the week. Thank you.