

# 2003-04-07: The Paramis

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

develop, generosity, people, compassion, practice, qualities, person, skillful means, bodhisattva path, liberation, life, virtue, strength, meditation, tradition, part, connected, enlightenment, happy, renunciation

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

As we come to the end of this sitting, I'd like to offer you contemplative reflection to include as part of the city. If there are some small adjustments in your posture you'd like to make to be more comfortable, it's fine to do.

And this is a very simple practice. I'm going to list go through a list of 10 qualities and virtues or ideals that are highly revered in all Buddhist traditions. And as you hear the concept, take it in as if it's a quality you have Potential you have a quality of your own. So it's not something you have to live up to so much just to recognize even if it's a very small amount. It's something that's within you. A reminder or perhaps it evokes something about this quality in you. And after I've said the word of silence for a little bit and if little bit use when Repeat the word to yourself and seeing what bubbles up, seeing what parts of yourself are touched, generosity

virtue, integrity

letting go.

Wisdom

effort

Patience,

determination

truthfulness

loving kindness

equinix

so

what I'm planning to do today could be called an exercise in theology. In Buddhist theology, and this kind of thing, it's their own sense that it's a Buddhist theory, or it's an attempt to try to construct the kind of Buddhist theory. And probably most of you would never want to come to a talk Buddhist theology. But I thought, to be honest about what I'm doing to tell you, this is what I'm doing, I suppose to you guys assuming that here, this is the way I was taught by my teachers, and this has been we've been this way since the time of the Buddha. And so it's really you know, it's, it's I've tried to take in a lot of the teachings I've heard a lot of different elements of, of the practice I was introduced to and the texts and Buddhism and history and ideas. And so it's kind of attempt to synthesize them or pull them together and hopefully what what is an interesting way and useful way for all of us and so, I want to Start by telling a story that I've heard about the Dalai Lama. I've heard it now a few times. I wasn't there. So I don't know. And but the story was, I think it was in Los Angeles. And it was one of these really big conventions conferences. I'm getting to that list, by the way that you recited this is you know, so I guess you're wondering what happened to that. Okay, so there was a spirit as big, big gatherings with, you know, thousands of people listening the Dalai Lama. And I guess at the end of it to the end of the one day or the end of the week or something, there was a chance to ask him questions. And I don't know if people stood up and asked the questions. They wrote out the questions by paper and he'd read them. And someone asked him the question, what is the quickest way to enlightenment? And he didn't answer right away. And as I was told, he was just quiet. For a long time, and as he was told, he started crying. And then he said something like, here in America, people are in such a hurry. They want enlightenment, they want the goods, they want everything right away. They want it tomorrow, they want it today. You should evaluate your practice. You shouldn't even begin evaluating your spiritual practice until you've been practicing for 10 years or 20 years. Part of the context where the Dalai Lama is that if you know if you fall if you know in the in his understanding of his what he's been doing through his many lifetimes, because he believes in many lifetimes, he's been engaged in spiritual practice. Probably four more lifetimes there ends on this planet. You ask him what's the quickest way? You know, he's been in it for the long haul for a long, long time. And I was really touched by this story I heard that he cried when you hear this person who wanted the quickest way. So reasonable question, you have lots of teachers who say this is the quickest way and you know why waste time. But what's lost in that is that perhaps, there is one aspect of spiritual life, which involves long periods of time for the long haul. And part of it is the development of our character or develop of our inner potentials and qualities. I had no idea when I started Buddhist practice, that character was important, or that we had there were all these inner qualities inner potentials that could be could be

developed and that developing them provide A very important foundation for deepening one's spiritual life. And, you know, I was kind of in a sense, we took me a character, like a character of my early approach was, you know, you know, enlightenment or bust, you know, just straight to the, you know, the deep stuff, and the most profound things now. And

and what happened was kind of behind the scenes when I wasn't looking. I was doing, you know, I was doing my practice, kind of unbeknownst to me, was the practice of developing various qualities in me. And I wouldn't I didn't come to develop these qualities but in retrospect, I realized a number of things were being developed. First thing I really realized in retrospect was compassion. I had no interest in in compassion when I started my, my Zen practice. I didn't you know, it wasn't really in my vocabulary. I knew what it was kind of, but I didn't use it, you know. And, and, but I was being compassionate. By the whole practice experience if I was involved in meditation and everything, and it really opened my heart in a dramatic way. I also developed a sense of discipline, a sense of discipline and determination resolve. And I didn't realize that I was doing that. It just that was kind of, you know, you had to wake up every morning early and show up in the meditation hall and, you know, there's all kinds of things you have to kind of hang in there for and, or I would sit there with pain, I'd have physical pain when I sat, and then just not to not to move or run away, whatever, when had the pain took some kind of inner strength. I was really, that could a part of me was really weak when I started. But you know, very, very slowly, that kind of muscle got stronger and stronger, the resolve dedication to patience, the insight, the self understanding that it took to really stay there with pain and not cave into it. Never once. I think it was my first or second session and to last sitting of the evening. And the way it was set up was that that's sitting didn't end until the abbot came back into the meditation hall and did a little ritual. And he was busy to giving interviews and that maybe was a long interview. So it was, you know, rather than being the usual usual 40 minutes sitting, it was a really long sitting, like was going on and on and I was, you know, waiting, and then you're not supposed to move at all. It's like, you know, it's like, you know, to say it's the law is to smile. It's like, you know, you don't move. So, you know, I was sitting there and not moving and it was so painful. And you know, please come please come and he wouldn't come you and come and just sitting there was pain. And I don't know how long it lasted, but at some point caved in. And then he walked through the door. And there I was, you know, a mess there. But anyway, slowly that's kind of his strengths developed and I wasn't thinking about that was going on. But that was kind of the side effect of always going on.

If you go to Burma or Thailand, especially in Burma, I heard this not quite as much in Thailand. But there is an idea that a person can only go as far in the spiritual practice, as their developed character allows them to, as a character development allows them to use inner strength, if there is sufficient inner strength to go with certain depth and practice certain maturity and practice. And if some person came to kind of plateau in their meditation practice, and you kind of wouldn't go any farther. The teachers would say, oh, that person hasn't been develop these inner strength essential qualities and, and personas, you basically should go out and develop those qualities. And sometimes they'd say, Well, those qualities will get developed as a continued meditation practice is kind of a side effect. But sometimes they would tell you, you should go out into the world and develop those qualities by the

kind of activities that actually develops them and then come back. So these qualities are a list of 10. And the word that's used to describe them is the Param ease in Pali. Some of you might be more familiar with a Sanskrit word, which is the part of meet us. And there's different lists of them. There's six parties and attend parties to power meters, six power meters. The word power meter, usually in part is usually translated as perfections. It's because you develop these qualities to the perfect state or these The qualities that perfect the human being perfect the person different ways in which is described and the Pali pāramīs comes much closer comes from the root perfect, the Sanskrit paramita. It has a little different etymology, it has that meaning a para means other. And here it means the other shore. And it de is understood to mean to go. So to go to the other shore, to cross to the other shore, those qualities that take you across the shore cross the flood of samsara, the flood of greed, hate and delusion, to this floor, the shore of liberation. So, these are the qualities that help you take your cradle that will take you across the shore, the boat, the raft that'll give you the strength to pass it pass across. And usually these parties are parameters are associated with the Bodhisattva path in Buddhism, the Bodhisattva path is that path, which leads a person to becoming a Buddha. And it's considered to be very, very, you need a lot of spiritual maturation, you need a lot of these character building these straightener strengths in order to be primed in order to become a Buddha. So it's usually associated with the Bodhisattva path. But in the tera, vaada tradition. It's at some point, it became understood that even for people who are not on a bodhisattva path, we're not trying to become Buddhists for themselves. But we're basically just trying to become, you know, ordinary and right enlightened people.

They also needed to have a certain measure of these, these parameters developed. They didn't have to develop the same degree as someone trying to become a Buddha, but they had to be present and that's why they would say, if there weren't enough of these present for you yourself you should go out and develop those or they can happen together in tandem, your meditation practice your it can go together with doing other practices and develop these qualities. Now it gets more interesting and this is where the this is all what I've said now, it's not my theology. But now the next one kind of is now letting you know, you know where I'm kind of going off the deep end or is Well, not exactly but so the sorry, that is always caveats probably doesn't help to talk. The so the so there's 10 parties in the, in the Pali tradition in our tradition, and they're the ones I listed at the end of the talk. They are generosity. virtue. I said letting go in the meditation Actually the word is renunciation. But I didn't want to frighten you. You know, you know, in meditation, you know, it's kind of like you have to just like, you warn people before they see a movie that has a lot of violence in it, you know. So relaxation is kind of difficult word for Westerners. So I said letting go, that's easier. So, generosity, virtue, pronunciation, wisdom, effort, patience, determination, truthfulness, loving kindness, and equanimity. So there are different strengths. And I find it very useful when you have these kind of lists in Buddhism, especially ideals like this is not to take the mind as a burden, like a should, so much, oh, not to live up to this or now, you know, just makes my life so complicated, so long list of things and there's the Four Noble Truths and the five faculties Factors awakening and boy, but rather to take them as something that you already have something you're already doing. And it might be just a little teeny itty bitty corner of your heart where that's going on. But take it from that point of view already doing it rather than something

you have to impose from the outside. And once you can find where you're already part of who you are, then try to promote it into develop that and encourage it, because one of the things that said in Buddhism is that paying attention bringing attention to food of attention and awareness to your wholesome qualities, feeds them develops. So if you know to look at the lookout for equanimity or patience and devalue it, then actually you strengthen that patience much more than if you didn't value it. So it said in the turrett Theravada tradition, that these qualities, generosity, virtue and so forth which are common to many people are only become Panis parameters when they're joined together with compassion, and skillful means. So, it could be very generous for all kinds of motivations, but it doesn't become a part of me. Unless part of the motivation for the act of generosity is that is compassion. Some are concerned compassionate concern for yourself and for others. And it doesn't become a part of me. generosity doesn't move over and become a part of me. Unless it's also connected to what's called skillful means, which is in a terrible tradition means it's used it's being done and used, or in acted on or live by or being expressed in order for the purposes of Becoming liberated. So a person can be generous for all kinds of reasons again, but it isn't necessarily as a way of helping them become liberated, necessarily an expression of compassion and compassionate concern for people around around you. So, the foundation, one of the, in order to create a foundation that supports spiritual practice, we develop these qualities, or were born with them that some teachers would say, you know, you you had did you did a lot of this work in a past life. And so some people are born with him and he was lucky that way or whatever. And, but whatever reasons, you know,

some people have, you know, or have these more than others, but, but in order to develop them, if we're going to develop them, we have to understand how they're connected to Compassion and skillful means. That means, and this is the theology part. That means that in order for us to develop our practice, whether we're on the Bodhisattva path, or we're on the ordinary kind of ordinary kind of people kind of enlightenment pass, like us, most of us, I suppose that there has to be some connection to compassion, there has to be some connection to liberation, that that liberation and compassion helped create the foundation, a strong foundation for letting us plunge into the depths of a spiritual life, which sometimes can be quite frightening, quite disorienting, because it can be so radically different from how we usually understand with ourselves and the world around us. And it requires a lot of fortitude in order to really follow through in a persistent way to hang in there like Dalai Lama. Thanks for never 1020 years or lifetimes or whatever, in order to have the strength to stay in there the patients have the equanimity have the honesty, to kind of stay in there and work with it day after day. And I am so in awe. Once I became a teacher and I'd been teacher long enough to have kind of know people know have students kind of who I knew their practice over, you know, over many years, I had become so in awe of how these practitioners change and grow and develop and the power of the practice and you know, the inner strength and the aspiration, the strength of intention, the strength of wisdom and understanding and compassion, that, you know, that development sometimes you know, it's really remarkable given where people start You know in Vegas you know how you know how wonderful it is

it's so the classic treatise on the Army's explains that generosity is offered as the first one. Because it's the easiest to do. And, you know, just a matter of physically giving something to someone, maybe, for example, or smiling, giving someone a smile. And I can't do I can do very little, my new baby who's now five months old, you know, you can do the state standard things, but to really kind of see, you know, make him really happy. You know, if I change the diapers doesn't necessarily make him you know, notice that he's particularly happy just stops crying. But if I can smile really nicely and make a fool of myself, and he smiles, and I give him my smile and he smiles. It's one of the few things I can actually do for him, you know, as a to make him happy.

And I believe that one of my beliefs or my theologies is that it's impossible to continue in Buddhist practice after a certain point. Unless a person feels that practice is connected to other people, you're doing it for the sake of other people also. And a person can go along for years quite well in practice. Without any concern, you know that their practice is really going to help other people's No need. There's no moral imperative, you have to do this. But at some point, you come to a place a point where if you're going to continue any further, you'd only do it if you felt that your practice was connected. To the welfare of others, otherwise you would simply wouldn't continue. And there are people who take the practice quite far. At some point feel satisfied. And then we'll, you know, stop the practice being enlightened retirement.

So I'm really happy with the idea they said, The Theravada tradition. These parts of it, understand that how intimately practices connected to compassion. Think of that. Does that sound like sound like a burden? Does it inspire you and make you happy? Or what do you think of this concept of so far? like to hear from you before I continue especially skillful means means that skillful means means different things in different Buddhist traditions in the Theravada tradition, skillful means are those inner qualities and sometimes understood inner practices but qualities that you have that lead a person to liberation. Those are the skillful means that you have as a skillful quality, skillful, Dhamma. skillful. So, in being generous, if you feel your generosity is connected to your aspiration for liberation, to be free of all clinging, then there's skillful means conjoined with the generosity. But the person can be generous. Lots of people are generous. It's really inspiring to see how many people are generous, you know, a wonderful, many people, many, many people are generous. It never occurred to them, that they're being generous. A part of the generosity is part of a practice. It's part of the, in the context of their own liberation. They're just doing it because it's, you know, good thing to do like Their parents told them to do a good thing or whatever. So it means you have to have a you have to have some understanding of what liberation means. And then you have to some sense that that this practice of generosity is supporting that are connected to it or enhancing that direction that possibility. It's not so not so difficult to do that with generosity. Because one of the classic definitions of liberation is that it's freedom from all clinging. Absolutely every poor thing you can cling to. And in order to give something away to someone, there has to be some relinquishment of your attachments to it. So you're kind of exercising that could be exercising that in the act of generosity.



Yeah, so it's part of an intentional life where you actually this is your you've reflected on it your intention, you developed it and after a while, becomes kind of second nature, but there's somewhere there's some momentum And you set the momentum in motion, where this is the orientation that your practice is about.

Well, again renunciation can seem very, very closely connected to freedom from clinging because renunciation means you, you let go of something. But renunciation has, I think has more than just letting go of something. Because you know, giving means you give something is you know pronounce renunciation means you're just like giving something to someone you just letting go of you're clinging to it. Part of renunciation is to realize that there are a lot of worthwhile things to do in life. And one human being can't do the ball. And so if you really want to do one thing, well, you're gonna have to renounce some things, you know, at least temporarily, in order to really follow through. And, you know, he's pretty self self too thin. You can't really get the momentum going, the charge going to really, you know, if you want to learn play the guitar. And you pick up the car, the guitar, you know, once a month, and strum it for you know, 20 minutes. And then you do, but you have a lot of other hobbies you do like that. And every once a month you pick them up, you're not really gonna develop the momentum and your fingers and the coordination and the sense of music and all that it takes to really learn the guitar, you have to have some ongoing momentum building. And so you need to practice maybe every day. So same thing with a spiritual life. So you need to have that if you really want to let it take the practice as far as it can go with you. You have to some real dedication, you can do it enough so you can feel that you know, that it's working within you, you're working it, it's working you and you kind of keep you keeping the fire a little bit going. In order to do that. I think for most people, it takes not everyone but it takes some degree of renunciation especially this modern life that many people live, where there's, you know, so many options and so many things we feel like we need to do to be fulfilled. I think if some kind of enunciation is necessary, and we do that temporarily, but go on Retreat, you know, 10 days, you're not asked to do this, but you come there and you know, I didn't know I was asked to do that. But for example you're asked to be celibate. So celibacy is one of the classic forms renunciation you go to, you know, spirit rock state of the art meditation center, it's built like the Hilton. And you show up and you told to be celibate for 10 days, and so, it is a so you give up also you renounce spirit rock and in retreats for example, you give out you renounce temporarily, social speech, most most forms of speaks kind of renounced for the benefits of going you know, that silence can give you so the organization usually has a trade off, where you really understand how we are announcing this particular thing is helpful for a goal that you have in mind. You don't renounce because you're an ascetic and just you're gonna beat yourself up and some idea that you're pure person because you're in I don't think that that's a Buddhist idea that you attain moral purity by just, you know, renouncing things. But you're announced because it's helpful and conducive for the path of liberation. Yeah.

My motivation

certainly

in terms of Chico State

that's a big topic. You know, what is enlightenment and liberation but I think your your motivation with your is beautiful. So I'm quite content with that. And, and rather than looking for me to, you know, to say what the tradition would judge you You know the connection. I just encourage you if if to look and see, do you feel a connection? Is your attainment of non duality supported by the cultivation of these inner strengths? There's a wonderful story and if so wonderful, but in Irving Yolanda's book loves executioner. And I think it's a first story in there. He is a story of him working with clients. He's a psychotherapist here in the peninsula. And so it's kind of true accounts cases of his client. He's working with his clients. And, and he works somehow he is working with a woman. But what the story is that there's a another therapist who's gone off and on a Vipassana retreat in India 10 day retreat and has come back from this very powerful retreat with not feeling the usual do Listen between self and other. And so this therapist then feels tremendous empathy and care for this very lonely guy clear story, but something like this, this very lonely, elderly widow. And so his professional boundaries between how you help such a person became rather fuzzy. And they had a romantic relationship, I think story, so but it happened to me, right. And so she comes, she comes to urban Yolande for help because you know this, that's a very traumatic thing to have happened and your therapist in romantic relationship with you. And so, you know, you're being kind of helps him out, but it's an example of a certain kind of, you know, he probably attained something, something of significance, but he didn't have the support and the understanding the wisdom to hold that non dualistic or you know, falling away of the sharp divide between self and other that can happen it's very beautiful to have that happen. But if it happens without some sense of integrity and virtue and honesty and loving kindness and a lot of other qualities, it can be very dangerous. So you're not attained complete non duality until you're ready for are sick Yes. So the way I was hearing you describe the promise, passion.

Those are sort of avenues for

executing

right so as a person can look for opportunities to develop those and some people not. So this is interesting because in practice is like generosity and virtue in and of themselves. Important foundations for the Buddhist spiritual life. But, so you can, it certainly helps us to do them. But if you understand in doing them that they're connected to your compassionate concern, then you're also developing the armies, which is kind of different kind of strength, or maybe a different degree, you're I don't know exactly how it works. So that rather than simply you're developing ordinary generosity, and the benefits that come from that, you're getting a whole other category of benefit. In addition, when you understand what you're doing is connected to compassionate concern.



almost expected, I hadn't heard the problems before. I expect to hear compassion listed as one of them, but not as sort of overriding

my brain. I mean, I could imagine that

wisdom

could be placed on us, as you stated sort of compassion that you can

Compassion as

I guess is a compassionate skillful means is a part of each one. So it's kind of presupposed it's kind of the foundation for the Army's we're doing the Army's so that has to be there first.

Yeah and it's some people will say that all the all develop Anyone want one of them completely the others follow. So, there are all kinds of things a hologram are kind of all kind of interconnected that way. And even some people will say you know, that if you simply sit wholeheartedly, in that wholehearted sitting you feel you fulfill all of them. So you don't have to actually do anything you know, to fill them. And, and some, some some classic text say, all you need to do is cultivate the perfect have insight. And the other party's parameters follow that friction, the wisdom that follows from that. And so they're just kind of singular approach. And, and certainly certainly valid. But I think that it's also important to, I think it's useful to understand the principle what's going on here to appreciate it. So just so you can be aware of it and notice these things in oneself. And then to think about, you know, would it be useful would be wise to spend some time developing some of these, I feel like for myself that one of my strengths in practice has been my resolve my capacity for resolve. For example, I don't think of myself as someone who has natural capacity for concentration. And I've developed a lot of concentration over the years and I can get concentrated now clearly well, but it wasn't like, you know, something that came naturally to me like some I know practitioners, just like a natural this comes to them naturally. But what has come to what I have is a strength of resolve. And so that resolve carries me into the concentrated state. You know, that's what my strength is. In the, but I can imagine someone noticing and maybe they don't have a lot of resolve, you know, and I look at some practitioners and wish they had more resolve. And so they can say, well, let's let's, let's talk about that let's talk about the lack of resolve and let's talk about ways that you can develop that and are the healthy ways of developing that and having that level of determination. And you know, sticking to sticking with something and really seeing it through. I know some people I had one friend of mine, who had a very, very hard time in her cycle, personal life and she was very dedicated practitioner, and her Buddhist teacher gave her the practice of generosity. And she thrived with it. She didn't really sit very much for a long time she's practiced generosity, she was for opportunities to be generous, and over time that provided a sense of inner well being inner strength, a lot of things in our understanding a lot of things came with her through the is the practice of generosity. And it created a foundation, which

later she was able to go further and practice. So, you know, some people, maybe it's a virtue. And I beat plenty of people for not that often but for whom virtue is rather lacks. And I'm not usually inclined to be moralistic about such things. But I do recognize how a lacks moral life will put a limitation on how far person can go in their spiritual life. So it's not a moralistic issue, but rather pragmatic one. And so I really wish this to people to kind of clean up their act for the sake of deepening your spiritual life. So they work on that part of me for a while. And if they work on that part of me of cleaning up their life, their integrity, then and they also feel doing it for the sake of others. So much better. They don't they still good, we still cheer them on. But it's not a parent meeting. Yes, Bill.

generosity seems to me that my life to some extent, has been my personal detriment. I tend to be over.

So one of the armies that is important then is also wisdom. So it could also lead up on the generosity thing for a while and develop wisdom.

list is the one that seems a little confusing to me. And I think it's a semantic problem. Our cultural semantic

virtue

virtue in the West, in the Judeo Christian context.

I think there are 774

If you say virtue, is there another word for which this translates

the word the word in Pali is sila. And sila is sometimes translated as ethics. Sometimes its virtue, integrity, some, you know when it's okay. Sometimes Sometimes inappropriate is called precepts, but I think it's more of an inner quality. So virtue or, or, or ethics. And

one of the seven virtues in the Judeo Christian is generosity, great. Peace. I can't remember them. It's been. It's been 30 years since I've studied.

So Plato. Let's talk about the Greek tradition, Plato apparently said that if a, if all things are equal between two people, they have the same conditions in their life and same experiences and all kinds and all things are equal. The one who is just will be happier than the person who's not just and part of the explanation is that just person is in harmony with him or herself. And that inner harmony is a happier state to be in. Whereas the unjust person will be kind of more not in so much harmony, more fragmented, more being pulled around by their desires and opinions and aversions, things like that. To paraphrase him into Buddhist context, and maybe kind of building on this little discussion of the armies

if all things are equal. The person with a trained mind or the discipline mind will be happier in the person with the undisciplined mind. It kind of for the same reason, if the mind is on disciplined, who's in charge? Where are you going to go? You know, but if you're disciplined, and in a sense, you know you're in charge, then you're not going to be pulled off, you know, in all kinds of directions that later you would regret. So this is another, you know, reason for developing the mind training the mind. So, in a sense, the armies are kind of a description of the qualities of the mind or the heart that can be developed, retrained. And it's really a beautiful thing, that the human heart the human mind, is malleable enough to be developed. If you have the persistence to hang in there and do it, the it's amazingly valuable. Part of the reason is because they human mind is not a thing. It's a process. It's always a process that's that's in process, it actually can be quite malleable. And the thing that makes the mind most malleable most shapeable kind of kind of hit the tenderizer of one of the one of the tender risers of the mind is concentration, a concentrated mind is the mind which is most malleable. So one of the reasons to cultivate concentration is then the mind is malleable enough, tenderized enough that these other practices you do these other practice will have a much deeper, much more profound effect on developing your character. Yes, last one, and then we'll stop.

Why compassion

is so important. and connecting to each of the

economies, I think, is that compassion is a word that we use for, for a fact, that gets ignored in Western culture that people really are connected. And it was that compat original. It was that compassionate compassion in any spiritual leader in Jesus. And that compassion, even like the 12 step programs that took that original, getting your own mind together. Record paid or Jesus could have just stay where they work with that compassion became the vehicle to carry the message to others. So I'm justifying an experience like with generosity and working in a church setting. There's a difference between people who just give because it's good to give up unexamined giving, and the effectiveness of their generosity versus people who are connecting with that compassion of their tradition. So you see damage done when people and their generosity reinforce racial stereotypes or gender stereotypes which I saw versus people who use their compassion, to move beyond and change the world. So I think that's that's why it's important it energizes it and moves it to that to that further level. To do things of eternal significance. Those traditions are still ongoing. They don't just stay in the tree or stay at the Jordan River. They are here present and

beautiful. Thank you. Yeah. It's really beautiful. The possibilities inherent in the human heart are really beautiful each one of you. And it's really one of the one of the really marvelous things in life, to somehow to tap into and develop and cultivate those potentials in our own hearts. And it's not always easy. It's not always easy. It's very difficult at times. And, but if you think about it in the long term, there was a article I saw this weekend. I'll end with this. We're running late. About a new kind of space probe base rocket that they've invented, it's going to go deep into their galaxies and all that and it has this

Ion thruster engine, that is the solar powered kind of, you know, motor and it just kind of pushes out a little bit of ions from the back. And the amount of thrust apparently, is, is less than the amount of gravity. That's a weight that's in your hand. If you're holding a postcard, there's almost nothing, right? And so how can how could that move a whole spaceship? Probably first, they get it up into space. And then you know, the bigger rocket and then they let go. But the idea is, in the short term, it's going really, really slow. But there's almost no resistance in space. And so it builds up more and more speed. And over the long term, it actually ends up going much, much faster than a conventional rocket where they have to bring all this fuel with them, you know, to get it going. And so this thing about slow you know, starting slow and steady, slow and steady and thinking about the long term If you think of your spiritual practice, you know, as over the 10 year, or 20 year or 30 year, you know, it's remarkable things can be even less than that. But remarkable things can happen to you. It's really, really amazing. So I hope that you take your own potential seriously and love it and enjoy it and have a good time. And I hope that this little exercise in theology today was interesting and provoking. Thank you