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SPEAKERS

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So today is my favorite American holiday. I haven't surveyed all the American holidays, exactly, to figure out what's going on with them. But, you know, a lot of them have to do with war lot to do with conflict. And in a sense, today's holiday has to do with conflict also. But it's not about war in the conventional war in terms of violence, but rather, it's celebrating what I think is one of the most remarkable people in the United States history, Martin Luther King, who not only championed the cause of social justice, and entered into the conflict around many, many of the important issues his country faced when he was alive and still faces today. But he entered into that conflict with a spirit and a teaching and a philosophy, of love, of non violence and A deep understanding of what it means to be purified. In personally purified in the act of work for social justice, the need for that, I mean, often people who are involved in social activists sometimes don't, you know, look at themselves. And sometimes people look at their look at themselves and always look at the world around them. And he was a wonderful man who had to bridge the two. And there's a lot of people in the world today, especially in the Buddhist world, who are trying to find language or understanding of how, for example, the path of liberation can also be fulfilled not only in monasteries, and you know, in Asia or here in America kind of retreating from the world, but also, the work of the path of liberation can be found engaging in the world, in the activity of social justice and I think Martin Luther King's Life and Work is a really beautiful example of someone who's married together those two and saw them as inseparable. Without the kind of deep work. He had off, he didn't use exactly Buddhist term terminology, even though he was familiar with Buddhism without the kind of deep inner work, that deep inner work, the kind of focus on social justice and working for it, that he he pointed to was impossible. And you'll see that little bit when I read some quotes by him. San Francisco Zen Center, where I was today, published a little brochure about Martin Luther King. And there's a quote in the front cover darkness cannot throw out darkness. Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate. Violence multiplies violence and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction, the chain reaction of evil, hate, beginning hate wars, producing more wars must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the darkness of annihilation. I am convinced that love is the

most durable power in the world. It is not an expression of impractical idealism, but of practical realism. Far from being the pious injunction of a utopian dreamer. Love is an absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization. To return hate for hate, does nothing but intensify the existence of evil. In the universe, someone must have sense enough and religion enough to cut off the chain of hate and evil. And this can only be done through love. I believe firmly that love is a transforming power that can lift the whole community to new horizons of fairplay goodwill and justice. And then as incident are published, this statement is put out by the king center. And it's a pledge that there's a little place in the bottom of the thing you can sign it if you want to pledge pledge this for yourself. In honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Junior's life and work. I pledge to do everything I can to make America and the world a place where equality and justice, freedom and peace both grow and flourish. I pledged to make non violence a way of life in my dealings with all people. I will reject all forms of hatred, bigotry and prejudice will embrace the values of unconditional, universal love, truthfulness, courage, compassion and dedication, then empowered Dr. King I will dedicate my life to creating the beloved community of Dr. King's dream. We're all people can live together as sisters and brothers. So it's kind of remarkable thing that I think that America celebrates somebody like him, and then so easily forgets him so easily forgets his teachings. And he's forgot he's a little bit you know, someone who was important for for fighting for civil rights and changing the whole you know, the whole civil rights thing to some degree in America in the 60s 50s and 60s, and then was assassinated in the process was assassinated at a time when his vision of What he was working for, became much bigger than simply working for civil rights. He was someone who understood how so many different issues in human life are interconnected, and how you need to look at the whole the whole system together in order to be able to address the particular problems. And so he was kind of gearing up and I can 68 or so to look at much bigger issues than civil rights. And he was beginning to look at the Vietnam War and other issues in our society. And I think it's a really phenomenal opportunity that we have celebrating this holiday, and celebrate this holiday to look at what he really stood for, what his real beliefs were and what his life what propelled and fueled this remarkable life that he lived. And one of the things that I'm doing Inspired by his his dedication to non violence, and this is what he said in 1958. It must be emphasized that nonviolent resistance is not a method for cowards. It does resist if one uses this method because one is afraid, or merely because when lacks the instruments of violence when it's not truly non violent. This is why Gandhi often said that if cowardice is the only alternative to violence, it is better to fight. He made this statement conscious of the fact that there's always another alternative. No individual or group needs to admit to any wrong. Normally they use violence to right the wrong there is the way of nonviolent resistance. This ultimately is the way of the strong man. It is not a method stagnant passivity. The phrase passive resistance often gives the false impression that this is a sort of do nothing method, in which the resistor quietly and passively accepts evil. But nothing is further from the truth. For a while the non violent resistor is passive in the sense that he or she is not physically aggressive towards the opponent. His or her mind and emotions are always active, constantly seeking to persuade his opponent that he is wrong. The method the method is passive physically, but strongly active spiritually. It is not passive non resistance to evil. It is active, non violent resistance to evil. A basic fact that characterizes non violence is that it does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent but to win his or her friendship and understanding. The non violent resistor must often emphasize his

or her protest through non cooperation or boycotts. But must realize that these are not ends themselves. They are merely means to awaken a sense of moral shame in the opponent. The end is redemption and reconciliation. The aftermath of non violence is the creation of the Beloved Community, while the aftermath of violence is tragic bitterness. One of the things that broke my heart in the paper today was in the Chronicle was the statistics with a suggestion that 30% of the soldiers coming back American soldiers coming back from Iraq will have to go through psychiatric counseling to deal with what they went through there. That's a phenomenally high percentage of hosts. And but even those 10% that's a lot and You know, I could go on for the impact that the Iraq war has on American society can go on for decades, in all kinds of horrible ways. People are so often sometimes so twisted by their or disturbed or traumatized by their experience with war. That, you know, it's something that the country has to deal with. It's been for a long, long time. some degree, America still dealing with the legacy of Vietnam. And people still, you know, fighting the war and a sense in their own minds and the hearts that trauma that caused. Other characteristics of this method is that the attack is directed against forces of evil, rather than rather than against persons who happen to be doing the evil. It is evil that the non violent resister seeks to defeat not the persons victimized by evil. If one is opposing racial injustice, the non violent resister decision to see that the basic tension is not between races. So I'd like to say to the people that Montgomery, the tension in this city is not between white people and Negro people. The tension is at bottom, between justice and injustice between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. If there is a victory, it will be a victory not merely for 50,000 Negroes, but a victory for justice and the forces of light. We were out we are out to defeat injustice, and not white persons who may be unjust. Another point that characterizes nonviolent resistance is a willingness to accept the suffering without retaliation, to accept flows from the opponent without striking back. rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom. The powerful quote, rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom. But it must be Are blood. Gandhi said to his countrymen, the non violent resistor is willing to accept the violence if necessary, but never to inflict it. He or she does not seek to dodge jail. If going to jail is necessary, when enters it. As a bridegroom, bridegroom enters the bride chamber. Through the story, I've told a few times here, I met a woman. It was a woman on retreat, I think was a woman who told me the story of a white person of going to the south during the civil rights era. It was there for doing some kind of protest. And I think it involved us, you know, championing civil rights and protest involves standing on a street corner, just standing there with a group of people kind of demonstrating the signs or what it was just standing there. And she stood there from the number of days one Day, this pickup truck with white racists, I suppose, came along and these guys jumped out of the pickup truck and started beating up on people protesting on the sidewalk. And she was one of the people being beat up. And no one defending themselves, you didn't defend yourself. And at some point, I got beat up some and the pickup truck fellows left. Next day they were back on the same sidewalk. And the same thing happened. The same guys game pickup truck jumped out and beat them up a little bit and then left. So what did you do the next day, they came back the same sidewalk stood there again. And then when the guys came again and jumped out at the pickup truck, and the guy was standing above her with a fist ready to hit her again. He looked into her eyes and he said, What are you doing? And then that was the beginning of it. Look, they started having a conversation and talk. I don't know what the outcome for that, but he there was

no more fighting the last day, the third day but and could that man have been changed? Could he have been forced to look at himself? Like, what are you doing what's going on here? If it had been a confrontational situation, I think because of the power of this person who's willing to be hurt, it will just stay there. It allowed someone else's heart to change in a radical way. And that's the kind of that's kind of isn't the kind of one example of the kind of dedication that Martin Luther King was calling for, among the people. He was leading in the civil rights movement. rivers of blood may have to flow before we gain our freedom, but it must be our blood. So here's a here's a statement that maybe you begin seeing some parallels with Buddhist practice. One may well ask, what is the non violent resisters justification for this ordeal to which he or she invites others? For this mass political application of the ancient doctrine of turning the other cheek? The answer is found in the realization that unearned suffering is redemptive, suffering. The non violent resistor realizes his tremendous educational and transforming possibilities. Things of fundamental importance to people are not secured by reason alone, but has to be purchased with their suffering, said Gandhi. He continues, suffering is infinitely more powerful than the law of the jungle for converting the opponent and opening his or her ears, which are otherwise shut to the world. As a voice of reason. Here's another interesting statement. An important point concerning non violent resistance is that it avoids not only external physical violence, but also internal violence of spirit. The non violent resistor not only refuses to shoot his or her opponent, but he also refuses to hate him or her. At the center of non violence sense the principle of love. The non violent resistor would contend that in the struggle for human dignity, the oppressed people of the world must not succumb to the temptation of becoming bitter or indulging in hate campaigns. to retaliate in kind, would do nothing but intensify the existence of hate in the universe. Along the way of life, someone must have sense enough morality enough to cut off the chain of hate. This can only be done by projecting the ethic of love to the center of our lives. In speaking of love at this point, we are not referring to some sentimental or affectionate emotion. It would be nonsense to urge people to love their oppressors in an affectionate sense. Love in this conjunction means understanding, redemptive goodwill. Here the Greek language comes to our aid. There are three words for love in the Greek New Testament. First, there's eros. In platonic philosophy eros means the yearning of the soul for the realm of the Divine. It has come now to me in a sort of aesthetic or romantic love. Second, there's philia which means intimate affection between personal friends philia denotes a sort of reciprocal love. The person loves because he or she is loved. And we speak of loving those who oppose us, we refer to neither eros nor philia. We speak of a love which is expressed in the Greek word agape. Agape means understanding, redeeming goodwill for all people. It is an overflowing love, which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative. It is not set in motion by any quality or function of its object. It is love of God operating in the human heart. So in the Buddhist terms, we call this meta loving kindness. loving kindness has the same qualities. At it is an overflowing love, which is purely spontaneous, unmotivated, groundless and creative. It is not set in motion by any quality or function of its object of the person. We're relating to. gopa is not a weak, passive love. It is love. In Action, a gopa is love seeking to preserve and create community. It is insistence on community even when one seeks to break it. They got it his willingness to go to any length to restore community. It doesn't stop at the first mile, but it goes the second mile to restore community. It is a willingness to forgive, not seven times, but 70 times seven, to restore

community. The cross is the eternal expression of the length to which God will go in order to restore a broken community. The resurrection is a symbol of God's trying for all the forces that seek to block community. Therefore, if I respond to hate with reciprocal hate, I do nothing but intensify the cleavage, in broken community by meeting hate, with love. If I meet hate with hate, I become depersonalized because creation is so designed that my personality can only be fulfilled in the context of community. Booker T. Washington was right. He said, Let no person pull you so low as to make you hate him. And then great quote, that no person pull you so low as to make you hate him. This is kind of used to really kind of keep your own inner spirit, pure, awake or free. When that person pulls you down, he brings you to the point of working against community. he drags you to the point of defying creation and then thereby becoming depersonalized. In the final analysis, a gopa means a recognition of the fact that all life is integrally related. all humanity is involved in a single process. And we're all part of the same family, to the degree to which I harm my brother or my sister. No matter what he or she is doing to me, to that extent I am harming myself. For example, white men often refuse federal aid to education in order to avoid giving the Negro his rights. Because all men are brothers, they cannot deny nigro children without harming themselves. They end all efforts to the contrary, by hurting themselves. Why is this? Because all men are brothers. If you harm me, you harm yourself. Love a God is the only cement that can hold this broken community together. When I am commanded to love, I am commanded to restore community to resist injustice and to meet the needs of my brothers and sisters. The sixth basic fact about nonviolent resistance is that is that is that it is based on the conviction that the universe is on the side of justice. Consequently, the believer in non violence has deep faith in the future. This state is another reason why the non violent resistor can accept suffering without retaliation for he or she knows that in the struggle for justice, one has cosmic companionship. It is true that there are devout believers in non violence, who find it difficult to believe in a personal God. But even those persons believe in the existence of some creative force that works for universal wholeness. There is a creative force in this universe that works to bring the disconnected aspects of reality into a harmonious whole. So this is not very long ago. You know, it's less than 50 years ago. that Martin Luther King was writing this. And I think it's something that I hope people will study for a long time. And try to really engage in this kind of teaching that someone's as America has a holiday, a national holiday that celebrates someone who championed this kind of activity. This kind of non violent action is a phenomenal thing that our this country does. It's only a few years old this year, 4050 years ago, that someone of tremendous religious conviction and courage inspired a whole nation in what was possible on the side of justice, freedom. It's been a long time for me since I've been inspired to say way by great American religious figures. You know, there's been a lot of discussion in the last year of how religion is dividing people, rather than being bringing them together. I don't know what motivates people in different religious circles today. I don't know these people so well. But I see a tremendous division happening in our country. And Martin Luther King was someone who was willing to enter into conflict, enter into a situation of conflict. But his spirit of doing that was seeing where we could find how to reconcile how to find common humanity, how to see the common humanity and the other and not to demonize the other and not to be critical of the other, but rather to look for where the justices and the love and to work with that. I know that a number of Buddhists in America have adopted Martin Luther King as as one of their own, who they feel that he was a great bodhisatta by great being. And in

many things that I've read about him. He's someone who seems to understand really well. Some of the the, the inner possibilities of freedom. That is not just an outer freedom that we're searching for, we're also searching for an inner freedom. I think one of the things he brought to the civil rights movement was and what why he was successful is because he gave showed people how to live find inner freedom that allowed them to stand up against injustice in the world. So the story I've told also a number of times is my own story is in a sense, I'm here at IMC years teaching Buddhist practice. Because as a young man during the time of the Vietnam War, I was draftable. And I knew that I was not only was unwilling to fight in the war, pick up a gun. But I also felt that I had to be ready to protest, be ready to stand up and resist what I thought was wrong. And as an 18 year old, I was knew that I was afraid to do that I was afraid of dying I felt if I was going to follow these kinds of teachings through that has to be in a situation I'd be willing to put myself in situation where the blood that was flow is my own. And I didn't feel like I had that ability because of my fear. And because of that, dissonance between my ideal and what I could actually do, I felt it was really important for me to look for something, some practice some way of working with my fear. So when the time came, I could kind of be there in a situation in a brave way, or courageous way or find some way to kind of. And so when I started casting around, looking around for something that would help me kind of deal with this fear. For reasons I don't remember now, but what I settled on when I found was Buddhist practice, that was somehow that spoke to me as a way that would address this. And certainly, when I finally settled down and really started practicing Buddhism seriously motivated by other other things. They were not as lofty as the initial kind of 18 year old idealism I had, but that was kind of the first kind of attraction and kind of open of the door for me of what Buddhism had to offer and what the possibility that was. And I would like to believe that that is still the case, that that the deep, transformative work that personally transformative work that Buddhist practice, points towards is makes all of us available to be of service to be of help to our community. And then if it isn't that way, if it's not for the sake of our wider community and to be better able to be of service and be helpful, then perhaps the Buddhist practice ultimately has very little value. And so those are my those are my thoughts before I lose my voice here. But now it's your turn. Some of you were there. In civil rights time, maybe some of you knew Martin Luther King or anything. by him in different ways, or you have a reaction to what I've said today. Anybody want to say something? Yes.

I guess I'm also here to learn to deal with my fear. And so I'm wondering how it helped you.

Well, how do you deal with fear? So some advice I mean,

I guess some of your experience and

some of my experience of working with fear the I had a lot of fear in my life for various reasons, variety of different ones. And felt in some ways when I was young, quite insecure, quite kind of afraid, all kinds of things. And a lot of it had to do with seeing it really clearly. And seeing it open. over again, there's a lot of freedom, a lot of wisdom comes from familiarity. And that's kind of bad news. Because

familiarity means you have to see it over and over and over and over and over again. But a lot that was my lot of case me like I would sit, I would sit, I would sit and look at this stuff. And somehow and seeing and really clearly, that kind of helps set me free from it to some degree. So for certain certain things, there wasn't some magic, you know, moment that aha, there's been free, but rather, there was a kind of slow kind of eroding of it as I looked at it and was present for it and learned how to relate to it in wise ways. This learning how to relate to fear was certainly very important part of the training there not to be afraid of fear, not to be resistant to it, not to act on it, but simply allow it to be present and to see it clearly for what it is. Also, as I could do this exploration, I got to see some of the different flavors or kinds of fear that I had, and one of the most common ones to one, the most deepest ones that really important for me to look at, was my attachment to self, to being someone to being someone in the eyes of others. And, and somehow you want to be liked. And so you need to look at that very honestly, and learn slowly free myself of that kind of neurosis. And one of the things that was very helpful in this process was meditation practice. There were times when I wasn't looking at VR directly, I was looking at, or I was finding a sense of well being, that was independent of my fear, independent of my neurosis and anxieties. And using meditation to find that sense of well being and well being and started to melt some of the kind of crusts of who I was this the fear, and started showing me an other way it was possible to live. So then I could see I had a choice. I could I, you know, had a choice between living in a way that was free or peace or calm or his sense of well being or a choice about whether to pick up my feet anxiety, those are the things and started to see that choice was really important because then I started exercising that choice. And it wasn't always easy. There were times when I could see I had a choice, but I was incapable of making the right one. You know, it's just, you know, go back to old habits and old fears, but I could see Oh, this is what I have to do, but no, no, not I can't do that now. And then I just, you know, hung in there and practiced and waited and eventually I was able to make those choices. And some of the some of the working with fear in my life. There is a kind of almost mysterious ways in which meditation practice or Buddhist practice works, where some of the some of the issues that need to be addressed some of the attachments, clinging is not, you might never see what it is that took You're free from it. And often we're expected to see, you know, this is it, you know, but if you do really deep, deep practice, sometimes a very deep practice will change you. But you won't see that change in the moment or in the day or something like that. But then you'll see later Oh, you know, there's this issue that I always had is not there anymore. I'm not sure exactly how it went away, but just simply not there. What a strange thing. But you know, you know, I attribute it to the practice but wasn't clear the mechanism of how it how it worked. There are people who can't hear Otherwise, they have hearing system devices.

If fear

should arise as I'm sitting or some emotion or body sensation, which seems like it might be a mask for fear, would it be useful to shift attention from the breathing to that fear and then simply observe the fear?

Yes, it can be very useful. It's not recommended if observing the fear spirals you depth downward. Sometimes occasionally fear you get, you know, end up being in a panic attack. So that's not useful. But sometimes it's very helpful to actually let go of the breath. Bring your full attention to fear in a sense, sit in the middle of the fear, and just sit there and just be present forward, watch it, explore it, explore it, get to know your relationship to it. You just sit there very peacefully and just gonna see what happens. And if you sit in the middle of that fear and then watch, something will happen. That's interesting. Nope, nothing else a person might learn, that's doable. And so by doing that, not be afraid of the fear. You have something right behind you right behind.

I also had a lot of fear in my life. The three times three kinds of fear that stand up in my mind. One was fear as soon as I started meditation, meditation on my own and not to a tape, which I've been doing for relaxation and the enormous fear arose.

And

I was taking a loving kindness class also at that time, and I just felt like applying loving kindness. So doing Roman kindness first and then setting Do my mindfulness meditation and the fear literally melted away. And I have found loving kindness to be just unbelievably powerful to counter fear for me. But it was fear of, you know, going on out in the dark. I recently noticed if my husband was away on business trips I used to not quite sleep well at night and in a sort of wake up, he sort of half awake and these days I'm just slipping through it. And my take on it is loving kindness really reaffirms to myself, my own good intentions, and

really, really strongly and

it's seems strange thing to say, but that's really sort of a sense I have that the biggest enemy is myself, and I'm afraid of my own self. And if I really put out those intentions of loving kindness really strongly, then I basically defeat the biggest enemy I know, which is myself my mind. And that has been just incredibly powerful for me.

Just wanted to share that.

I guess something that struck me with what you said was a further definition of passive resistance as you need courage. And I can think of the balance between the fraction itself and focusing on the self and community action points. I feel like my meditation like I'm running away from, you know, doing community work. Like, I go back and then I say, oh, maybe I'll just be a monk because this is really exhausting. Or I feel like, feel like that's not really addressed in like, what I practice or I don't know, I don't really focus on like how important courage is and then doing community work and not not taking feel like sometimes meditation is running away. I don't know if it's running away from seeking refuge. It always seems like what's that balance between working within the community and working within

myself? And where do you find that courage? And when do you find the courage to do what's good for you and do it for the community or find where both of them coincide? And that balance? I was wondering if you could maybe speak of that and speak to that.

It was very, very well said that you said which is now and in my mind, the important thing, the most important thing there is, you keep asking that question. Because I don't think there would be a final answer. But you keep asking that question and find new answers every day. And there's some days or some years or some lifetimes, where you decide to become a monk, and that's really the wisest thing to do. And other times when you decide to go and, you know, and, you know, be a schoolteacher in the inner city, you know, and, and, you know, you know, so it's hard to know where the, you know, depends a lot of your your own conditioning, your own situation, your own inner life. depends a lot on the situation out there and what's going on. So it's a question that's one of those questions. I think you have to kind of keep always in the forefront always thinking about and exploring. But what you said it's very important to look at this question of escape. I don't think escaping is ever wise strategy.

Sometimes there are

strategic withdraw with retreating. So realize, Oh, this is not useful this day, in some activity, I think what I need now is physically is to retreat, to go on retreat or do my own practice, go become a monk for some time. Because that's really what's most useful for me to address certain things. In five years or 10 years, maybe they'll change and maybe I'll do something different than but right now, this is what has to happen. But it's escaping running away, which it's not, there's not just not I know a few Buddhists, who, unfortunately, will look at meditation practice and retreats and monasticism as a form of escape, trying to avoid their problems, rather than looking at them. And that's one of the shadow sides or one of the traps of Buddhist practice is that when you have this kind of contemplative approach to life, it can lend itself to kind of a kind of unhealthy pulling back and escaping. My hope. My belief is that if a person's practicing mindfulness practice sincerely and fully that any of the problems and how we were practicing will sooner or later come to the fore. So If your practice is sincere and dedicated, you're being honest. Don't worry about it so much. Just keep doing your practice, ask those questions and keep doing your practice doing your life. And then what you need to know will eventually come to the surface. And in a time that's right for it.

So,

you know, you don't have to be, you know, 100%, pure 100%, right. 200% whatever, today. You know, I think it's good to be compassionate and patient with ourselves and do the practice and then maybe in a year or two years, certain clarity will arise. And don't expect to have it today.

It makes some sense.

Two thoughts come up to what you said. The first one is I had a friend described to me meditation is kind of like when you've got a world class athlete, they spend a lot of time I'm working out and preparing for the race. And that that is what meditation is, it is going inside and doing your calisthenics even though you might not necessarily want to do them that day and it's cold outside and facing those fears or the anger or the love or whatever intense transformation you're undergoing. That's number one. Number two is I was struck by the meditative power of Martin Luther King's words. And it was almost as if the quotes that you were reading, were a mass meditation. And I was thinking about the complexity of what he accomplished because he had to unite completely with the one with the one mind, so much so that not only was he communicating with words, but he was communicating spirit to spirit. And it was very helpful for me today

to think about

finding the negativity rather than the person. I had an event happen today where somebody struck out at me and anger. And my old reactions had always been to strike back with anger or defensiveness or trying to resist it. And this time, I opened my heart and let myself feel compassion, which was new behavior for me. And when you think about the kind of anger that Martin Luther King and the people were facing at that period of time, because there was so much fear.

I'm amazed that I

I did this just with this one person today. But he did that with an entire generation. It's pretty remarkable. So to me, somebody who has that kind of power must have had a very strong inner practice meditative practice able to take it out. And work does miracles in the world.

Yeah, so. So there are certain things a lot of power in engaging in a long term, spiritual life in practice, and to expect us to be able to address the crisis in our lives or in our national life. Cold without having prepared ourselves and maybe naive. And, and some people you know, will come expecting spiritual life to help. You know, when it's a crisis, sometimes it does, but it's a whole different animal, whole different situation. If we do the day in day out work of practicing affecting working with our fears or any Are love are working on the heart working on the mind. And they are they clarify understand that whole world so that when we come to possession of crisis, we already know ourselves really well and we have the skills to be able to deal with it. And I don't know about Martin Luther King, he just seems like kind of remarkable man to me. But when I read when I studied Mahatma Gandhi, he, you know, he describes himself and he kind of appears that way when he was young, is somewhat of an unremarkable person. You know, he was kind of like an ordinary kind of unremarkable person, you know, and, and, and he described himself that way, you know, no particular promise. And, and somehow, he did that work of, of, of transforming himself and transforming a whole country whole world and became a remarkable person. And so each of us here, some of you are maybe You're all remarkable. But each of you, you know, has in your heart or your mind, in your psyche, the capacity of

great things a great change, and not to underestimate what's possible for you and not to hold yourself back or, or remain stuck in some kind of mode or be afraid or don't limit yourself and what's great things you can be and become. And it might take a lot of a lot of small teeny steps to get there. But with enough steps, you can do it.

So

May the legacy of people like Martin Luther King, find itself in the steps you take as you go forward into your life. Thank you very much.