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SPEAKERS

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Good evening. I'm aware of a number of different stories, fantasies, fairy tales, kind of stories, science fiction stories, where there's some hero who is fighting some great evil in the world, some evil being Darth Vader or someone. And, and in order to succeed at this, you know, life and death, combat the hero as they be very balanced and not give in to anger, somehow stay balanced and not somehow be caught by fear or caught by anger and be able to stay basically at peace or economists. And if they kind of give in to their anger For a lot of blogs is getting angry, then somehow they don't have the clarity or the presence of mind to fend off evil being, and sometimes unfortunate things happens to our hero. So this imbalance of mind, and I know one story generally 30 years ago, so I don't remember so well. But Herman has say has a book, The Glass Bead game. And there's a character in the book who becomes kind of like a master like a Zen master kind of person. And, and what I was most struck by in the book was the last page or to the end of the book. And this master has become old. And he is standing in kind of Alpine Lake together with a young man. And the young man jumps into swimming across the lake. It's quite cold, like And at least in my memory, the way it struck me at the time, the master somehow his pride or his something kicked in, his young man jumped as he jumped into the cold Lake who's gonna swim across, he was gonna do the same, keep up with him or something. And so he jumps in that mode, right? So have you read it. And so he jumps in and starts swimming across the lake. And I think he has something like a heart attack. As he doesn't make it, he basically drowns in the lake. That's the end of the story. So I remember. And, so, here is a, you know, this great master who had this little moment where he got caught by his maybe his arrogance or pride or something, lost this balance and lost his life. So, all of these are pointing to a quality in Buddhism which is considered very important and that is the quality of equanimity equipoise Balance of mind, a mind that doesn't give in to what's called sometimes the eight worldly wins the pairs four pairs, gain and loss, pleasure and pain, fame and disrepute. And just success and failure. I think that's right. Right, you get the idea. So a mind that doesn't give in to those, the world produces all these wins. And the mind can blow along with it. Or there can be a strength of mind and a balance of mind. So the mind is not blown around by things. One of the things that is often blown blown around by is pleasure and pain, and the

pursuit of pleasure pursuit of comfort, can you know in a cell and it can be okay, but it's very interesting to watch what happens in the mind and how the mind sometimes we'll lose its balance. We get caught up around up in the pursuit of pleasure. Sometimes it takes us forms forms of addiction, or the pursuit to avoid what's uncomfortable or unpleasant. And it can be very subtle but very fundamental to many people's psyche, the movement away from things that are uncomfortable and to avoid, to deny, to turn away, to lash out to get angry at all as a reaction to what's unpleasant or uncomfortable or painful. And so the mind is somehow affected by gets pulled into what's called the world of reactivity. Same being Praise, praise and blame is a great one for people with the mind gets caught. Someone comes and praises you and you can see the cockiness By the way, energy gets boring you are the kind of guy No, that's good. And or some people don't like fame and the opposite happens or blame, you know that you'll wake up if you get blamed really well. You know, Falling sleep meditation just you know, as the person next to you next to you to blame you for something or criticize you the way you're sitting. You shouldn't be allowed in here, just terrible. Then you'll wake up. Also energy the mind gets caught so easily. equanimity is considered to be as a status in Buddhism where it's almost like a pinnacle, the top of spiritual development. It's a very high, highly praised, highly honored mental quality. And you'll find in a number of lists, that famous lists that the Buddha had the equanimity is last in the list and being last it's considered to be the most important. It's one of the seven factors of awakening the seven qualities that directly come into play as a person gets liberated. It's one of the four forms of love, the Brahma vihara, the Buddha championed. And it's the last one equanimity, which is strange people don't often think of it as kind of love with the kind of love. And then it's also the last of the 10 parties. 10 perfections. And that's the topic for today is to talk about the 10th perfection. So the 10th graders 10th perfection, because over the last year, approximately once a month, on Monday nights, I'd be giving a talk on each of the 10 perfections. And I tried to do it close to the day where I did the Dharma practice day on that quality. And the last I did equanimity in August. And so somehow I was gone. Thanks happened. And so now almost a month late. And I know you're very quantum honestly, we've been waiting. So today's the last day in talking about this, the 10th the 10th or the 10th army's perfections it's the pinnacle of the perfections. And so if you had any idea that you have that equanimity is kind of a uninteresting emotional state or mental state, that's kind of a dull one, that it's somehow you know, kind of diminishes your life in some way. It's kind of not exciting or passionate, you know, you really want to get in there and, you know, live. The idea that it's the 10th of all these very important qualities. It's the pinnacle of it all. It gives you one idea that I don't think Buddhist and Buddhist puts it as kind of a dull uninteresting thing. It's actually a very dynamic quality. To give you a sense of that dynamism or dynamic quality of it. Here's a description of the mind of equanimity. When the mind is fully imbued, and equanimity, it becomes pure and bright, pliant, malleable and luminous, just as if escaped Goldsmith were to prepare a furnace, heat up a crucible and taking gold with a pair of tongs, place it in the crucible. He would blow on it, sprinkle water on it, examine it, so that the gold would become refined, well refined, thoroughly refined, flawless, free from dross, pliant, malleable and luminous. Then whatever sort of ornament he had mind it would serve His purpose. In the same way the remains only equanimity, pure and bright, pliant, malleable and luminous. So, this is not adult state of mind, in fact, that I think is a very powerful emotional state. The state of equanimity, as attend to the perfection is kind of the end of this pinnacle of them. The 10

perfections are qualities of character qualities of the mind that can be developed as a support as aids to the Buddhist spiritual life, part of development of it There are many people who develop a spiritual life in Buddhism without reference to the 10 armies, so they're not necessary. Often these qualities kind of come along with a spiritual life without knowing it without intending. It just kind of follows in the wake of the mindfulness practice, for example. But some people actually like to train themselves and cultivate these qualities in themselves. And it said, that, for people, it's one of the best practices or best ways of developing oneself. If a person is living a lay life, living an urban life, living with family, your jobs are the you know, don't have a lot of chance to meditate a lot or be in retreats a lot in practice to develop and develop your meditation practice to some great degree. There's a really important thing to do then instead or is to do develop these perfections. So these are to develop your your character capacity for generosity. So it's not just simply, you know, as an idea of developing generosity, but develop a disposition to the point that your, your disposition, your, your, your inner mental state, becomes powerfully motivated by generosity, that becomes almost like second nature, perhaps, to cultivate a generous heart. And then the second part of it is integrity, for virtue, to develop your personal integrity, so you're not going to be very careful so you don't harm people. And so, the simplest way of talking about that is living by the precepts. And I'll tell you a great story sometimes. Many years ago, I was teaching a class on Mahayana Buddhist sutra, the Lotus Sutra, to a small group of kind of senior mostly Zen center students. Zen priests were invited a classmate of mine from Stanford when I was studying there to be in the class, and she was doing Buddhist studies at Stanford. She was originally from Taiwan, Chinese, and had grown up as a Chinese Buddhist in Taiwan and a little bit in Thailand and they immigrated to America. And so she had a very different relationship to Buddhism than the people, other people in the class who were convert Buddhists. They were born, born and bred in America, and, and converted to Buddhism as adults. Basically. This woman had grown up his whole, whole, whole upbringing. She was deeply embedded in it. And she had left her degree at her law practice in order to go back to Stanford and get a degree in Buddhist studies. This is what she wanted to make her life was but with Buddhist practice, she had a Buddhist teacher. She was really committed to, you know, to her Buddhism, making it central to her life. So I asked her one day do you meditate because I want to I want to know what kind of meditation she did. And all the people that I knew in the West who practice Buddhism, they meditated. And they often that's the first thing they do. They jump in, they start right there.

And she said,

Oh, not

yet.

I'm, I'm waiting until I'm worthy enough. I'm waiting until I'm worthy enough. Now she was a very ethical person. And to begin with, but she felt somehow that meditation was such a revered practice to do, that it isn't something you just jump in coal, but something you prepare yourself to do. And so she

was preparing yourself by her studies or ethics or behavior by developing yourself in other ways. And then she was going to get to it. I was so inspired by that. I thought you could have done both at the same time and they would have helped but I was so inspired by That I'm waiting to be worthy of it. So to cultivate an ethical life, so that we're worthy perhaps or that more importantly, perhaps, that our inner ethical life, that foundation of our life which is ethical is solid, stable and ruffled. Because if you have a ethical strata of your mind which is ruffled, or conflicted, it's very hard to go deep into Buddhist life spiritual life. So to develop a character, a disposition towards integrity. Then the third one is renunciation, letting go, simplifying, and developing the capacity and ability to let go when it's necessary to let go. And the whole question of when is it necessary to let go is a very interesting question to explore. And maybe people can To not notice very well when it's necessary to let go. So to learn to let go has that capacity to somehow release the mind from what what, what we're holding on too tight. You know, we hold on to grudges. And so develop the capacity to let go maybe select go back to the grudge, we we hold on to our status we hold on to many things that often cause a lot of suffering. So, to develop a capacity to let go, allows the mind to become simpler and in mind is simpler, can do deeper work can go further down as complicated, the mind stays agitated. And then develop a capacity for wisdom and wisdom often as the same meaning as discernment, developing a capacity to look in a discerning way to be wise in how we understand our life, to be wise about when we should let go for example, And then to develop capacity for effort or energy or perseverance. So we've kind of overcome laziness, inertia, but developed kind of capacity to kind of, Okay, I'm doing this getting up every day to meditate, I'm just going to do it and not to have the inertia get in the way or, or any kind of way to develop the capacity for applying oneself. And that's something that can be can it can be developed, and then developing a capacity for patients. A great one, especially if you're going to make effort. So you develop the capacity for effort. But then you follow right, right along with that developing capacity for patience, so that the effort doesn't get frustrated. When it doesn't succeed by the way.

And then,

after that is truth, develop capacity for being truthful, living closely connected in harmony with what's true, the truth with a truth that you feel what you know, is true. And then develop developing capacity for resolve or determination. When you resolve something, when you know something's true and you resolve to do it, then have a capacity to get behind it. So but different than perseverance or effort, but it's the kind of stick to this, this is what I'm going to do. I said, I'm going to do it, okay, I'm going to do it. And also develop that character traits. So, you know, you know, when we say we can do something we follow through and then developing a capacity for loving kindness, for being kind, being friendly, and not to leave our friendliness or kindness or love to chance will actually look and see how can we develop it. So that becomes, again, something readily at hand that happens, you know, readily, as readily as maybe being grumpy or angry, irritated, happens now. And you know, just kind of begin switching the balance to develop the capacity for friendliness and kindness. And then finally, develop a capacity for equanimity. That's a quite a daunting list to put them all together. So that's why we spent a year doing them. And some people said who did the study class said a year was too fast. We shoot in

a year and each quality but in daily life, this there's a tremendous amount of opportunities to develop these 10 qualities. And so, you know, different in some situations, it's more patients, some some situations more challenged in our ethics. I got a refund from the IRS today.

And

they sent me a bill this summer. Well, that's interesting. I didn't pay it right away because I was on vacation. I didn't pay them time. They gave me like the veil that they nailed it out on July 4, believe it and they will And then they wanted it back before I came back from vacation. So I had to so I got a second bill, for the interest for having this. So today I got my interest back. That's it. I wonder if you made a mistake? What should I do now? What's the ethical thing to do here with my \$8 and 11 cents? So you know that so there's lots of opportunities, you know, come along, and what do we do with our ethics? What do we what's, you know, do we just kind of blow it off? Or do we think about it do we look at her or ethical life are lots of opportunities for generosity, lots of opportunities for you know, all of these different situations, different ones come to mind, and we can cultivate and develop it there. Now, the reason why this is important for people who are interested in meditation is that these 10 qualities are tremendously supportive or helpful for developing an Deep stable penetrating meditation capacity, it's very hard to develop, it's very much easier to develop meditation when these things are there at hand, they become like powers. Now, the same thing can be said about equanimity. When the other nine qualities have been developed, they become kind of like a strength that we carry with us. And when you have strength, it's a lot easier to hold your ground, it's a lot easier to not be pushed around by things. So if you develop a strength, of love of loving kindness, you're much less likely to be pushed around by different winds that the wind the world provides. If you develop a capacity for resolve and determination, then you're much less likely to be pushed around because you know, you've committed you're gonna, you're gonna hold your ground. If you have a capacity for patience, these become strengths we carry with us. So equanimity then is that capacity of not getting caught Not being pushed around by what happens, where the mind can stay balanced and peaceful. There are two kinds of equanimity. There's many kinds actually as lists and lists of equanimity types that I think of there's two main types of equanimity. One is equanimity that comes from a certain kind of that can be called balance, when there's a kind of a capacity to be balanced in a strong way. So we kind of be able to reside at that place where we're not pushed back and forth. It's like having a tripod. If you have only two legs or one leg, it's kind of wobbly, because you have three legs, it's stable, and so it's balanced. If you have nine legs, it's even more balanced. And so develop some capacity to be well balanced on yourself. So for example, being grounded in your body centered in your body is a tremendous support to staying economists. You probably if you're not in your body, chances are you can be caught you're already caught probably. And, but if you're not in your body, you're probably much less like a cop. By the different things that go registered in the mind, they're reactive. So to be centered in your body is one of the strengths that provides greater equanimity. So, developing calm, developing concentration, developing other parties, developing capacity for joy and happiness. All these are kind of strengths that can reside within us and when they're strong, then we tend to be much more balanced. So the first kind of equanimity is equanimity of balance. The second kind of equanimity is the equanimity that

comes from our understanding how we see the situation. So from our wisdom if someone calls you a dirty name, but then you already know that they have what's the name of that's syndromes Tourette Syndrome, that was called and they've been struggling with for years. You know, they're heroic and how they've been struggling with it. They've done everything they can and they do it. One more time, but you know, you know, you know what it's taking that person to toll in the person's life. And so you have this equanimity, maybe even compassion for that person because you understand something about that person. So, there's an equanimity that comes from understanding. When someone does something that maybe even hurts us. Some people have the ability to see that the Act was perpetrated, created by or caused by or stimulated by the suffering that that other person was carrying in their hearts and in their being. You see that person is really struggling in their life. And their unskillful behavior was really an attempt to deal with their own suffering. So some people have that capacity to see the suffering and others and then be more equanimous not take it personally what they've said or what they've done, and have some compassion perhaps also. So I have equanimity through understanding and so now it's your turn. What are some understandings? Some realistic understandings that could help us see the world see our relationship to others or see ourselves with more equanimity. With the mind he's not gonna get caught, pushed off balance. What are some understandings Can anybody offer some you're all thinking deeply. Speaker maybe we can pass the mic to Smith to them in the back.

Once you gave, I think an example of Suzuki Roshi, where I might remember it wrong but you said something like, he pulled his glasses off one day and said these glasses are not mine. And that just that has made a very deep impression on me. And it seems to me if we can sort of hold our belongings, our emotions and our thoughts the same way this is not mine.

And even harder to look at other people's and say it's not theirs

would be very easy to become and stay equanimous

The thing I thought of was the realization all beings experience sufferings, suffering. So, you think of that.

Great, thank you.

If one can do

it one can reduce to the minimum the likes and the dislikes. That is one of the best way to get an equanimity in this place God we call this the rock Dwayne fish, which is probably the Sanskrit word for likes and dislikes.

Thank you

understanding of the fact that it will change, understanding that's gonna change and permanence. It's like my Yeah. This too will change. And we're having difficulty at home and my son was really young, my wife with it with a young kid, my wife would look at me and said, oh, we're having one of those kinds of days. And that was a reminder, this is only temporary. It's one of those days and tomorrow will be a different day. Sam back pass it up here.

When I feel attacked, I can't help but think that the attacker in whatever sense it may be a verbal abuse, a form of verbal abuse may be an act of terrorism, that the attacker has been attacked in some way with equal force to what I feel from from for what they, you know, I can't I you know, I can't help but think of experiences, everyday experiences with management in the workplace and also the big events on the news. Great. My suffering is, is a reflection of the suffering of another person.

They're connected to that also is that if I react in Then perhaps in perpetuating the cycles and so one of the one of the generous things to do in the world is to somehow rather end the chain that keeps being perpetuated.

I think of it in terms of like mental thoughts or representations in the mind of thinking one knows something. And I think young used to make a statement about you know, the antithesis of a thesis is always as true as the thesis itself. So

So there's two sides to the story. Me kind of

Really very basic. And that is that if somebody throws that negative energy towards you, it's not that you want to throw it back at them, but you don't want to absorb it. Cuz somebody's on the road, especially in congested areas could have had a rotten day and throw their negative energy at you in some form. And all of a sudden, you're grabbing on to it and you're reacting, or now you're going to share it that negative energy with somebody else so the best thing to do is just dissolve that negative energy and not let it

take apart or hold in our lives.

So one understanding then for acronyms it is the cost that it takes when we absorb things and we react or picks things up as tremendous cost on us, and then we pass it on perhaps to others. And one of the teachings of the Buddha is that If you get angry with your enemy, you do your enemy a favor because you're causing harm to yourself that your enemy can't actually do. Because, you know the pain of anger, something you have to make from the inside. I think when somebody reacts at you, the way I feel is that is an opportunity for me to practice not to react. So it's really a favor. So to be really motivated to practice to do this is another practice opportunity for the power base for patients record empty. Here we go. This is gonna be a tough one. But you know, it's like the rodeo sometimes.

Understanding the Tricia fields is very important. Not to take excessive responsibility for other people's happiness. And that's the kind of some people get really caught by that. And to have some understanding that people are responsible for their own choices. And if they make choices, you're not wise, might not be what you want, but somehow they have to make they're making their own choices. And so we can't, you know, take full responsibility. For a lot of people. That's a great relief to realize that because some people, that's their Achilles heel, I'm responsible for that person's well being

reminded of a person I used to work with that was in a pretty stressful situation. And he was in that era where everyone had those shirts with little alligators on them, little animal. Yeah, okay. Well, he had apparently his wife had found him a bunch of little ducks have the same size, and so he would have shirts that had either 1234 ducks on them and say well this is a to duck day it's gonna be a real hard day I need to just let everything roll off my back like a duck. And I just love that because he was turning it into something fun. Now, this is a to duck day and he got to be reminded of it because everyone would see it. Great.

I'll read down from the Buddha. This one I like this one, because it's I always feel more equanimous after I read it. They find fault in one sitting silently. They find fault in one speaking much. They find fault in one speaking in my in moderation. No one in this world is not found at fault. There has been there is Then they will, there has been there is and there will be no person who is only criticized or only praised. So now you've been told. So that should make you economist in. The hair comes in the praise. No matter if you say no no matter if you speak a lot or little or nothing at all. Somebody is gonna get you as a solid mess of rock is not steered stirred by the wind. So a sage is not moved by praise and blame as a deep lake is clear and undisturbed. So Sage becomes clear but hearing the Dharma virtuous people always let go. They don't prattle about pleasures and desires, touched by happiness and then by suffering, they say shows no signs of being elated or depressed. No signs of being elated or depressed. So do not. And one of the forms of balance and understanding that's very helpful for economists mind is if we have some understanding, or some experience of inner well being. And if we can begin with a foundation of sense of inner well being, then it's much easier to understand understand the cost of being caught the cost of reacting in ways. Even being elated sometimes has a cost, which is exhausting, as a cost which can actually lead to further suffering. So, to have a sense of well being inner well being inner peace, where praise blame, success, failure Pleasure pain, somehow, you know, you're not going to grab on to it or react to it in such a way to, to erase away to do away that inner well being. I think of that community as a protector and a guardian for something that's very precious inside of us. So rather than something which is, diminishes us or something that causes us to be, you know, less human, I think actually supports the beautiful qualities of the human being to flourish with inside of us, because we're not covering it over or losing it by the reactive qualities of the mind. One of the most important supports for Aqua dimity is mindfulness. To develop them our mindfulness and develop a capacity to see what's actually going on as it's going on. If you don't know if you can notice things as they're actually happening, then our wisdom and understanding and come into place and we can see every activity and know what to do about it. And one of the important ways that mindfulness works also is we can begin understanding the very things that stand

in the way of equanimity, the various ways in which we lose our equanimity, lose our balance, and then to be a quantum about that, but to study that, to understand that really well, not to feel Oh, you know, not a good Buddhist because I lost my equanimity, but rather say, because I'm a good Buddhist, I need to understand why I lost my equanimity. I need to understand what happened there. And the more that we can study understand how our mind works, the more like less likely we are not to be caught by the forces of the mind as they occur. So equanimity comes from understanding ourselves through and through, not by holding onto some kind of state some kind of ideal at the expense of ignoring who we really are, Spanish knowing who we really are, that have been emitted easy, easiest. So that's understanding The full range of who we are. And the last thing I'll say that just said, Every time I've thought about the parties, these 10 perfections are not generosity, virtue and so forth, in the ordinary sense. equanimity in the ordinary sense that equanimity only becomes a perfection, one of these armies, when it's joined together with two things, when it's connected to things, when it's connected to our compassionate concern for the welfare of others, and when it's connected to our concern for our own liberation and freedom. So, the concerns go in both direction for the well being of others, the well being of ourselves, compassionate concern for others, and concern for our own freedom, when somehow we understand the movement to practice the development of equanimity Somehow is tied or supports our compassionate concern for others and supports our own movement or liberation, then equanimity becomes perfection upon me. It can't be one or the other, it has to be both together. And with enough equanimity, with a mind that's completely balanced, the mind is not is not going to react to and from anything. When the mind has a capacity not to react to or from anything whatsoever, has this deep sense of peace, doesn't pick anything up. It doesn't push anything away, but just balance and peace in the midst of everything. Then the mind can let go of itself. And when the mind lets go of itself that's even better than when the self lets go the self Isn't that great? The settling itself lets go of itself. That's pretty good. Go in the mind that's when with when the mind lets go of itself. That's the best. But the mind can't be ruffled SP completely still in order for that to happen.

So

I hope that those of you who've come to these 10 talks over a year found them helpful. And may you take them one at a time to cultivate in your life. Thank you