

2011-04-15 The Paramis Resolve Intro Part 1

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SPEAKERS

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And if you think back over your life Can you recall a time when you were particularly resolved?
determined to do something to follow through on something

you acted based on a strong determination to follow through, stick with it. You can think back at that time. So I'm example. What did it feel like in your body? Why did it feel like within yourself the felt sense To have this resolved

energetically, emotionally the way that you were in your body used your body mentally What was it like for you was a feeling of being resolved.

And then finally and thinking back at times in your life through your resolve At a strong determination how satisfying was it for you to have this feeling of this sense of being resolved? satisfying how meaningful was it like that way to have resolve

pursue their resolve so with you they would resolve but there was a strong feeling of doubt within. Okay. Kamath came without energized feeling and being energized. empowered empowered

clarity,

clarity, clarity, thank you

hear me Sure.

It feels like a steel door comes down inside me. And that is it. And it's very clarifying, to have all that business going on in my mind just suddenly focused on that one thing.

Over here,

Victor, find you

there's a subtle amount of tension

involved with resolve because there There seems to be resolved. Maybe your resolve for something sometimes you're resolved

against something or there's in there's a

element of opposition or impediment that one needs to resolve within itself to go towards or through

or

that we word a little bit in the given how we're doing it here. So if we're you, sometimes there's tension is part of it. Thank you.

When I feel resolved, and my focus is right on the task, and there's just a whole lot of clarity that comes up I know, you know, no doubt that nails are right on the button. There's no doubt or I'm going into when there's no doubt, there's no choice. There's only one choice. You know, that's what numbers help to do. The, there's more

if you were to make a kind of sense, maybe when you read the range ranges, hopefully get a wide range Yeah.

Do I okay,

so there's two things resolve as indetermination has a feeling of tension for me, tight fisted, this kind of, I'm going to get through this and then resolved as in resolution has a feeling of relaxation and lightness.

And then the question is can the two come together

great doubt about the outcome but certainty about the goal.

Meaning meaning a doubt about the success its certainty about. Okay? I feel self respect, self respect.

Nice.

exhausted possibilities

to make a resolution sometimes feels

quite burdensome,

burdensome

and a surrender to all of the other options. being aligned, being in harmony with something and then surrendering all the other options.

I feel a freedom with resolve needs of freedom.

Freedom comes along with it.

solution and choice.

So solution and choice. This came off now. I disappeared

someone else

For me, some sense of excitement, so potential possibilities and a sense of excitement. Beautiful.

Sometimes relief,

relief. Would you ask Jim Kwan there? He's thinking about it.

Right in front of you.

Actually, I was dozing off. I don't think I have a lot of mercy. But now you

know you're awake. You have a word or two, around resolve.

Oh, well, it was determination and

sense of freedom.

Great. Thank you.

Wonderful, thank you all very much for that there's a nice beginning to hear all that in the range of things get you connected perhaps. So, welcome to our day. This is our Dharma practice day on the par me of resolve. And Polly, it's a de teyonah. And it's often translated to English as resolved sometimes its determination very occasionally as aspiration. But I think that Miss misses the sense of, of follow through aspiration can be kind of just wishful thinking. Resolve is when you have aspiration, that your your commitment to follow through and enthusiasm or devotion. You're resolute, to follow through. And so on these Dharma practice days is for those of you who are new, it's a chance for To explore a particular theme in the Dharma and practice, and, and some teaching from me, but also some way where you personally engage in the theme or the topic, not only individually but also as a community with other people. If you go practice in monasteries, and the traditional way of practicing monasteries, the, the not just simply private, you know, solitary practice, but it's very much practicing together in a community of other monks and nuns and practitioners. And what happens informally in the monastery is often a lot of Dharma discussions and, and discussion about, you know, the practice and your relationship to it. And you hear what the abbot said and what do you think of that and, you know, that doesn't work for me or that works for me or this is my understanding of it and, and that exchange and that kind of contact with each other is a very rich important part of the overall practice. So how we replicate that little bit here at IMC is we dahmer practice days where there's actually a time for discussion with other people. Sometimes in pairs, sometimes in other groups, larger groups. Sometimes there's guided reflections like we did this morning. And sometimes it exercises we do. And so the idea is in different Dharma practice days, there's different approaches different and it can vary somewhat over time. How would we do this? be nice if each one was a little bit different. So he came a little bit surprised. And the theme for the year is that perfection, so the armies are pardon me does. And the armies are list of virtues or personal qualities of character that support the development of Buddhist practice. And not only they support it, but they also grow out of it. So for example, resolve it's very it's a There are times when you're not going to really follow through and the call of practice the possibilities that practice has for us. Unless we're really resolved to follow through sometimes our life has a lot of other things we want to do. And so how do you know you get pulled off and distracted quite easily. Sometimes, practice is not easy to do so it can be very challenging. Even just sit every day at home, it

can be challenging, let alone to kind of a lifetime of really following through and going to treat making a big part of your life. Sometimes practice requires us to look at aspects of ourselves that are quite difficult, and overcome some of the hindrances that we have and it takes sometimes a lot of resolution to kind of stick to it and do it and follow through. Sometimes the resolve means sticking to something that we feel is very important. For example, practice in spite of the strong messages from others. Our society or, you know, our family, you know, family says, you know, you should go on you should go, you know, go to graduate school, go to graduate school and get a degree. And, you know, it's really important to get him get a stable job and, but you feel like there's something else much more important going on for your life, it doesn't make any sense to do that kind of classic route. And so your resolve to fall through what you believe, is important, independent of financial success or failure. Kinda like the starving artists who thinks that I'm going to do this arc regardless because this is what I have to do. And so with resolve, you know, having resolved in practice, sometimes it's really important that you follow through on your practice.

But as you follow through in the practice, that strengthens the capacity for resolve, it strengthens your capacity to be committed and follow through and a commitment and, and then some of the hindrances, the doubts obstacles that distractions that keep you from following through begin falling away. And so then it's easier to be resolved. And so the resolve becomes a stronger muscle over time. And so it becomes kind of kind of circular, where the practice builds resolve the resolve supports the practice, and it goes on again. So that's true for all 10 of the power meters, that they will support the practice. And they also then are strengthened by the practice. And what's classically said in *tera, vaada* Buddhism is that you need to have a certain minimum amount of these personal qualities in order to really follow through the full possibility of what practice has to offer. And if you don't have enough, so the first one the sense of generosity or enough sense of virtue, the first to enough ethical integrity, if you don't have enough wisdom, or energy, or enough patience, enough sense of the truth, truthfulness, it's, you know, he did some of that in order to follow through. In practice, it's the same thing with resolve, you need some. And so sometimes what's the limiting factor for people continuing practice or developing the practice or letting it unfold is, is there is the lack of these armies, these developments. And sometimes a person can have one part be very strong you can have resolved very strong. But perhaps the commitment to truth is not strong, or the commitment integrity or the commitment to patience isn't you know, it can be very resolved but completely impatient. And so, you know, you need a number of these to work together. Sometimes one is enough to carry you through. So like for me, when I kind of look back at my years of more intensive practice, I think what was my strongest part of me my strongest quality that supported me and I my guess is it was resolved with you know, it was really resolved. I didn't have a lot of natural ability to get concentrated, for example, in meditation, but I made up. But being resolved and so became concentrated but not because of the resolve kind of kept me going and focused and continuous. And so different people have different strengths and different strengths which will carry the carry them support them. Sometimes when the people get to a barrier or obstacle or don't seem to make any so called progress anymore in practice, it's not uncommon for teachers and especially in Thailand to say, oh, that person needs to develop certain these permissives rather than continuing to beat their head against the wall of trying to meditate meditate meditative is meditation is the only way maybe what's needed is to take a break from retreats or a lot of meditation and develop some of these intentionally. And when one such strong day maybe then something some door opens up and it's possible to continue. So they're beautiful, certainly beautiful qualities. There you know, I think of all of these listed some of them already, right so are listed. There's generosity and ethical integrity and making effort and so generosity, ethics, renunciation, wisdom, energy, patience, resolve. And then the next two, which we'll do next two months is loving kindness, and equanimity. So all these are quite beautiful. And when you see them crystallized in a very clear way, coming through clearly with a person, it's quite inspiring to see if that person any of these, these qualities, very meaningful. And

hopefully, there are times in your life where you've touched into these different ones in a way that they crystallized or clarified or stood out, and you've so you have some sense of their value and appreciate them. So that's the introduction for today. To say a few more things about resolve this ID Tana

I don't think this doesn't in Pali, the word *Adi Tana*, it means kind of like something heightened, like something special, and tonight means to stand. So to heighten taking a stand, maybe that's what the etymology of the word might mean. So taking a position is what I'm doing this is where I'm at. This is what I'm sticking to, which is a nice, the English etymology resolve, I like a lot as well, because it comes from the word solve. And so, it has, so not just a matter of kind of, you know, bearing down and sticking to something, but it also has the idea of something being solved in the process. But solved also relates to the word solution. If you look back at the Latin word root for salt, salt, it means to be in solution in liquid to be dissolved. And so to resolve in, in it, certainly many Buddhist meditation practices, also To begin to dissolve, certainly we dissolve the tensions we hold and the attachments we have. And so the idea of being resolved is not supposed to end up being tense, you might be tense there might have to maybe something has to be tension, as Victor said, sometimes and to do it because sometimes we're up against huge obstacles in practice. I don't know if any of you but you know, but, you know, my mind sometimes it needs some help. And sometimes the resolve you know, to stump me stick to it and not listen to all these different possible motivations and desires and feelings and everything. So, you know, just stick to it. And sometimes they take some tension to follow through and do something which is not easy to do. But, but in a sense, in a shorthand, perhaps, a very short term kind of cliché ish kind of shorthand of Buddhist practice, would be, to be completely resolved at being relaxed. So meet you know, so, you know you might be tense originally, but they could the goal that all things about is learning to be relaxed, not to be relaxed by being relaxed but be committed to being relaxed to fall through to be thorough about being being relaxed, being thorough about learning to let go thorough but showing up and being present thorough in, you know, being mindful. So I think of this idea of resolve is one of the things that supports our capacity to be thorough and thorough, I think is really necessary in order to really follow through or to fill our lives with the value of the Dharma in the practice. So how do we get become Thoreau is about being resolved. So there were determined determination is sometimes used as well. And determination has both the meaning of being resolved and you're committed in some way, but also means that something's been decided. And so we just decided on this thing and so this is what I'm going to bring up With my stand, this is what I'm going to follow through on. Some people shy away from determination and resolve. They're afraid of it, or they feel like it's something wrong to do it or, you know, they feel not worthy of it. Or they feel like if they're determined to somehow they're going to go against the grain of other people's wishes, are they're gonna roll over people or, you know, they just so there's a lot of obstacles to being resolved being determined to follow through. Sometimes it's fear. Sometimes, it's reasonable fear, you know, like, you know, you know, how am I going to if I just kind of throw myself into doing a long retreat, even if I go do a three month retreat, which is a big deal. You know, that's kind of foolish because, you know, can I come? Will they hire me back in my job when I come back? Maybe they won't, and three months is a long time to take a leave of absence. And so maybe there's a reasonable fears, you know, what am I how am I gonna have to live with that I'm gonna follow through If I, you know with my life if I kind of step out for three months, and so we have to negotiate that then. And sometimes the sense of resolve is so strong, that doesn't matter, there's a fear of I'm going to follow through anyways what I'm going to do

a very kind of simple, simple colloquial way of saying resolve is stick to this stick to sticking to things stick to it. I'm going to stick to this. And maybe some of you have had the experience of, I'm going to stick to this however long it takes. My eight year old son someone gave him a present this year Christmas or something, which is origami box, folding paper thing and it's it's 306 Five origami shapes

to make over the year. So one a day. And it comes in Oregon. Each instruction comes in a origami so like, you know, April 4 15th. Right. So the instructions for April 15. Today's

comes

on the paper that he'll make April 15. So in other words, the instructions in the paper he's going to do is holding on today had the instructions for the folding he did yesterday. All right, so that's the backside somehow. So and they're getting increasingly elaborate, you know, it's he's been doing it since January, I guess. And it's very complicated boxes and, you know, boxes in boxes and stars and you know, just quite elaborate music. He's eight years old. And he loves it likes doing them but he'll be standing at the table doing them and Sometimes he gets angry, gets really angry and he gets bent a little bit about, you know, this is hard. And he never asks for help. And he never gives up. He just stays there and stays, he's gonna do this. And he's gonna do it. And then eventually, he has a boxer he has the thing as beautiful. He has this he has this capacity for being determined. So I'm gonna follow through on this I'm gonna do that I'm gonna figure this out. And you know, I wish he wouldn't you know, get angry but but exactly breeding behavior these kind of, he doesn't swear but you get some kind of i don't i don't think he knows yet. He doesn't know those words yet. But, you know, you hear these little explosions. And, but you know, he, and you hear these explosions, I think by a reasonable person would give up I mean, it's not working. But you know he's gonna stay to it. So in terms of departure dummies, this stick Tunis has to do intimately with two things. It has to do with our liberation. And it has to do with our compassion. That's what admit what makes these qualities armies is when they're connected to these two. So it isn't just simply having resolve for pizza. Man, you can do that it's okay but, but that's not what then you know being resolved for pizza then that resolve is not a parmi it becomes a parmi when resolve is connected to being on the path to liberation to freedom, and when it's on the path of living with when the world with compassion, and so resolve here both supports the movement Towards liberation. And it supports compassion. As we become more compassionate, there's become more free. It then supports the growth of resolve. And so this is really the, you know, the, you know, so we're not today we're not just looking at resolve as a general quality in our life. We're really looking at resolve as and how it points back to the heart of what Buddhist practice is about. Freedom and compassion. So, you have any questions about that you ask anything you want to say or comments at this point.

You don't have to but maybe just stimulated something

right behind you.

I was intrigued by what you're saying about having resolved without patients, so forth. And when I thought about it, it's almost like you need them both. You know, they're really almost two sides of the same coin.

Today Yes.

I would distinguish resolve from skillful desire. I see resolve as the force to stand still while everything else moves around, but I'm going to stay where I am. Where a skillful desire or chonda is what has the goal to it. I don't see resolve as having a goal quite as much as I've heard somewhat interesting.

I just my impression could be diminished. There's many there's many things to be resolved to. So the resolve to be still to be here. It's very important especially in meditation, and in being free, but you can have so I think of resolve as being being different than intention, different than desire, but connected to intention and desire, because there has to be an intention and desire for resolve to operate. And so

resolve is the strength, the power, or the commitment, but more than just commitment, but it's the, it's the follow through energy. And I'm going to do this. And so certainly, I think I think one of the beautiful things in meditation practice is the resolve to stay still and not give in to anything and stay present. But I think that there can be desire for cultivating loving kindness, and then there can be a resolve to do it. I talked to a beautiful monk yesterday and, and he was telling me about his his loving kindness practice. And he said, Oh, yeah, when I walk around. I asked him if he I asked him you When you do a loving kindness practice, do you coordinate the phrases you say with your breathing? And he said, No, not what I do in a meditating. But I, if I do that when I'm walking around the streets, then I kind of get too into myself kind of more kind of, you know, internal and I don't pay attention to what's going around. So I don't, I don't focus on my breath. I just do the phrases as I'm walking along because I'm walking around the street, you know, and nothing better to do. So I go around, I say my phrases and just kind of see what happens and say my phrase and see what happens and stay open. So, you know, here he has that he has a certain kind of resolve or relaxed resolve, but you know, enough resolve to follow through walking around the streets and doing loving kindness. So I think there can be desire

For me, it's really kind of interesting because there's a goal or just kind of a direction that we're going to go. But there's also that tranquility that I miss, often in myself, I get real excited sometimes. And then it's been able to go with the flow as we're going in that direction. So it's kind of like paddling a canoe upstream. know you're going upstream. But without a map, you actually don't know what upstream is, you know, so you might go up this one little creek and decide, well, now that didn't feel good to go up another. And that's kind of what resolve is, you know, you're going upstream. But you really, and that's the focus, you know, you want to get to the top, but you don't really know exactly what it takes to get there. So it's kind of going against the flow you're going with the flow. Is that close might

say so to go back to them with Kim's idea of standing still means something Different somebody think different things to be resolved at or with. And, and also there's I don't have to say exactly, but there's like layers. I mean you could have, you can have a goal of freedom and know that the best way to come free more free in the future like a goal is to be completely present here not move from this spot. And if you if you committed here and stay here, then something begins to shift and change, and that change brings you to freedom to greater freedom. So the goal is might be downriver, but the but the way to get there is to really paddle the boat here. Or just to stand here. Make some sense. I'm saying Cindy.

So What happens when you resolve causes suffering for others?

Well, then you need to stop and, and, and reflect carefully what's really going on? And what's the trade off? And what's the nature of that person's suffering? What's the nature of what you're trying to do? Sometimes maybe you're overly attached to something and so it can they get the relationship between being attached and being resolved to different things, right. But sometimes we're very attached and the attachment it gives the result gives it gives a strength to the resolve. You know, I'm going to, you know, more comes to mind right now, as you know, how I chase girls when I was 15. I mean, I was pretty resolved. I mean, the things that I did to you know, was follow through with you know, you know, maybe like, I went to went through, I wanted to meet this girl again. And all I knew was a street she lived on and her first name so my friends I went through the telephone book. And when I went to the back and he went through the from the front, and we called everywhere we look to the streets, and we called everyone who lived on that street was referring to the telephone book and asked for her name. And we found her. But that's a resolve. But I don't know how much freedom was in that. Yeah, there are certain certainly a lot of desire. So but in terms of, you know, somebody else getting hurt because of their feelings suffering because of it. Then you have to read, I think it's really good to start with him. Stop and

look at that and question it and understand, maybe talk to them about it. It could be by talking about it, you can understand better what's happening. It could be that they're being unreasonable. They're attached to something and it's their practice. And sometimes your job is just ignore them and I'm sorry, but you know, I feel for you, but you have to work this out yourself. Sometimes it They're off somehow. And you say, Well, I care about you, and what can we do to make this easier or work this out for? So it works for both of us, we have to make this work for both of us, and how do we do that? And, and sometimes, depending on how they're suffering, you realize that you know that they're not going to you know, that maybe this isn't a situation where their well being takes higher precedence than yours. And so, you might be very resolved about how important it is to be free and to meditate and go on retreat. And this is the most important thing in your life. And, and it's a beautiful thing and you know, you can be tremendous service to the world around you, if you kind of free your heart and deal with your whatever deep issues you have. And this is nothing can be more important. Seemingly. These are all Yeah, but we should remember I have this, you know, one year old at home. You know, and if I leave now, there's one year old is going to suffer, you know, mom leaves, right? And so what takes precedence so then I hope that the day care of this kids is more important than going on retreat. So there's a trade off and you have to kind of find your way and there's no formula for just accept a lot of attention and mindfulness and empathy understanding of the other people and yourself and trying to find what's best approach that I take often with a lot of things is is twofold. On one hand, I'd like to like to believe that I'm looking for the greater good for the for everyone what's best for everyone involved, not just what's best for me or for that person, what's good for the greater good. But also I have this kind of belief, that or operating principle that if you if you explore the situation enough, and you can find you can find a solution that brings out the best net for everyone. So rather than a kind of win, lose kind of situation. You hang in there. Well, it's a win win for everyone.

I had a comment, but also what you were saying about someone leaving the young child. It made me think about Deepa Ma, her resolve that she needed to heal herself and left her daughter in the care of someone else in order for something bigger, so just kind of Well think of that and moment. What was her resolve in that? She was suffering?

Yeah. I mean, she wasn't resolved in liberation, per se, but exactly, but her suffering was so monumental. And she was so sick. That I don't know, I think she could, she probably couldn't have been a good parent. And so she, I mean, you know, that was an extreme situation and she needed healing. She needed, you know, the hospital, you know, spiritual hospital. And so, she came back and she has, you know, she came back and was I met her in India. I met her at her daughter's house and their loving relationship. It wasn't I don't think our daughter I couldn't They suffered because of it, but it was a known they were committed. Yes. So but so that they say there sometimes people suffering is what makes them resolve the suffering is so big, that you know, if they don't do something here, the other option is not doesn't work anymore.

And that goes to my original comment before you had that as like to me there seems to be a quality of generosity in resolved, and that I'm hearing something deep inside myself towards liberation towards compassion, like she did. And there's a generous act of quality that I'm actually offering to myself. By this resolve beautifully feels is like a generous thing.

It couldn't be it doesn't have to be very could be and that's a beautiful thing to be generous towards yourself or generous to the Dharma or generous to, to be very gracious and generous and to the urges the aspirations that arise from within us.

Where's the other mic? Okay, what do you have that? Do you have it?

Wondering this week? If there's a shadow side of resolve?

Absolutely. We'll get to that. Of course of the day. Okay.

Well, maybe that's the same question I have, which is how do you keep resolve what you mentioned a while back link between attachment and resolve. And I find with myself that it can become an obsession, the resolve, and then burn out on it. So that's an obstacle for me. Yeah, we'll address that.

Yes, it will talk to us obstacles, but yes, mean resolve can come with all kinds of associated problems. I mean, there can be a lot of attachment and can be, you can be resolved in something really beautiful and valuable. But, but it comes along with clinging, you know, and so then it's, you know, you can end up with problems. Okay.

So some of you might need to go to the bathroom at this point after an hour sitting here but so you can either we would do a break you open two pairs to talk about this individually in a little bit. And then before you start you can go off to the bathroom and come back and start your pair discussion. And now what I'd like you to discuss with is, is some is your how resolve has worked for you know, what is this way, what are you resolved in, in terms of doing a mindfulness practice of Buddhist practice the path of liberation In practice, spiritual practice. What are you resolved on? Are you resolved? Could you be resolved? What would resolve be like in doing a spiritual practice? What has been your experience of being resolved in the most successful ways? What are the what are the benefits you received from being resolved and doing a spiritual practice and following through in that kind of committed way? And if the idea of connecting to mindfulness meditation or spiritual practice doesn't quite work for you, then find something else. What is something really good that you have been resolved on in your life? And what was that like for you? What did you feel like? What was it it allowed you to follow through? What supported it? What were some of the, you know? things connected to allow you to follow through in a good way and make enough sense It's not It's not an exact question because I like to these questions, something's a little bit vague so you can find your own way in it, find your way, find yourself in it. And rather than, you know, I'm not looking for an answer, like, you know, the answer, the particular I'm looking for I'm finding, right? When I have questions, it allows you to kind of discover find yourself. And the way, the way that these kinds of pair discussions work best is that don't think of them as a ordinary conversation, where you're telling someone else something for their sake. But rather, you're speaking, so you can hear yourself and see as you speak, you can explore and discover something new about the topic. And if you find yourself telling you telling someone else, something you've told people 100 times before, you know the whole thing really well. You know, it's probably not so useful. You want to kind of say it too quickly or abbreviated Lee or so. To make try to find some way to push the envelope to get beyond understand this particular thing in a new way or go beyond that, they already well, Warren understandings you have to decide to discover something about yourself. And And so, one way to do these kinds of pair discussions have one person just talk for a while, and the other person just listen. And so the person who talks can just kind of explore and maybe just pauses and they can explore and think and explore and, and find their way and see what's new, what comes up or what bubbles up that's might be different. And the other person mostly just listens, doesn't ask questions just listens. And so for this time, whatever, sometimes I give it length of time I say, Okay, do it for you know, five minutes or 10 minutes each person talks and then the other person listens. Then we switch. Today what I'd like to try with is find your own way. Make sure that you're more or less talking to the same one person doesn't dominate the period of time. But it doesn't have to be one person, half the time first half and the other person, second half, it might be a quarter, quarter, quarter quarter. I don't know how you're going to find your way but be a little more fluid and relaxed about it and how we usually are. And

you have 15 minutes to do it. And I'll ring the bell when we're halfway through just so you can check make sure you check in how it's going. Switch if you haven't switched or kind of trying to find more balance and who's doing the talking to make enough sense to use a clear any questions about that. So find a partner you can sit with and then when you're ready, you can start