

2013-06-02 The 5 Supports For Spiritual Maturity

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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to IMC. The I would like to make one announcement, I think, one in a couple of weeks on the 14th of June. We have kind of a special day long event with a teacher from Portland named Gregory Kramer. And he has been a very interesting pioneer in the, with the insight practice, in that he's taken the teachings of Theravada Buddhism that insight practice we do and applied it to meditating in speech to be mindful and speaking in relationship with people. And I think he noticed that sometimes, people who do insight meditation, spend a lot of time with our eyes closed not relating to others. And so to explore how the value of this practice can arise and in relation to other people has been his passion for many, many years. And he's developed a whole series of retreats and how we approach for, for working with that and working in dialogue and talking. So it's kind of special. He's come here a few times before, but he'll be here, I think on the 14th of June. And then, and then, in about three weeks, on a Sunday after our regular Sunday program, I think it's the 23rd of June, we're going to have a community meeting. We don't often do community meetings. We don't have anything particular we have to talk about. So that's good, I guess. But it's good to meet in a different format. And so we'll after the Sunday morning, we'll meet in the outer Hall and maybe have tea and sit in a circle and talk about issues related to IMC is a community of practitioners and hear from you some of your concerns you might have questions.

So, I'd like to talk today about a remarkable discourse sutta from the time of the Buddha that lays out some of the useful foundations for engaging in kind of wholehearted or intense or practice of meditation or the spiritual life and, and in relationship to Gregory Kramer coming, you'll see that the first foundation for engaging seriously spiritual life is having good spiritual Friends and companions, so being in relationship with others. The it has to do with a story of a monk by the name of Meghiya. And Meghiya was the Buddhist attendant for a while. And the discourse, doesn't say this, but I think it enhances the feeling of the text. If we imagine the Buddha is quite old, you know, he's maybe close to 80 and maybe an old man like that, wandering around India, it was good to have a companion to kind of younger, younger monk, maybe quite young, who helped with some of the things that needed to be done. And so Meghiya one day, one morning, said to the Buddha, maybe this would be a good time for me to go off on my alms round and so the walk into the local village or town and collect the food you can eat for that day because monastics, that's the only food monastics eat. And that it's tradition is what people give them that morning. So the Buddha said, Please Go into your alms. And it's possible quite likely that McGee was also responsible for going collecting alms also for the Buddha, this old man's going to town to get the food and come back and eat it. Still to this day and countries like Thailand and Sri Lanka, they have this custom. And so on his way back from town, Meghiya was walking, I think, maybe along

the river, and he came across a beautiful mango grove. So maybe you can imagine a mango grove. mangoes have big canopy and it's probably somewhat cool in a hot air hot country, on the edge of a river, maybe a nice breeze, very peaceful and occurred to this young monk. This would be a great place for me to practice meditation. So he went back to the Buddha and after their meal, and Meghiya said to the Buddha, I found this wonderful place by the river is mango grove. And now I have permission to go off into the grove to practice meditation for the day. And the Buddha said to him that this is not a good time. Why don't you wait until another monk comes to be my attendant? And so Meghiya says, a second time, he said, with a little argument, he says, Well, you know, you've already done you've completed your practice, you're, you're enlightened and spiritually mature and, you know, you've done what you had to do, but I'm still not a young monk and I'm still need to practice I want to practice and and, you know, this is a great place for me to practice. And the Buddha said, you know, not now why do we wait until another person comes to the monk comes? And then Meghiya says the same thing a third time. And the custom apparently in India or at least in the Buddhist circles at that time, was if you ask the Buddha something three times he acquiesce, it's so he said, Please, you know, You know if you need to please go. So Meghiya, went off down to his wonderful mango grove in the river and started meditating. And after a while, he noticed that he was obsessed with lust, thoughts of lust, thoughts of ill will and thoughts of cruelty. And then he said to himself, and I love this part of the text, he says, This is amazing. This is awesome. I am seriously committed to the practice that the conditions here to go off and practice seriously. It's amazing. My mind is filled with lust and ill will and cruelty, thoughts of cruelty in that lovely that rather than say oh shit. Shoot, you know, I'm just a rotten, no good, lousy person with these terrible thoughts and, you know, I'm a Buddhist disaster. No, it's embarrassing. For others it's amazing this is something you know this we could all take a lesson from that to be amazed and in awe of the power of our minds and what goes on and how are you know we have the intention to do one thing but our mind has another idea in an amazing so he goes then so he realizes is not working to meditate so he goes back to the Buddha. And he says to the Buddha, it's amazing, sir. It's quite awesome. I've intense and serious and with the conditions to practice was beset by less than ill will and thoughts of cruelty and suffering the Buddha says seek a more or less right here.

Oh yes, he said the Buddha says when the mind of freedom is not yet mature. There are five things that lead to maturity. So in other words, you're going to say that if you're not really free, yet free enough to go and practice on your own, there are five things that lead to that maturity that ripening. And before I tell you what those five are, I would like to kind of re categorize them or interpret them. And five great tasks that any human being should engaged in, in their life, maybe as a foundation, for in Buddhism for freedom. And the first task is the task of belonging, to feel some connectedness and belonging, people don't feel some sense of belonging to a community to a place, it's a little bit hard for them to find their way in life. The second is a sense of integrity, your wholeness to feel whole or integrity or have a sense of worth because of one's personal integrity. The third is to be happy. Be there have some basic happiness in one's life. The fourth is to have a sense of purpose for oneself. And the fifth is to have some deep understanding of this life we're living. So these are important tasks, and some people have some of these few people have all of them. But some people, it becomes really important to work on these, one of these one or more of these areas. Because without some of these brought to a certain level of, of maturity, certain level of strength. There's kind of a hole in a person that makes it hard to do the kind of deep spiritual work that Buddhist practice is pointing to. And so sometimes it's necessary to actually take care of these other things first, before going off on retreat or doing you know, really long intensive practice. And so the Buddha says, you know, there's five things that lead to your maturity so he's gonna lay down the foundation and what was lacking in muggiest practice, why couldn't meditate. So the first the Buddha says is to have good spiritual friends and companions on the way. So they have other people who are models of practice who can support you in practice, it could be guides in practice, who can walk the path with you. And it doesn't mean that you have to have a lot of people, or it has to

doesn't mean they have to be kind of intimate friends with people. But it's very hard to do this path when you're doing it alone. And some people I know, in this environment, when they are the only person that they know in their circle of colleagues and, and, and friends who meditate. They can feel like they're the odd person out. And it's a somewhat common conversation I have with people who come to me and say, before I started meditating, I was just just happy at work at the coffee tea area, you know, with the conversations that are happening there. And but after you're meditating for some time, I just couldn't have those conversations, because basically all we did was gossip. And I can't do that anymore. And so it's kind of awkward. What do I do? So, or some people feel like you know, everyone thinks everyone else thinks you're weird because you meditate and you're like, be quieter than you used to be. And so it seemed kind of strange or the one man many years ago, it came time seeing an older man. I didn't hold maybe in the 70s had grown children. And he was became here for a while and he meditated for, I don't know how long he was meditating, took a meditation. And then it came to me, he said, My kids are really worried about me. And, and they're worried because I'm not. I'm not the same person. I'm not behaving the way they're used to me, the behaving and they think something must be wrong neurological problems or something. You see, I spent a lifetime being nervous. And now that I'm meditating, I'm no longer nervous. Did you know all the other kids knew I was just nervous, very prepared, right? Something must be wrong and that's not nervous. So anyway to have other people, whether it's a meditation group that you go sit with, then just use the fact that you see other people that meditate can be meaningful and you realize that you're not the only one who's strange to some other strange people.

It can be helpful and, but also to have people to mirror you. I think it was very important for me in my practice, to especially early years of practice, to be grounded, be around other other practitioners who are more further along than me, and to meet them and be mirrored in the scene myself in them. Mostly, I saw you know, a lot of my attachments and attachments, a sense of self and how I tried to present myself to them to make an impression and so a lot of things is kind of social games I was playing that I wasn't these people didn't participate in in so I got to see myself more clearly. It was very important to see people who were more who had practice their sincerity and dedication and their hardness or their practice and maturity. Because there were times where it was hard for me to continue doing the practice. And only by having other people around to inspire me, did I keep going. There are people who pointed out some of my faults, some some of the challenges some of the ways I was little bit off and without those, you know, those pointing out, I think it would have been much slower for me to do this path. So there's many ways in which having good spiritual friends operates. Again, you don't have to be good, you know, really good, intimate, conventional friends with people. When I was living at the monastery for three years. I didn't really have really good friends there. It's more like everyone was my friend is more like, everyone is part of my village. And so I felt kind of connected to everyone and had plenty of social time with people. But, but it was the way practicing together with the And, and the kind of exchanges we had were very meaningful for me even though that wasn't a group of people that I was really close to. So the first thing the Buddha said is to have good spiritual friends or community or companions along the way. The second is to be ethical to have to develop one's virtue and integrity. And I like the word integrity, partly because it kind of means one, maybe, and to become whole. It's my belief that the lack of integrity is a lack of wholeness. When we do things to intentionally cause harm to others. We're not hold ourselves, we're disconnected to ourselves, there's holes and gaps in who we are. And if we want, it's very hard, it's very hard to be unethical towards other intentionally, if we are holding ourselves because in that wholeness, there's a sensitivity and both to ourselves and to others. That just doesn't make sense to intentionally cause harm to anyone. And so the task of becoming whole task of becoming whole in such a way that we know ourselves that we feel complete in ourselves, we're not disconnected to ourselves. I think probably some of you will recognize how easy it is to do something that later you, you regret. If you're harried and stressed out, you're in the freeway

rushing you late, fuming, everything's going wrong, your car's overheating, and you're trying to get someplace and someone cuts you off. And it's very easy to do something with your finger. And but if you're calm and settled and relaxed, and you don't feel in a hurry, probably you just kind of take it all and kind of take it all graciously. Someone cuts you off in traffic and you're sitting there and it's hot. So the state of our mind is very important. So how do we how do we feel whole? How do we feel connected to ourselves in a way that we feel holder? I'm integrity, so we live ethically. So ethics is very important. There's a foundation without it, there's probably no Buddhism. at all. So the third foundation is to be happy, what I call to be happy. And, by the way, this is how the Buddha words it. It's connected to having good spiritual friends.

One obtains at will, with no trouble or difficulty talk that is a facing type which is a help in opening up the mind, which conduces to complete. Letting Go, peace, direct knowledge, enlightenment, and Nibbana. So it's kind of nice. So you hopefully you come to IMC it's relatively easy to get here and where you go on the web nowadays, it's so easy to hear talks, you know, used to be in the old days you have to walk for even even, you know, just their stories, you know, from the 1940's of in Thailand of practitioners who walked for weeks and weeks in the jungles in the hills of Northern Thailand, looking for a great teacher so they can get teachings from that teaching. And, and now you just have to kind of plug in your iPad, you know, and they're all kind of, you know, you know, almost every center now posts, their Dharma talks, and, you know, it's so easy to get hold of. So back then it was particularly difficult so be able to easily hear these talks. But here's the here this is interesting. So it's basically easy to hear Dharma talks. This is also that was also a time when there were no books. So but here, you know, so what are the important things to hear if you hear a Dharma talk? He's supposed to hear the metaphysics of Buddhism or the philosophy of Buddhism. Here is what you should hear. Talk about future Have wishes. Talk about contentment, talk about seclusion, talk about being non gregarious. Talk about putting forth effort. Talk about virtue, talk about concentration, talk about wisdom, and talk about freedom. What do you think of that? fewness of wishes, contentment, seclusion, non gregariousness, putting forth effort, virtue, concentration, wisdom and freedom. So in the way I categorize this has to do with becoming happy, some some basic level of happiness. These are things that are conducive to becoming happy to be content. There's a way in which appropriate contentment with one's life. And probably all of you have the experience of being unhappy because you are discontent in some aspect of your life is not you know, not up to what you want and you want you wish it could be other Other ways even though you have all that you need, you have your basic necessities taken care of the unhappiness has to do with things that are on top of that. greater than that. There's another story in this book here, it's called the Udāna, about a monk who is sitting in the, in the forest, kind of in a forest monasteries with other monks around and he's sitting there meditating. And then the other monks suddenly hear this monk yelling out, oh, what happiness so happy, happy, happy. And so the, the other monks look at each other and say, Oh, we know what this guy is up to. Before he came to the monastery before he became monastic. He was a wealthy in the broad royalty, so he had a lot of wealth and His Royal person and he's remembering how much happiness he had having all this wealth and all this stuff and all this servants and everything. And he said he's remembering it. He decided now to disrobe and go back. So they go to the Buddha. And they say to the Buddha, you know, you can't believe what this guy happened to this guy. He said, happy, happy, happy. And he's just, you know, in his mind, he's remembering his life as being a wealthy guy. And he's probably decided to go back. So the Buddha said, well ask him to come see me. So he goes, the Buddha Buddha comes to see him and he says, you know, when you were meditating in the woods, did you say Happy, happy, happy? Oh, yeah. And why did you say that?

And then this is the answer. Formally, sir. When I was a householder, and enjoyed the happiness of royalty within and without my inner apartments, guards were appointed within without the city guards were appointed, but then without the district guards were appointed with Reverend sir. Although I was

less guarded and protected. I lived fearful, agitated, distrustful and afraid. But now on going alone into the forest, to the foot of a tree or to an empty place, I am fearless, an agitated, confident and unafraid. I live unconcerned unruffled my needs satisfied with a mind become like a deer's I don't know what's it might feel like a deer like a footnote.

So it says, as a deer living in a forest where people do not travel, stands and sits and sleeps confidently, and goes wherever it wants, once it wants unimpeded in its movement, so I live so that's why it's mine like a deer. Seeing this Reverend sir prompts me on going to the forest and meditating to exclaim, ah what happiness what happiness then nice. So, he has you know as a monastic he has fewness of wishes. So, how you know how the content and few wishes, having a simple life being virtuous, developing wisdom is it is a sometimes, you know, very different approach to life than how some people in their lives, lives that end up, feeling their lives with more desire. Fear and protectiveness and concerns around them. So the Buddha said, you know, that's a third foundation to prepare oneself for spiritual maturity. And then the fourth one, which is to have a sense of purpose, or I call it that one lives with effort aroused, for the abandoning or letting go of unskillful states and for acquiring skillful states. So, in other words, when begins to have a sense, that there are a sense of purpose, that there are some ways some mental states, some states of mind which are useful to have and some which are not useful so much are helpful and not helpful, that Buddhist word of skillful and unskillful and that have a sense of that differentiation. Then to know how to let go of those states of mind those activities of mind, which are not helpful for you, and to cultivate and develop those which are helpful for you. This is not meant to be something complex or analytical or you have to acquire, you know, read lots of texts about what you're supposed to do. But as we become more sensitive, through mindfulness and more aware, it becomes, I think, some point quite obvious that certain states of mind are constricted, they hurt, they're limiting their darkening. There's obstructing they don't help us know, support us in our lives. They help us to make choices we don't want to make and other choices in other states of mind, lead us to be happier leaders to make wiser choices need the mind to be open and sensitive and more more like a deer caught in the jungle. The you know, it's like, you know, the rush hour traffic example before you know if you're a hurried and upset and fuming that you can feel that's not a helpful state of mind. And if you want to, you know, you can make all kinds of mistakes that way, a helpful state of mind is a mind that's calm and relaxed when you're driving and open and attentive to what's going around going on around you. So that's the fourth foundation. To have a sense, I call it a sense of purpose. And a sense of purpose is not an abstract purpose. It's not like you have to read a philosophy book about what the true purpose of human life should be. But there's something that can arise from a deep connectedness or sensitivity to ourselves, that provides us shows us the purpose of life here now, because it's so obvious. If you stand if you step on a nail with your foot. The purpose right then is to take the nail out. That's pretty obvious. And I think that sense of deep purpose can come from a deep kind of knowing or intuitive sense to our life. That then you know, And that comes from being settled on ourselves and connected. But anyway, it's one of the purposes one of the tasks of most human life, some sense of purpose. It doesn't have to be the grand purpose of Mother Teresa or some big thing like that. But there's some without some sense of purpose or some sense of direction. Many people flounder in their lives. And then the fourth, the last one has to do with understanding. I think that there's a need for the human mind, human heart, to have some sense of understanding this life that we're in, and without some understanding of his life ran and what's going on. People can feel lost and flounder don't know which direction to go.

And, and the understanding that the Buddhist tradition points to is that understanding that leads to freedom to liberation. Liberated heart, a heart that's a piece in itself at rest in itself. It's no longer anxious, no longer Nervous no longer caught up no longer a heart that's addressed in itself. The understanding to provide that provides some of the greatest understandings. You don't have to

understand physics to be have a settled relaxed heart, there's no need to, to say that but you know, to me, it's it's people who do so much anymore. But for periodically, there's been these books written on Buddhism. Now the Buddha and physics teach the same thing. And so, you know, you have to kind of, you know, think you have to understand Buddhism now you need to kind of get into quantum physics. But it's not that difficult to understand what you know, what it takes to have a settled heart. And so, but to have to understand that and the value and the importance of that, so the Buddha offered these five things to to McGee, this is what's needed. So, I've known people who have gone On retreat, to do long intensive retreats and had to leave the retreat, because there were some aspects of life that needed to be taken care of. My colleague and friend John Travis, maybe you've heard this his story. He was on a long retreat and in India and he was felt some big obstacle come up and it wasn't making any progress. It was it wasn't happening as retreat. And so Ram Dass was in India at that time he knew him back. So he went to Ram Dass and told him what was happening and Ram Dass listening to it said you need to go back to Kentucky to see your father and reconcile your with your father. So John Travis cut off his long dreadlocks that he had and went to a tailor in India and got a suede corduroy suit made and, and then went back to Kentucky to see his dad and then but Rhonda said go back and see your dad but don't stay long. So he kind of went back into his father's world and kind of reconciled or with his dad. And then he went back to India and continued his practice. So sometimes an example of you know, sometimes we have to kind of take care of certain things. And I've known people also who have kind of beat their head against the wall trying to meditate, because they thought somehow they got the message, that meditation you can take care of all your problems. And so just kind of just, you know, try harder and do more. And, and it doesn't work that way. Sometimes certain some things certainly can be addressed in meditation. Meditation is very powerful. But to expect everything to be addressed in meditation is not accurate. So here are these five kind of foundations for spiritual maturity that the Buddha gave maggia I think are a nice kind of reference point to reflect on and think about your life or some of these areas of your life areas that could use a little more attention. And so they can so they can support you more as you go along. Can you have more spiritual friends or better spirits? connection to other people? Can you work on your virtue? My assumption is all of you are virtuous. But my assumption is for all of us, there's probably can be improved somewhat. And then and then what's your level of happiness? Are there ways or the behaviors things you can do simple things to make your life a little bit happier with being more content and maybe you certainly the here, the idea is you listen to Dharma talks make you happy to inspire you. But I think the idea is not just to be keeping inspired, but to actually follow through on some of these ideas, discover how to have fewness of wishes, how to be content, how not to be gregarious in a way that just you know is not happy for happiness producing for anybody including you. And then to to know to have sense of what's skillful and not skillful, what's helpful and not helpful to really have sense of that. And then to cultivate those things which bring understanding. And in addition, in our tradition that comes from meditation, the deeper understanding of what helps liberate the mind is what unfolds through meditation itself. Doesn't have to, but it's where it is. So what do you think of all that? So you have any comments you'd like to make about McGee? Or about the Buddha's comments, or about yourself?

I have a question. And that is that, do you think that if you attend to all five, that it really contains everything in your life in the end anyway?

I suppose it's pretty Throw. You're trying to get to try and get away with not meditating? No, that hasn't worked. So far. It hasn't worked so far. Yeah, it's, it feels pretty thorough. And so you know, and also, you know, the idea that you would put off meditation to all these things are done, it's probably not so useful. So these are integrated, they work together. So this is kind of one way of laying out a path or it's not, you know, a comprehensive picture of what it means to be whole and long, you know, in this in the spiritual path.

Yes. When asked this question carefully, it's about the non gregarious approach to being happy. And I've seen folks who are sort of becoming serious about spiritual practice,

and they get serious Oh, boy. Yeah, yes.

And I understand not being falsely gregarious. But the non gregarious and the straight face the dour is that looking through newness you know they

I used to have a great upside down smile and meditating

the let it just be a transition, they have to go through maybe sometimes it's sometimes up sometimes when when people are finding our way they need sometimes let the pendulum swing and in order to find their way and it is pretty serious work means the two people the need some people have for practices he really huge. I mean, the degree of suffering and challenge that people have in their lives some people have it's just you know, it's really over the top and so it is a serious thing for them. And so they might have been actually you know, they're just a series before but serious weather depression in our series with their grief or something so he's not it's not a crime to be overly serious. It's just sometimes a drag for everyone else. And, but I wouldn't, I wouldn't be generous to them. And partly because the, if they're doing a mindfulness practice something that allows them to really see themselves, it's self correcting. It'll work itself out. And so that's I would just be generous. And just, you know, let it be a transition time and way of finding themselves. Don't don't don't don't judge the whole tradition by who those people. Remember the guy who was yelling out in the forest, be happy, happy. Can you do it from your sitting? Yes.

Could you say more about the fourth one purpose At the end, you summarize it by saying skillful, choosing skillful instead of unskillful acts when you were speaking of it earlier, it It seemed broader and more defined than that could be Yeah, yeah. So I think i think i think i think for some people a sense of purpose in life is the big hole big lack that they flounder about and they're trying to find themselves to know what they're about and, and so without some result resolution of this issue of purpose, that we keep floundering in their life and up I kind of lost and so, you know, different people find different sense of purpose for their lives and there's different layers of different ways of understanding purpose can be multiple purposes at the same time, multiple levels of purpose. The ultimate purpose in Buddhism offers you know, for the Buddhist practice itself is liberation and freedom and some people find that to be extremely meaningful purpose that's more meaningful than anything else they can do. It's their biggest contribution to the world is, is to support the movement of liberated heart. And it's enough to give them a clear direction and that sense of purpose. Other people, maybe it's very important, but it goes together with doing some other work in the world of being of service that that gives them a sense of purpose or something, something else goes on. So because of the maggia is was a monastic wanting to practice and meditate, I think, for him, to have a clear sense of the purpose or direction that he was supposed to go was necessary. And some people will meditate and don't have a clear sense of meditation, what it's about and what they're trying to do in meditation. And there's not not not a few people don't really understand that meditation is supposed to help you have a relaxed and or a mind that's at ease. And so they strain a one month Recently I heard speak, talked about AI. When I first started meditating, I thought I had to suffer more in order to become free of suffering. And that didn't work for him. But you know, it took a while for him to realize that. So the idea that some people don't understand and so they go in the wrong direction. So, bearing down being angry, being too dour and serious, you know, you know that they actually may be making reinforcing habits of mind which are not useful, so to have some sense of which direction to go. And that's why this these talks about self

effacement contentment fewness of wishes, non gregariousness are kind of like pointers in the direction that's helpful to go. Not that we have to kind of, you know, end up being I don't know what just silence sages who don't want anything at all. With the direction of that is to go in that direction. Such a way can be happier and lighter and more open. Before

it come, there's a lot of something stirred up when I heard you talking about belonging and spiritual friends. So there are many questions so I really don't know what to ask. What I see what the image that I see in my mind is this pendulum going back and forth and just smiling at it and seeing the mind wanting to clean wanting to anchor to some place

And part of me, you know there's another thought deceits You're kidding me. It's like are you kidding that but in essence of it, there's it's just these bubbles coming out from from these pool of an I think I mentioned something about that yesterday

and bubbles of attachment in your in your sea of peace.

Yes. And it's not it's not a clinging to fix it or to make a difference is is is where is the balance of belonging like these belong gaining in a place of spaciousness and not belonging like this where I feel hopeful pressed.

Yeah, that's a good one. So how to how to how to what's a healthy way of belonging, the sense of belonging is a real sore source. really sore point for some people, some people feel they don't belong at all, anywhere they feel excluded. It's been remarkable to be in all kinds of groups. And, and everyone thinks everyone else belongs. You know, everyone think I'm the one who doesn't belong, you know? And, and I've known people who've been central to a group and you know, and you know, everyone sees them the central like, the pivot of it, then you talk to them, I don't belong, you know, I feel like if they find out, you know, if anybody finds out, find out who I am, you know, so they'd have inclusion exclusion is a very painful one. And if you're excluded, it feels painful. If you're included too much, it's painful. Sometimes, you know, it's a where do we fit in this kind of whole thing. So working that out and finding one's peace with that is very important. So you're saying that you know you have you have some capacity now for peace and in that capacity, You have these bubbles of suffering the bubble up that are still connected to the idea of belonging or not belonging and we're weird. Where does where does belonging? You know, sometimes belonging is oppressive. And, you know, I'm happy to belong to my group of friends, but I can't belong anymore to my family, you know, those going home to my parents, you know, just too difficult. And it's oppressive, you know, they they think I belong, but please, now live the other side of the country, then I feel okay. The Yeah, so that's a whole. That's an interesting question. So I think we should stop I think it's short. Medium. Maybe you'll get a very short answer. And then it's

just I see a lot of connection between these five things and back to the good gloriousness When when I'm in a more gregarious mood, I feel like I'm more connected with people and I'm more, I'm happier. And when I'm not feeling so gregarious, I'm more likely to be isolating and not so happy. So hearing that gregariousness is not okay. is not very appealing for me. Oh, good.

The so I think what you anytime you read these words, you have to take words lightly. And even you know with the words of the Buddha I mean, after all they're in translation probably multiple like telephone game, right? that's been going on down through the centuries. So what do these words really mean especially in English? And you know, I wish I had beforehand looked up the Pali for you and be able to tell you what the original word is. Maybe gregarious is not the best translation. So you always

had all these words, all these ideas yet. There's a context for them, you know, India 2500 years with different culture, different times. It Might have meant a whole different thing than we understand it to be. So you don't want to get depressed or to get take any of these teachings too heavily. I called this is the truth. This is how it is now I'm supposed to be non gregarious. The Buddha said it, you know, and what did he mean by gregarious, you know, just don't take anything to free yourself from that kind of burden. But this is what you can do it with this word gregarious, I'm not sure what is meant here. But this word is supposed to be is offered in a way that's, there's something about this concept or some concept connected, which is meant to be helpful and supportive for my growth and maturity. In what way can I understand this general concepts, so it's helpful for me. So that's the question for you. So what wait is this general concept that kind of fits into the IDF gregariousness? Or what way? Can you understand it? So it's helpful for you? I'm expecting an answer.

I didn't think we had that much time.

You know, if the hook that easily

I could see a type of seriousness, that would be, I would say, unskillful. If, if there's a lot of, you know, I mean, you could be gregarious at a party after for drinks or something, I mean, that probably wouldn't be very skillful. So I could see it. I could also see curiousness if it's kind of trying to be the life of the party, or people pleasing, or what have you as been unskillful, too. Yeah. So.

So I think i think i think the more useful approach many times is to hear you hear teaching, so how can it How is this useful for me? Because sometimes it's very easy, very easy to see how it's not useful. And then to limit yourself from benefiting from it because you actually don't benefit very much. We're saying this is not useful. Very often, you get much more benefit by saying, Well, probably there's ways is not useful, but how can I make this particularly teaching useful? In what way? How can I learn At what angle or perspective and, and maybe it's only like, maybe from now until, you know, for the next 50 years, maybe it's only going to be useful once you know this non gregarious thing, but that one time it's really meaningful. So, you know, So this when is it useful? what circumstances is useful? And what way can I understand it? I think it's actually a more I just think it's more helpful way of approaching this. And you have the freedom to do that, you know, you don't have to be oppressed by Buddhism, you know, then you get to a serious Okay, so thank you so much.