

2014-04-20 Celebrating Earth Day

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SPEAKERS

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So Easter, it's also Earth Day. And it's pretty close to when some people celebrate the Buddha's enlightenment. So it's a nice, we'll take it as a nice day. I think it's Earth Day is one of my two favorite holidays, maybe not an official holiday, but that Martin Luther King Day, Martin Luther King Day because of the social justice and Earth Day because of the environmental justice, the caring for the environment. And so I thought I would say some words about Earth Day. But first, you know, it's wonderful coincidence that the same day as Easter I don't know if you know this, but the rest of the world outside the English speaking world doesn't call Easter Easter men have a different language, right? But they usually use a word that's connected to the Hebrew, Greek latin word for Passover, the Christians kind of adopted the Hebrew word for Passover. So in like French, I think it's a skull. in Norwegian, it's posca it's a it's a and but we had an English we have Easter, and Easter comes from English Germanic in Northern European name for the goddess of the dawn and we have a record from the eighth century of someone writing saying that that in his dinner his lifetime, people stopped celebrating the you know, the celebration, the spring celebrations around the goddess of Easter, and have now switched over to celebrating the resurrection of Christ. And, but somehow they the English word or the Germanic word for East This goddess continued as the preferred name and English for this particular holiday. And so I kind of find that delightful that you know that, you know, we're you know, in the background here, it's time to celebrate spring, the beginning of dawn, kind of in nature worship perhaps from the old days before those Christians came over and pushed it aside or they got lost. And also, you know, the resurrection of Christ is also a beautiful idea symbolically for some people, the birth of something new. And so here we are, Earth Day. And so that's Earth Day is only about 48 40 years old. And also celebrating I think, an appreciation of nature, a connection to nature, gratitude for our natural world. But also the protection of the natural world that we have to protect it. So I wanted to say a few words about my own connect my own connection to both Buddhism and environmental care. Because for me, my my formative years in college that those were closely connected, I was going to school at UC Santa Barbara. And they just had a massive oil spill down there. Just before I started freshman year in college. And there was you'd walk on the beaches in Santa Barbara maybe still today, and you'd go home with oil blobs on your feet, because of the oil that's seeping out much much of a natural but some of it may be not. And we were studying. So you know, I got married when I was 19 got very interested in ecological crisis of the time and in the started studying and how to address these kinds of issues. And understood that was more than just politics was needed, but some kind of change of back then because a change of consciousness, some kind of a different view orientation towards our place in the natural world. And so I eventually came upon Buddhism, and one of the important doorways for me into Buddhism was actually as a philosophy that would help offer a more ecological view of how humans can live in this world. The and then as

I started practicing Buddhism, the, what was surprised to me was not the philosophy of Buddhism, which can be seen as being quite supportive of ecological lifestyle or approach to life. But, but rather was the chain actually the actual change of consciousness a change of mind states that happened through meditation. How that changed mind state creates a very different relationship to the natural world and to others that the whole world then any philosophy could ever do or any you know, the pre existing kind of understanding of self and other that I inherited or grew up with here in the West. Buddhism has myths and some of these myths can be tapped into for resources or understanding or inspiration for a Buddhist approach to nature. And what are the primary myths myths have to do with how the Buddha was awakened. It said that he was awakened underneath a banyan tree and around this time of the year and he and there are three wonderful myths. The first myth is that he sat under this banyan tree for several weeks pursuing his awakening and during that time, great Naga Naga is a great serpent snake came to protect him when it started raining. And I have at home a little statue of the Buddha sitting in meditation. And this is the base of the Buddha is kind of supporting him is wrapped around coils of the bottom of a snake. And then the snake like a big Viper comes up over the comes up behind him and then spreads his his head above the Buddha spreads out. It's kind of like kind of wing like Cobra kind of thing on the neck over him and creates a wonderful umbrella. And then this fierce Cobra snake kind of like looking at you. If you look at the Buddha above him, he's sitting peacefully in this fierceness above. And so this idea that the snake represents something in nature to respect some Power of force a force and that comes to protect us protect us. The Buddha was living of supposedly in harmony with nature, he wasn't trying to harm it, and, and doing something very profound and to be awakened to wake into his connection to the natural world. And in that, this this thing that deserves respect, a natural force came up and protected him. So this speaks to the idea that how are asked the question How are we protected by nature, the natural world, the ecology, we live in the global environmental resources that support our life or our lifestyle? And I would say that it doesn't take much reflection to see that there's a tremendous amount of ways in which we are protected by nature and are hosted in serve our life depends on The abundance and the well being of the natural world, that it has to work just right. It's not uncommon these days to read people who say that for human life to exist for life to exist on this planet, it's kind of like a very odd, because a tremendous amount of very precise things had to happen after the Big Bang, and down into it to be certain, you know, I mean, all these different things had to be just right, the strength of the grid tech, computational force, the strength of electrons and atoms and everything was things were slightly different than what they are now, everything would collapse or everything would kind of, you know, just vaporize out but somehow the universe is held together just right. And then we're just the right distance from us from a star from our sun, so we don't burn up but we don't cold, just large enough planets. So we have an atmosphere. It's phenomenal. You know, that whatever. To be just just right, in order for us to exist. And then and then, you know, it wasn't that many millions of years ago when this planet wouldn't have sustained life or human life. And things slowly evolved and developed. And now we have this wonderful planet that supports human life, animal life relatively well. These people who live in this part of the world, it supports Well, there are places in the world where

it doesn't do such a good job supporting them. It's a big challenge. And now that the global kind of climate is being challenged or changing, for whatever reason is changing, is the people who live in the marginal areas that tend to suffer the most. The people who for whom they're just barely having enough water already, is beginning to dry up even more. And so the idea that the natural world protects us sustains and supports us and that it's something that we should respect and cared for so it can care for us. I think for me, I read that back into the story of the snake that Naga coming to protect the Buddha. The second myth that part of the Buddha's enlightenment is that he had some doubts about his right to be awakened in fact that this myth goes that this kind of devil like figure, got came to the Buddha and challenged him and said, What right do you have to be enlightened, to be awakened to be free. And it

came at the very end of his quest. And I see it that sometimes doubt as being one of the last hindrances, to allow people to do the dramatic freeing of the heart, that liberated from a lot of the social conventions, social obligation, social conditioning that we grew up in. It's very hard To become free of, and so the doubt it's okay to take that step is it okay to step in some ways to become free from our conditioning and from our biological sometimes, perhaps, urges of, of hate, of greed, of lust of delusion that some people have. And so, what do we, and so the Buddha had some doubt, and where do you go when you You're the, you know the Buddha to be and you have doubts about about this. And so, the myth goes that the Buddha reached his hand down and touch the earth. And the view was that this the earth goddess, the goddess of the earth, then shook that was an earthquake attesting to his right door is worthiness to become free and to be enlightened and so on. quite fine at this idea that to find his right is to be awakened, that the Buddha called upon nature. You know, he was sitting outdoors meditating under the banyan tree, sitting on the ground. And as he called upon the natural world, to be his witness to his right to be awakened to be free. and to what degree is the natural world our witness to what degree is our connection to the natural world, meaningful supported helpful for us? Some people grow up in urban settings, where they never see the ocean. I've heard of people who grew up in in Oakland, who have never seen the Pacific Ocean. It seems kind of amazing, right? It's kind of amazing to see the Pacific Ocean to feel the vastness of it all. And have never been, you know, in the mountains or in the forests or many places. People who go To the natural world, that's not uncommon for them to feel something changes within them sometimes is a changing understanding of who they are themselves, changing understanding of values and priorities of their lives. If you get to spend time in nature, there's something that happens. The more time the more deeply we go into nature. Something began shifting and changing for us. When I was living at Tassajara, the Zen monastery in the car and in Big Sur mountains deep down in the Montana National wilderness. You take a I think it's a 14 Mile Road, you take over a dirt road, it's a kind of treacherous road full of potholes and cliffs going down and you go up steep steep, and try not to use your brakes going down the other side because, you know, it's steep, and they burn up the brakes. And then you come all the way down and so you're kind of in the middle of this private property in the middle. One of the great national wildernesses in the United States so I, you know, I was lived there for three years. It was a great to live there. But the second second year I was there, there was a Dutch man who came from Holland to be a monk there to live there. And he went to lunch to the edge of the property of the monastery up on a hill, and looked out, up down further up the Valley of the river to a waterfall that was across there. And he started crying.

And he said, that never in his life, had he seen nature, untouched by human beings, you know or not, weren't touched or unchanged by human beings. Growing up in Holland Northern Europe, the natural world there, the land had all been changed and, and rearranged and forests cut down and dikes built in, areas farmed. And so in the way he grew up, he had never seen nature that had been unchanged by humans, he started to cry. It's quite something. One of the sacred spots for me in here in the Bay Area, I think of it as sacred that I've never been on. And that's one of the reasons why it's sacred for me is the San Francisco has this Crystal Springs reservoir, you know, the water supply for the measurement. And much of the land going above the Crystal Springs, either side of 92, especially north of 92 is for many years was you couldn't visit it, no one is allowed to visit exists unless you work maybe we're working for the water district. And so I don't know how many acres it is, but it's a you know, big, big piece of land that has been walled off from human beings to enter. You know, they don't want the guests you know, things that flowing down into the reservoir. Maybe I don't know why it is. But the fact that there's this huge, huge acreage Right here in the Bay Area that humans can go in and mess with. And not only that, we can even visit it. I hold I hold kind of very special like like, wow, you know, you know that i like it and have a little bit disappointed some years ago when they opened one trail through it. And I don't know if you have to go with a tour guide or something or whistle you have to know you can go by yourself. What are some of the water district has to go with you? But now it's kind of it's I was little, I

was kind of disappointed. Because you know, we shouldn't be we should be we should wish you'd have done it. And I think we should respect you know, it's kind of like symbolically as I did we something about nature we should respect and not to make it all our own and not feel like you know, we can do whatever we want and pillage from nature and ruin it. And so it's the fact that there's this part that we can't go to mostly is kind of hold kind of special in my heart. And so what is it that nature does for us, you know, certainly protects us. It provides us with everything we need. But, but what happens? What's that heartfelt connection? What's that shift change of relationship that happens when we are in the presence of the natural world in some deep way? I think priorities change, as I like to point out that if you go spend 234 days in the wilds, like you're backpacking or something, some of the things that seem so important when you're back in urban life begins to shift. You know, you how clean your clothes are not that important. You know, you spills ketchup on your shirt, and, you know, like, doesn't matter, right? Who cares what people think about you and ketchup on your shirt. But, you know, come into the urban environment, you don't want to be caught dead. With walking through the city streets going to work with catch up on your shirts. And maybe you shouldn't, maybe it's good to keep that clean but, but somehow the social conditioning and what's important how we see ourselves began to change. And it's not uncommon for people to feel very alone and lonely in an urban place if they're alone and no one talks to them when they're in their own house or something. But you go into the natural world and you feel very alone. But even if you don't see anyone you don't feel lonely. One of the beautiful one of the kind of paintings artworks that inspired me when I was 19, and 20. and beginning to explore this, our connection to the natural world was the Chinese watercolor brush stroke paintings, of an of nature often was this beautiful mountain and river going through it or waterfall and, and it's just kind of very inspiring to see. But if he came up close to the painting, you'd see there A little hut with a person in the hut and the edge of the mountain or something and, you know, into somehow the scale of the natural world and the human being living in harmony with it was very inspiring. As opposed to some of the Western kind of Renaissance painting where the people stood in the foreground and nature wasn't behind like Mona Lisa. Right, the beautiful painting we have. And, but, you know, Mona Lisa, thanks, you know, she feels almost the whole canvas and yet to kind of look and kind of in a hazy way in the background is,

you know, that guy's probably Florentine, back, you know, landscape in the back. So, is there so you know, what, what is a How does being a nature shift our understanding of who we are as people, and how does it shift our relationship to the natural world itself. And if it does shifted, if the being in natural world shifts or understanding of self and the world What does it say about the status or the other? What does it say about what the sense of self is? And what does it say about what the understanding is, what the nature of their understanding is, of our place in the, in the natural world in the world. So what I'm trying to say in a clumsy way, is that our concept of self is fluid. Our concept of self is for the most part of a social creation. That's a convention. And it's can it's fluid that can be changed and changed depending on circumstances. And if you live in different societies, different cultures, different cultures have different concepts of self and different concept what it means to be a self in their society, what it means to be self in relationship to nature. And I don't want to say that one culture has a you know, leg up for, you know, a better sense of self and others. But every culture, part of what a culture needs to do is to condition members of its culture, to have a self concept that fits in there so that we're harmonious with each other. Just like every culture needs to teach its members a language so they can talk with each other. They have to teach, you know, basic ideas of what it means to be a kind of a self. If you insisted on having being your own true self, that's one of the kind of ideas in America, Be true to yourself, be your own person, find yourself is often so much emphasis on self, self, self and find yourself. And if it's taken too seriously this idea, then you might want to decide that to really be kind of your own person, you should just invent your own language. show those people. You know, just speak your language and no one else speaks in the world as you do. original language why use an old language? An old fashioned language that everyone speaks? It's kind of like passe, right? The English,

you know, has been around for a long time and why bother? And you know, we're ready for an upgrade anyway. And you don't want to, you know, speak a language there other people speak, it should be something that you speak. It's ridiculous, right? The purpose of language is to communicate with other people, if you will, no one spoke it. It doesn't serve its purpose. So the concepts of self we have, also are deeply socially conditioned phenomena that that are kind of like a language that helps us communicate, be involved with people. And but it's fluid it's created. And so being in nature, spending time in nature, and you start seeing and feeling your sense of self shift and change is a very important lesson, so that we don't take the concept of self too seriously or as too fixed. I saw this wasn't exactly connected to nature. But when I was 17 I was kind of like a hippie traveling around Europe, and a Volkswagen van. And we had almost no money at all I got \$50 for the trip. And five of us were in this van, we've traveled through Yugoslavia and Greece and all over and one of the people he was 19, my friend, everyone, whereas the rest were 17 with the guy who drove was 19 and he was looking for a French Connection. He was looking for the place where we could buy lots of marijuana. Anyway, anywhere he was gonna drive it back to Amsterdam. And so that was kind of like the subtext of our travels. And so we made it to Dubrovnik. And address nothing doing grease. That's we'll find it so we traveled to Greece and had a great time in Greece, not finding any connection. Belgrade had an address in Belgrade. So we drove up to Belgrade This is ridiculous right 17 year olds and, and you know, it's a communist country back then came to Belgrade and, and had his address and evening we showed up and knocked on the store. Third floor apartment building turned out to be the only rock and roll band Yugoslavia. You know, they've lived there so they were happy to see us and they put us up and, and, and then for the night and then the middle of the night. I don't know what time it was the Yugoslavian police stormed.

And then they left us all there but they weren't happy with everybody there. So there was no there was no connection there either. So but but the thing about that trip was that there were five of us we had very little money, traveling and this Volkswagen van all over and sleeping outside. We didn't. We slept outdoors. We slept back then in the park. work right underneath the Acropolis that was quite something sleep there on the night and look up and see the lights, I don't think you could probably can't do it anymore now through sleeping all over the place, and, and the way we shared everything. That's the point I wanted to say. So we shared all the money we had we shared if we remember anybody would buy which share with everybody else, which is completely a kind of a commune on wheels. And it was very nice. When we did it all without thinking was like obvious thing to do. And then I went back to Los Angeles for my senior year in high school. And I was hanging out with my friends. And there was no sense that we were all in it together sharing, we'd go out to hamburger joint after school, and someone wouldn't have money and I said, Well, I have money, I'll pay for it. No, no, no, no, we couldn't. That wasn't allowed. You couldn't do that the idea that you would, we're all kind of sharing our resources and helping each other out and like we're all in it together. Was For an idea of friends that I had, and it was kind of harsh for me to kind of go from this time in the summer where we were all sharing to a time where sharing was not allowed was not accepted. Wisdom wasn't something we did different views of self different ideas of self, different understandings of what it means to be in relationship to other people. And so one of the things that Buddhism teaches is that phenomenal interconnectedness, the fundamental basis by which our human life is dependently co arisen interconnected with the world around us that we don't exist independent of the world, we don't exist as autonomous units, but who we are in our experience of life, our thoughts and our values are all arisen dependently conditionally inter inter connectedly with the world around us, and so it That interconnected, interdependent nature of ourselves or ideas or concepts of self. It's also fluid, it's changeable. There are some, if it's not helpful and healthy, certain views of self. The good news is we're not stuck by it. It can shift and change. We can adopt and find more healthier, more helpful views and understandings of self that we can engage our life with and support our life with. And now with the kind of the global ecological crisis, it just seems

to get stronger and stronger. Or even if you don't think it's a, you know, even for people who don't believe this human created that climate change and everything is going on, chances are very good. That over the next you know, 4050 years, certainly in the lifetime of my my own children, maybe in our own lifetime for many people in our planet. People are going to have a tremendous amount of challenge with human life with be able to have they've been places where there's enough water live in a place where the crops that they're used to growing can still grow, the changes are going to create a tremendous challenge to help people live their lives. And are we ready to live? Are we ready for that challenge? How are you going to get ready for that challenge? It's kind of heartbreaking to me that what people are saying that people who are well familiar with the predictions of what's going to happen to the earth over the next 50 years, is most people have seemed to have given up any hope that we can reverse the damage or the change that's coming our way. It's already coming our way. And now they're saying we have to try to lessen the impact, and learn and now figure out how to cope with the impact. And how do we cope with the impact in such a way that there can be economic so Environmental Justice for everyone on the planet. So that everyone is well being is taken into account. We don't have a history of doing such a good job at that. It wasn't many years ago where there was no conception in the West. For many people in the West, you know, 100 years ago when or 50 years ago, were Europeans mostly and but also Americans

really pillaged the word world, you know, and went to war in order to get resources from others a guarantee that cheap resources were available for the West had no sense that they were stealing from holiday cultures and countries to mine and take the resources in order to build up the West. In the last 50 years, there's been much more understanding of how all this works, and much more, you know, but I don't know how much a big difference it has made. But as we go into the future, this interconnected world, we live in What is the sense of self? What is the sense the understanding of self and other that we want to develop and live by? So to create the most helpful environmental post helpful conditions for the globe as a whole? Do we want to see the globe as a whole, as one big family? Or is it really it's me against them. It's, you know, it's my family. It's my clan, it's my town, it's my country. And I'm not really going to pay attention to what's happening elsewhere. There's a beautiful story that's told in the Buddhist tradition of a monk who had, who had dysentery, and he was sick in bed, and soiling himself and the other monks were not taking care of him. And so one day the Buddha with his with his attendant, Ananda came across this monk sick and soiled in bed and the Buddha there In the Ananda they went and cleaned the monk up, carried him to a clean bed, and then gathered all the monks together to talk to them. Because you know, this was kind of not right, that among should be unattended, two legs soiled, being ignored. And the Buddha said to his monks, he said, Now that you are monastics, you have no mother and father take care of you. Now you have now you only have yourselves Take care of yourselves. And he said, in a very powerful way said, for those who want to attend to me, they should attend to your fellow monastics your community. And why that's powerful is that in the Indian religious scene, attending to the guru to the teacher, is considered one of the most meritorious forms of spiritual practice you can do and so there's a lot of emphasis given to that. And for the to redefine caring for the teacher to be caring for your community, I think it's a very powerful lesson. For us, we're not monastics here, I don't think. But I would like to reinterpret this particular instruction the Buddha gave to his local community of monks, to for us in our global community, in this world, that we live in this earth, we live in this global community. There is no other outside, who's going to take care of us. Taking care of us is up to us to take care of ourselves as a global community. Those who would care for their spiritual life should care for our global community for the world we live in. So what's the sense of self what's the understanding? And this fluid understanding of self? How do we how do we want to understand This world that we live in, what choices do we make about understanding of the world understanding of ourselves, if you don't make a choice, if you don't see it as a choice, then you've made an unconscious choice. The choice has been made for you, perhaps by your society, about the

notion of self notion of other, your relationship to the world that we live in. how deeply Have you looked at this for yourself? The third myth of the Buddha's enlightenment. So the first one has a snake. The second is the earth as a witness or connection to the natural world. And the third myth is that of after his enlightenment, it said that for seven days after his enlightenment, he sat under the banyan tree, enjoying the bliss of his awakening of his freedom. And then it's the myth goes, he took a number of he got up and took a number of steps away from the tree and turned around And looked back at the tree and then stood there and expressed his gratitude to the tree under which he sat this idea of expressing gratitude for the tree. So, he was supported by a tree shade, it gave him shade, they gave him support, it was his location, his place, but to turn around and express gratitude for the tree, you could say logically, it might make some sense

to do so, and maybe logically you can come to the idea to express gratitude for a place that supported you. But my kind of sense is that it was much more than gratitude that happened, who are much more than a logical finding your way to gratitude. And this is where I mentioned earlier my one of my surprises in doing Buddhist practice, is the change of consciousness that comes with doing the practice that as and you know, primarily, I think of it in meditation, the Sometimes being out in nature for a long time can make the same shift. Other things can do as well. But for me it was meditation, that as we meditate, but one of the things that's happening in meditation is that the normal discursive activity of the mind begins to quiet down. The normal stories we tell ourselves begin to quiet down. And these stories, these activities are telling ourselves stories have a huge impact on ourselves psychologically, and our well being has huge impact in the choices we make on the world, and a huge impact in how we see the world around us. More often than not, we see others we see the world through the filter of the stories that we tell, to develop through our desires and our wishes, our fears and our delusions. As the mental activity quiets the activity of story making quiets, as the mind quiets, the heart quiets, more The activity of greed, desire, fear, hate, quiet as a quiet even more the, the mental activities that are involved in creating a sense of self that we normally have begins to quiet down as well. And it's quite remarkable to discover that what we, what we what we thought was just, we just assumed or inherent or deeply embedded in who we are. Our sense of self is also a construct also arises out of the activity of the mind. And to have all this activity is quiet down. And then to open your eyes and look at the world. The world looks different. It's very different. Unless your old way rushes back in, you open your eyes, but it looks different. One of the ways it looks different is that It's very hard in a very deep, quiet clear mind it sees clearly without all the all the overlays of stories, its tendencies we don't see a sharp separation for himself another sharp separation between the world and me that this was there's a, there's a seeing not an understanding conceptual but a seeing of deep interconnectedness that we're not separate. We're all together in some profound, meaningful way. So much so that if you look at a tree, the tree is not different than you. You're not different from the tree, you become the tree almost. The tree becomes an extension of you, you become an extension of the tree. The I remember when I was about 20, at a time when I was very deeply coming out of this kind of way of seeing. I watched Someone tear a leaf off a tree. And it was painful for me to see that. Now I thought afterwards maybe that's kind of silly, isn't it? It's kind of silly kind of, to just be seem to have that kind of sensitivity to feel the pain of elite being torn off for treatment. But in fact, I thought it was actually quite profound to feel that sense of connectedness to the natural world. The Buddha said, for some things, some for someone who sits or sleeps under a tree under the shade of a tree. For them to then get up and break a branch off the tree is similar to it is the same as harming a friend or is harming a friend. He likened the tree to a friend. So to stupider after his enlightenment stood back, walked away from the tree turned back and looked at And something happened in that seeing of the tree, that he felt that he had to bow to the tree. Actually, the myth goes on and says, He stood there for seven days expressing his gratitude for the tree. And I'd like to see this as a as,

you know, as symbolic for gratitude towards the natural world that we live in. But not but the gratitude that comes out of a heart and the mind that sees with clarity, a heart and mind that's learned to see not through self interest, but rather sees as if we don't need to be self interested in the kind of profound liberation and freedom of heart where we just are there. Free. seeing clearly ready to respond with the hearts ability for compassion and care and honesty, the kind of freedom where we don't have to limit ourselves by this kind of self interest that comes out of fear, fear that it's living in a world of limited resources, and I better keep it all to myself. That kind of freedom where it's okay to let go and simplify our lives. I think that as well as that my guess is as the world over the next, you know, 50 years, we're going to come to appreciate more and more wonderful little saying that goes, live simply so that others can live. So the freedom that Buddhism points to, is a freedom that allows us to pick up a simple lifestyle, a lifestyle that causes less harm to the world with joy and happiness, and not with a sense of limitation and and, and doing without or diminishing our us. So

So the last thing I'll say is that the Buddha in the night of his awakening or you know, something shifted in him, something clarified he could see in such a clear way that he shifted I like to use modern terms he shifted from being egocentric to being eco centric and that in that transformation, the Eco centric view and what follows from that is gratitude is bowing to the tree was not an obligation, but rather was came from the joy or the singing of his heart. I think that it's possible to engage responsibly and actively with the environmental challenges of our time, not through despair. despair, I think having your heart broken is part of the deal now. But rather, as we free the heart mind that we can come from a place of joy or he's, or come from the kind of a natural response that comes when we're not held back or caught up in the self, me myself in mind. Acting from the place where there is no self separate from the world there is no world separate from the self. And so that responding and caring for the tree is caring for yourself. It just feels natural to do just like you would care for yourself in an easy, natural way. That self care it gets extended to the whole world, the whole world as a self. So, today is Earth Day. Please spend some time today celebrating and appreciating and protecting this wonderful planet that sustains us. Thank you