

# 2018-08-19 Speech That Unifies

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## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

It probably doesn't need to be said but one of the core practices or the core practices that we do here at IMC is mindfulness. And mindfulness was birthed through a specific kind of practice, but also is often talked about in a very broad way to include a whole approach to living a life. And what I'd like to emphasize today is that mindfulness, the quality and the strength are my are part of our mindfulness is directly related to how we live our lives. And that and there's a paradox, and that is that as the mindfulness gets stronger, we become, it's really becomes obvious that the mindfulness teacher decreases when we are unethical. When which means decreases when we do things that knowingly cause harm to others. And that conversely, that mindfulness is supported by the by living ethically, by living a life that's supportive, other other people are beneficial to other people. And this is there's a very intimate relationship between ethics and mindfulness. It's they're mutually supportive of each other. And the Buddha emphasized one area of our life that is easily overlooked and frequently overlooked as an area to be concerned about, about our ethics, how we are, how we live, and that has to do with speech. For a variety of reasons we get pulled into the world of speech so often it's often one of the most difficult places To Be mindful and as we speak, and maybe because of that it's difficult to attend to be careful for the impact we have on our speech and the motivations behind our speaking. And what our speech some of the biggest impact on the world around us. And, you know, one of the motivations to talk about this today is that, it seems we've come to a point in our society, where the great conflicts of our society are not being fought out in the battlefields, but rather in the verbal world of how we talk and so, you know, in the press and on the news and in books and how people speak with each other, and the degree of divisiveness that has arisen in our society at this point, as made it almost impossible for some people to speak to each other There, and there are people who come together for family gatherings and they won't talk to each other because of this tremendous divide between how what their views are, how they understand things, and how they speak to each other about it. And the and there are people now who are saying that the biggest challenge of our society, the biggest divide, has to do with this issue of divisiveness, political divisiveness that goes on and how people are talking to each other. And it's it clips to become stronger than some of the other great conflicts and divisions in our society, racism and class and gender and sexuality and all kinds of things. And you know, it, I think that I, you know, one little representation of this is that generally our insights In the West is relatively liberal, not entirely so. But I've had people tell me who are not liberal who are remember once teaching retreat and there was a man who said he was told me privately he was the philosopher for the tea party many years ago and, and he was a lovely man. And I, you know, I've met him as a teacher and he seemed to have a lot of integrity and goodness in him and he seemed smart and reasonable and many ways. And he said to me privately, you know, I can't come out in this community. The degree of animosity that I'll receive makes it impossible to stay here. And so that's quite a quite a powerful statement.

The and recent surveys I don't know how much we can trust the surveys, right because but still was recent survey has pointed out that Democrats and liberals are more likely to cut off people from conversation from relationships than Republicans and conservatives. They both do it but Democrats, it's a greater, much greater degree. And so, so, you know, to the degree to which, you know, you know, probably safe to say majority of us tend to be liberals. You know, this is something we need to look at and ourselves quite seriously, not just kind of keep it out there to them. And so the degree of vilification that goes on and the degree of divisiveness and the degree of separation of people has gotten to be quite strong and you know, we need to look at it. So the Buddha had clear guidelines or discussions about speech, and he used the language of skillful and unskillful to talk about fork of unskillful speech, and four kinds of skillful speech and the unskillful speech. The word skillful is an interesting word, in and of itself is not necessarily an ethical word. However, if you look through the language of the ancient Buddhist texts, it's probably the, the way it plays out this word kusala. And how to imply what implications of it are probably closer to our word of ethics than almost any other Buddhist word. And the reason for that is that kusala is directly connected to what causes harm. And quite what caused this benefit. And so akusala skillful is that which causes harm and skillful is that which brings benefit in what's interesting in the teachings of the Buddha is that you cannot cause harm to others without causing harm to yourself. The intentional causing of harm to other people And whether it's through speech, you know, and vilification and anger and these kinds of things that are kind of pushing people away or creating divisions in our society, that you can't do that kind of thing without it harming oneself as well. And then if you kind of follow the Buddhist logic, I mean, he says this, that if you harm yourself, you're also harming our society around us. And so the alternative is to do skillful things, those things which are beneficial. And if you benefit yourself, the understanding in ancient Buddhism is you will benefit others. And if you benefit others, that's a benefit for yourself. And these these are mutually related closely related phenomena. So, he talked about four kinds of unskillful speech and these are so these are false speech, divisive speech, abusive speech, and pointless speech. And pointless I think is seen as kind of no one really quite knows how to translate this word from Pali. But the pointless I think kind of maybe is the best one of the best presentations. And so and when the Buddha talked about gave illustrations for false speech, he used kind of a dramatic example and that is when you're asked to bear witness. And one translator says in court but in meetings and town hall meetings back that didn't have courts, or in family or different situations, bear witness of what was true or false what happened it didn't happen, to speak falsely there as a witness for one's own personal gain, or for the gain of someone else. That is unskillful. So it's, you know, there's many kinds of falsehoods people can make. But, you know, one that has a big impact is if we bear witness falsely when someone's being judged or someone's being considered their behavior. And this idea of falsehood and truth now is, you know, is become a hot topic in our society.

It's kind of amazing that, you know, that the tremendous amount of doubt. It's almost like the postmodern is philosophy has, you know, has, you know, puts a lot of doubt about how we interpreted and how subjective Our understanding is, has gotten into a degree of the public discourse that we can't agree on anything. And recently, the lawyer for the president said, truth is not truth. This week, And I mean, that's kind of an interesting statement. And so, so, you know, it speaks to something very dramatic going on in our society and how do we follow the, you know, this idea of speaking truthfully or avoiding false speech, when the whole question of what is truth is, so dramatically question these days. So, the second kind of unskillful speech and the one that kind of inspired this talk is that of divisive speech, and the speech which divides people, and that separates those who are united is the language of the Buddhism divide those who are who are already united and, and set and continue to separate the people who are separated. And I found it you know, early in my mindfulness practice a very interesting thing to pay attention to. And that is, when I spoke, the words that I spoke, I spoke even if they were ethical, they were near, there's nothing ethical necessarily about them. I became sensitive to the impact that my speech has. And I could feel that if I said certain things, that it would create a little more

distance, or people pull back or the energy would go away, or things would shut down a little bit. And if I said other spoke other ways, maybe the same topic, but just a different approach of talking about it, there'd be a stronger connection, a stronger sense of, of participation in the conversation or more energy there and engagement in it. And, and I found this, that simple kind of tuning in what's going on in the conversation, if people engaged or not engaged. What am I saying? How is it being received was a huge piece of information that was interesting. And if we look at this, we can in terms of ethics in terms of harm, you know, we see a huge degrees in which people in our society now are speaking in ways that makes communication or makes the divide almost insurmountable between them. The this kind of speech, the Buddha said this divisive speech is one that creates factions, create groups that are opposed to each other. And maybe that's one of the reasons why people love doing this kind of language, because it creates a very strong sense of us, me, it's a kind of a conceit. There are group conceits, a group ism, like egoism, group mystic, as opposed to egotistic that, you know, there's really sense that I'm special, we're special. We're the chosen ones where we're the ones who know what's right. And a lot of the energy or Speaking angrily and complaining about other people is a powerful way in which people bond and feel connected to each other. And, and that's probably part of the reason that's fueling this. You know, we're the ones who know or something. So to speak in such a way that we don't exasperate the faction in Assam, that divisiveness or society. The third kind of unskillful speech is abusive speech. So, sometimes it's translated as harsh speech. But I think it's more closer to abusive and offensive, what it is. The Buddha described it as cutting speech, hurtful speech, offensive speech, connected with anger. So that all makes sense to some degree. But then he has one more little definition of what our description of what abusive speeches kind of how it functions or something. And then it he says, It's unproductive for concentration. You know what, what we know suddenly changes the topic. You know, what is this? Well, you know, it's no longer ethics now or you know, why is it bringing in concentration and why is that important?

In this kind of practice traditional Buddhism, concentration gives access to some of the most important sense of well being of wisdom of understanding that a person can tap into. And people who don't, don't have access to concentration states can have no idea why this is so useful and so important. But for someone like the Buddha who did tap into them, then it's really clear that you that it diminishes as for our, our kind of our harm or kind of contracted or get, we lose touch with something very precious. When we lose touch with our concentration states. You know even tap in a little bit to getting little bit concentrated, a little bit calm, little bit more settled, unified cup for daily sitting, changes, the context changes the orientation we have for our life changes what we're inclined to say or do coming out of that state. If we're frazzled and harried and running around being busy, it's so much easier to do things which are harmful to others coming out of a calm, settled place. It's easier to see that we don't do that and we're less inclined to do that. And as one of the themes of this talk, if we do that, it harms us. If we're settled and have peaceful and essence a well being and openness, and suddenly we lash out in anger at someone, it can kind of feel how that's lost. But if you're all always angry, you know, little bit more angers kind of good because it, you know, it gets you energized and gets you kind of feeling like you're right and gets you feel like you're, you know, you know, it's you know, it has its, you know, you know it just more of the same in a good way. But if you have a real qualitative experience of the absence of anger, accidents of absence of ill will, absolutely comes with concentration, it changes the whole game of reference point for how we live our life. So abusive speech is unproductive for concentration. So people who know about concentration and its value, you know, will try to avoid that kind of speech. And then there's a pointless speech. And so exactly what word English should be used for this sometimes it's called idle speech in some translations, and so, you know, you can decide here maybe, but I'll just I'll read you the Buddhist description of it. Speaking at the wrong time, and about what is not real speech that is useless, contrary to the Dharma, worthless, unreasonable, in moderate, immoderate and unbeneficial. Suppose that pointless, is that a good translation or, you know, maybe unbeneficial. So that's one of the words that describes it's also another possibility. And this includes in

the speech, which is not real, it's different than speaking. What's false, what's not real, and kind of a different category exactly what it means. I can't do that in ancient language. I can't tell. But certainly, how I feel about it. It includes exaggeration, pointless commentary and telling tale As if they were real.

And so, you know, why do we speak what we do? What motivates us? And is it really real? What we're talking about? Or is it art is it you know, the difference between interpretation, and real, is a really important thing. And difference between opinion and what's real is a hugely important thing. And that's very hard to see for people. People are strongly identified with their opinions. my opinions are mine. So therefore, there's kind of almost a peep out for many people a benefit of doubt that we have that there must be true. I'm thinking, Oh, it must be true. It's quite easy, I think for many of us, to see that other people, what they say is false, absurd, and useful, harmful, and all that. I see it out there but to see it in oneself, especially the strong identification with the you know who we are and our value has a lot to do with our opinion. It's hard to see that if we're talking about something, which is hat, maybe opinion maybe has a place has value. But is it real? And if it's not exactly real, but maybe it's not false either. Do we hold more likely do we hold it in such a way that it doesn't contribute to more divisiveness? We can we hold in your way that that even talk about our opinions in a way that welcomes people into our conversation or allows for other perspectives, as opposed to this is how it is. So then, to speak in skillful ways. The opposite of these four unskillful forms of speech is speech which is mutually beneficial. And I feel like I can't emphasize that enough, the idea that this idea of mutual benefit, there's a strong tendency to some type people to measure evaluate things, as a Good for me. Some people do the opposite is good for others. But the idea that actually they work together is a very profound principle. And if you really want to benefit yourself, you won't you want to, you want the benefit for society as a whole, you want to benefit other people around you. If they're happy, it's easier for you to be happy, it's easier for the ticket support and all kinds of things. So and then, then, and then this wonderful way in which mindfulness and skillfulness go together. If we give attention to skillful speech, the more we give attention to skillful speech, the more mindfulness grows. And that's partly because attention is mindfulness. So the more we bring our attention to it, the more grows. The more we speak. skillfully, ethically, the more mindfulness grows and the more mindfulness grows Greater is our sensitivity to the ethical impact of our speech. And so part of what mindfulness does is not just simply kind of being in the control tower watching what goes on, it's developing capacity to really feel the full range of how we experience life and process life. And that includes ethical sensitivity and become sensitive to the impact we have and what goes on. So as mindfulness grows, we will be more interested in skillful speech. It's just a natural byproduct. So there are the four opposites the unskillful speech, which are the four forms of skillful speech. So these are speaking what's true. Speaking what creates Concord? Speaking what is enough which, what is inoffensive and speaking, what is beneficial And as I said these for the Buddha describes them as four kinds of speech that are four kinds of living by the Dharma, and four kinds of living in harmony. And I kind of find these interesting these ideas. So living in accordance with the Dharma, I think of here like this just, it's my interpretation. But I like to think of the Dharma as something that's deeply personal. It's really something that flows from inside of us. That's so deeply personal, that it's almost impersonal. You can't identify with it, but it kind of flows out of us a certain kind of goodness and, and an engagement with what is beneficial, avoiding what's harmful.

And that living in a way that's harmonious has has to do with how we live our social life together. And, and so these two are very important. But there's living, how we live, our social life can flow out of the Dharma can flow out of this deep Wellspring inside of goodness and wisdom that can be here. And so it flows from us how it flows into the world, and help integrate harmony. So speaking what is true? Is mindfulness out loud. I think he knows mindfulness is to recognize in certain way what's really happening here. And to, you know, and we don't necessarily want to say everything that's possibly true. truth can be a weapon. truth, the truth can be used in abusive ways. tourists can use the ways that is



not conducive to harmony and to society and everything. So we want to be a little bit sensitive to that. But there is one area of truth telling, which is kind of like absolute and Buddhism. And there's few, you know, maybe there's not that many real absolutes in Buddhism. But I think this is one that the Buddha didn't say this, but I think it really is implied out of the whole Buddhist principles of life. And that absolute statement is, it's never okay to lie to yourself. And, you know, so maybe few people think they lie to themselves, but it's never okay to do that. And that's the one thing so whether you speak the truth out loud is another is one thing, but to speak it to yourself. certainly try to speak it to yourself. Don't Don't sidestep it or ignore it. And when we speak the truth, wisely and inoffensively we are harnessing the power of mindfulness And speaking the truth also contributes to trust and safety. It's a wonderful thing to be with people we can trust because we can trust what they say. We might not agree with them, but we feel like they're going to be honest with us. It's a beautiful thing. So the second kind of skillful communication is speaking to create Concord. And the Buddha describes this as speech that reconciles those who are divided. I just love this idea reconciles those who are divided. So even the people who you know, you know, maybe you're not divided from people, but maybe people in your family are divided from each other or friends. And so speaking about can you reconcile them and, and one way is to be very careful. You speak about people who are not present in non present third party people? And are you speaking about them in a way, that's going to make it a little bit disparaging of them or a little bit critical of them, so that when the person you're speaking to when they see that person, it's going to create a little ripple or big ripple in that relationship? Or do you speak in ways that are truthful and appropriate, but makes the person you're talking to feel good about that person can't wait to see them or, you know, delighted to see the person and happy to see them? Because they see them in a good light. You know, not everyone's always, you know, 100% good. But, but if we emphasize what is not good, it kind of feeds it or reinforces it or creates division. But if we were not to ignore what's difficult and challenging, but if we clearly see and acknowledge what's good then that Maybe can begin traveling and supporting and grow in our society. So reconcile those who are divided, and supports those who are who are united. And then the Buddha described this as words of someone who loves concord, the lights in concord, enjoys concord, and speak things that create concord. So, I love this little expression, you know, loves and enjoys and delights in concord.

I just delighted by the very idea of it. And, you know, the Dharma is here to bring joy and happiness and, and part of that joy and happiness we can feel comes from our delight in being skilled for the light and being ethical. I used to be surprised there When I first got into Buddhism, that there was this idea that people could feel joy in their, their ethics and their good ethics, their skillfulness. And I thought what that was like a foreign idea. And, and then as I and then what happened to me is, as I got concentrated, and my mindfulness grew, that became obvious that this the inner sense of purity or goodness that can develop in these deeper states of meditation, really spoke to this delight and joy that being ethical has because it being ethical is not like you have to follow rules, but rather, it's to be attuned to something that's really good within really healthy. So then there's a fourth kind of skillful speech is inoffensive speech. And this the Buddha describes as soothing to the Ear affectionate. And then it has wonderful expression, going to the heart and touching the heart, maybe with literally it's going to the heart, polite, appealing and pleasing to many people. And then he had one more little expression for what inoffensive speeches and that is speech that people treasure. They want to you know, they treasure means that part of you want to keep it one translator is literally the word treasure but one translator translated as as what people want to record. And then the last form of speech skillful speech is what can be called beneficial speech. And these are timely about what is real beneficial and concerned with both the Dharma life and an ethical life. Furthermore, it is spoken with clear explanations delineations and benefits. So pointless speech sometimes might be important things trying to say but we talk in such big or convoluted ways that it was pointless to have said it. So be careful in the speech and be clear what we're saying. So it's clear that in the Buddhist teaching, at least, in the area of avoiding unskillful

speech and engaging in skillful speech, that he has a strong emphasis on speaking in ways that are beneficial to others. Our speech, as well as ways we communicate our voice Learn in ourselves and from there flows into our interpersonal lives. The close connection with what is personal inside of us and the relationship we have with others means that if we want to care Well, for both these areas, if we only take care Well for one of these areas, we should care for both. To be happy and ourselves, we can promote unity and affection in our relationships. To promote unity and affection in our relationships, we can cultivate the conditions for happiness in ourselves. It's very tempting to respond to anger with anger, divisiveness with further division, this stain with disparagement. And doing so may if I can just put this in quotation marks doing so might work. In the short term, but not really doesn't really work in the long term. And it's works in very limited ways. It certainly doesn't promote personal and interpersonal peace. That is the goal of Buddhist practice. One can't clean a stain with more of the stain. So we need something else to clean a stain. A stain in our social life and political life is only cleaned by our capacity for goodness, generosity and cooperation.

Perhaps fueled by resolute fervor. So to really be motivated strongly This is not a idea that is always supported that you should not meet anger with anger, even at time and the Buddha, there were people who would argue, you can't you have to attack the people who are attacking you verbally have to be angry. Otherwise you're weak. And, and there's no no and so there's one response that was to this, there was given in verse and poetry. One makes things worse. Who returns anger, with anger? not returning anger with anger, one wins a battle, hard to win. When an other is angry, when two wins welfare for oneself and for the other, if one mindfully keeps one's peace, people who think one is a Fool. If one heals one's own anger and that to the other, have no skill in the Dharma, maybe there wasn't a hook clear but so you went two times over if you don't respond with a with anger to anger, and the two times you win is you win for yourself and you help the other person win. That's kind of interesting idea. And, and then and if you think that healing one's own anger and healing the anger of the other is a foolish thing to do. Then, one has no skill in the Dharma.

So finally, with mindfulness, part of the value of developing mindfulness, the motivation to employ skillful speech is not derived from moral injunction. Rather, mindfulness reveals the personal inner consequences of both unskillful and skillful speech. It shows us that it is for our own personal benefit to speak in skillful ways. That is, in ways that benefit both self and others. So that's my politically commentate commentary for the day. And so do you have any comments, questions? statements you want to make, so there's a mic is the mic on the stage there, if you could pass it over?

Question on the maybe relative importance of the skillful right speech. If you're in a situation I can give, give maybe a couple examples, if you're in a situation where no matter how well packaged the truth may seem, or maybe delivered, you know, you're going to create divisiveness. What should you do? And similarly, if you're always after Concord, and it's almost like you're trying to keep everything together, and you never let maybe the conflicts that are needed to happen happen.

Is that also beneficial?

Yeah, that's a good, very good question. And, and I, you know, I think that one of the shadow sides or kind of difficulties that Buddhist communities sometimes have is being conflict aversive. And so emphasizing Concord to such an degree that they're willing to kind of ignore or overlook or not really address the some important issues that are going on. And so how do we address issues where they might, it might be creates divisions or separation or something. And one of that is, if it's very clear that what needs to be talked about needs to be talked about when he's done with his own homework, to have clarified that I can speak now without anger without aversion without wanting to cause harm.

Actually, I've been really kind of thought about how I'm going to speak about this that is supportive for the situation is not putting anyone down or threatening anyone, but clearly laying it out so that they want they can participate. We need to talk about this. And I mean, knowing the people involved, I don't think it's going to work. But that's not I'm not, but I still wish to Don't need to do it. And it's their responsibility. It's their karma, you know, and we're gonna have to work with the divisions that are formed. But we can't go forward not talking about it. And so sometimes we have to allow that to happen and work with it. And sometimes it's very unfortunate and sometimes, you know, it does create insurmountable division, not because we're doing it, it has to do how the person receives it and takes it on and we can't we can't control that completely. But we do our best and we know people well know how they react. We might try to do our homework think about ahead of time, how do I approach them this time? You know, is a timely just the right time? Maybe I really need to wait a few days until they're in a better space or until there's a little opening. And, and it can I maybe need to wait until I'm a little bit feel more kinder to the first thing. I just feel so hurt right now. That I just know that it's me Easily triggered into saying things that are not going to be helpful. So let me wait until I feel, you know, not so hurt and have processed it. So there's all this homework we can do. But we can't. There's no guarantee that that's going to work. And sometimes we have to let it play out. Otherwise, it's worse. Is that kind of what you're asking or? Yeah, please.

Hi, Gil. Nice to

meet you. Do you hold it closer?

Hi, Kayla. Nice to meet you.

Yeah, my ears are not so good. Oh, can you

hear me? Yeah, it's just good. Um, what happens? Like so many of us, this lifetime is just very, very challenging. And you're going for that a suffering, physically, mentally, emotionally, you know, kind of goes hand in hand and you're trying his hardest Can that I've been meditating for over 40 years and studying originally with Pema children and just so many WISE WISE people listening to you I'm so grateful like to hear you from Florida and audio and tower Brock, so many so many black people that have helped so much in what happens in the people who you're the closest to friends, family at all. When you're in your own heart, you're knowing you're being as truthful as you can. But it's like you're not believed. And as many times as you say, like, I've spent so much time trying to prepare without say, to have it come out, so maybe it would really be heard. But if people maybe just not ready to hear it or don't want selective listening, sometimes I think people are just, it never seemed to come out that way. So what do you do for If you feel you have to be honest, and that it's so painful when you're not believed, even starting from when you're a little, little, a little, very crazy things happens. And yeah,

thank you for the question. And I think we can do a good place to begin as appreciating that you have this interest in this concern that speaks well for you. It's a fantastic that you're wanting to address this and interested in this topic. And I wish more people had that.

I have to just

so we can start. So we can start by appreciating what you're what you're bringing here. And then, and families are difficult society is difficult. And so one of the kind of guidelines that Buddha gives for speaking is only speak when it's beneficial when it works. And when it has some benefit. And sometimes it just, there's no ability to have a conversation with some people, they they shut down they

get angry and there's no there's no way to talk about some things and even though we're talking about the truth, we don't don't there's no point it's pointless to talk about the truth, if nothing changes, or if even gets worse. So some people learn to hold their mouth. Some people learn to surf around issues or, or to choose when they're with even family members. They they're very careful, very careful about, you know, they can't just kind of freely go over or have you know, it's a relationship that's fraught with danger. And so well, you know, we can meet, you know, at Denny's for lunch, once a week, you know, that seems to be a safe place to go.

It could be like a karmic thing. You know, sometimes people were around the most and do you think it could possibly be karmically from another life things really brought in to work out or try to and

I definitely could Big karma. But I think that in terms of our society, and where it's most productive to look at this is to look at something called family systems dynamics, family system therapy. And, and this is a form of therapy that looks at the family dynamics that goes back multiple lives goes back that, you know, lifetimes, but goes back over the generations, and how some of these deep, deeply ingrained patterns that people live in, and they seem to have a wonderful ability to replicate for themselves, is because of the family system constellation which they kind of gotten used to and, and, and their position in it. And so some people actually not intended intending to do it, but because they're familiar there with a family system that grew up with will kind of gravitated the same one over and over again, and then the one maybe that their parents had or whatever So, you know, it's I think it's a wonderful form of therapy and very helpful to understand how family systems work. And one of the, and perhaps, you know, some of the larger issues of suicide of our society are unfortunately playing out some people's family systems dynamic. You know, that trying to, you know, trying to please one's father, it seems to be one that is, you know, currently happening in full view for everyone. And he is being passed on from one generation to the next.

psyche Buchan's here when you came aware of it and try not to have everything that your mother and father said come out of your mouth, I consciously

so in terms of you know, our practice your mindfulness, my understanding it and family systems therapy, one of the axioms that central tenants That if one member of the family practices nonreactive awareness, the whole family system moves towards moves towards health. So, you know, nonreactive awareness is kind of like what we do. So this is not easy stuff. And, and, and to give a talk about, you know skillful speech or these kind of guidelines that Buddha has for it, you know, it's relatively easy for me to come up here and speak, right, you know, it's like, this is how it is right? It's not easy to apply them in our relationships. It takes skill, it takes thought it takes wisdom it takes you know, it's something we develop and learn over time. You don't just it's not either or, and our, our interpersonal relationships are constantly changing and shifting, and each one requires different kinds of thoughts, different kinds of consideration, reflection about how these guidelines might work and how to do them best. But the North Star that leads us is to create us. Society, communities, families, friendships that where people live in Concord that people are getting to feel united rather than separated. And I think that's the direction of the Dharma. So let's get to work. Thank you