

2019-08-11 Hatred And The End of Hatred

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SPEAKERS

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So from time to time, things happen in the world that have a big impact on many of us and certainly on me. And, and I often feel sometimes when this happens, I feel that I deserve some talking about in this setting, but I feel unprepared to do so. And sometimes I'm just impelled to do it anyway. And, but there's one variation of this, is that often enough, what happens is related to hate. And I feel like I should really talk about hate. But I feel unprepared. It seems like such a topic, big topic, deep topic. I don't know how to talk about hate in this context and so We've come to that kind of, I've come to that kind of place again, and I still feel unprepared to talk about it, but I can't do anything else. So, maybe this is an exploration of a topic, very important topic for our society. And kind of the way into the exploration that comes kind of naturally to me is to refer back to these ancient teachings of the Buddha and how we look at what he had to say about the topic of hate. And hopefully that helps our exploration of it consideration of it. So the word for hate in that could equally be translated as hostility is dosa do essay and one of the Most Famous occurrences of this. This particular word is in a verse four line poem from the Dhammapada, which has had an illustrious history down through the centuries. They've had a big impact on variety of it right up to the 20th century and I wrote a newsletter article about this first Buddhist poem, one piece last year. And it goes something like this. I hate dosa, hate is never overcome by hate. Only by most translations say love. Only by love is hate overcome. This is the ancient truth, ancient teaching. And, and so, you know, it's as his little soundbite. That's very powerful and It's used in different settings and you know, people take it in a certain way. It has a powerful lesson. If we think about how much hate there is and how hate begets more hate, for example. So this home of peace, and the word for, that's usually translated as love. Only by love is hate overcome is not actually love. It just that's what we want it to be. And it's reasonable, that that's translated as love, but the literal word in the ancient world, ancient language is non hate dosa and, and in it's very common for two be understood in this ancient language, that when there's a negative prefix a in front of a word, it implies the opposite doesn't imply simply the absence of something, but implies the positive opposite somehow that's a linguistic feature of that language. And so the opposite of hate. You know, love seems like a pretty obvious candidate. So that's nice. And, however, there are other opposites maybe, or by saying non hate. It's implying something positive, but it's actually doesn't define it very Exactly. includes a range of concepts. Maybe generosity may be kindness rather than love. May be respect, maybe appreciation. There's a variety of different kind of states that We can, that fits into that category of non hate.

And when we have a word like love, even though love is kind of vague in English, we know somehow it still specifies that it's something and then we have to like we have to fit that thing. And we make ourselves into that thing. But what's beautiful, I think are profound about this. You're referring to the negative the absence of something is in the absence of hate in the absence of defilements, absence of attachment, if then what arises, what comes? One of the marvelous things about meditation can be for

some people, the shedding of preoccupations, shedding of attachments, quieting of the mind that's caught up in its hindrances and desires and aversions and all kinds of things. And the mind gets quiet and peace quiet and peaceful, even the kind of usual conceits around self and self concern, fall away. And a person can feel quite peaceful and content and could say yes, there's no hate now. But then it makes room for something to arise from within that maybe will not be love. Maybe it's respect. Maybe it's generosity, maybe it's some who knows what the circumstance calls for us to feel and to be. And so to not specify what it has to look like. Maybe there's a lot of wisdom for people who have the ability to let go deeply and allow the deeper inner part of our inner life bubble up into this field. That's not obscured by things like greed or hatred, or delusion. Those three greed, hatred and delusion are considered in the Buddhist teachings, the fundamental root, fundamental cause or condition for all unethical behavior. So, if it happened to have been once upon a time that any of you did anything unethical, then chances are that in the background of that was greed, hate and delusion, one of them, two of them, all three of them, maybe you're operating. If you read about unethical things going on in the world, the Buddha's analysis, not far beneath the surface of that is the psychological conditions of greed, hatred and delusion are operating in some person or some people. And so part of the Dharma practice is to kind of delve deep inside of oneself, to discover what those roots are. So they're called routes, and they're also called poisons greed, hatred and delusion. And that's a powerful metaphor, because it speaks to how these things are poisons. And especially you can see with hate, hate is a poison, it poisons the person who has it. And it poisons the much of the world around it. In fact, part of their what's happening our societies the spreading and growing of hate, and almost an industry that is built around perpetuating, developing, enhancing and creating hate, not just in this country, but in many countries in the world. The end, and so it's a poison that can spread and spread and spread. And it's a poison that is where this is so ancient poem. Hate has never come overcome by hate. But it's it's easy enough to be the recipient of hate, and then to hate and return. And they're the div happens there the perpetuation happens, the poison that has begun to spread. It's doing its work in society, if we respond to hate with hate. So the Buddha there were people who encountered the Buddha and set to the Buddha. I see who you are now you're, you're embodying loving kindness. And the Buddha said, No, don't say that. But if you say that I embodied the opposite of loving kindness, I invited the absence of ill will allow you to say that.

So here he is, he doesn't want to be narrowed down to being someone whose love or loving kindness. It's a little bit jarring, but this cognitive dissidence to some of us that the Buddha would say No, no, I'm not loving, or don't want to find my don't define me that way. But he is willing to be defined by the absence of ill will. I see this as I'm repeating myself, I see this as a call, to really do the inner work, do our own personal work to get to the bottom of our ill will, and empty ourselves of free ourselves of it, and then see what wants to come. See what wants to flow out. Which that work wouldn't get done. If if maybe if the Buddha had said, Oh, yeah, you're on. Yes. I'm so loving. And, and then oh, we're supposed to be loving like the Buddha. Okay, let's, you know, put on the loving coat, you know, whatever the person they're loving persona. And, and it it, it, it covers over the fact that actually the inside there Almost ill will. And some people can, with a tremendous force of will, can cover over the deeper poisons that exists in them. And maybe it can stay hidden for years and years. One of the sad things is that people occasionally you see people who have done something like that, for years have have a public persona that's been successful and but then they start getting seasonality and they can't put the can't keep it up. And so that surface persona falls away. And lo and behold, there's all this venom poisoned underneath. And it's a shock to people to start seeing this. And there's also the opposite. That's been seen that people start getting Alzheimer's and they just get more and more loving. It's like they've done their work or whatever, they don't have that inside. And you know, the great story is a friend of mine. I like I said that a few times. A friend of mine who went to see a person who was very accomplished in the world apparently was the president of American Association of

psychology or something. And he went to see this man was invited over for dinner, knocked on the door. And, sir enough, this man opened the door. And he said, looked at them, and he said, I don't have a clue who you are. They've known each other for decades. I don't have a clue who you are. But you're welcome in my house. So this, this idea of doing the inner work, getting to the bottom of all this requires a lot of courage and a lot of honesty, the willingness to kind of look inside and identify in ourselves that there is hostility, hatred as a theme of today, ill will, aversion that's there. And the word hate is a big word and I think many of us probably my guess is a lot of us don't go around thinking of ourselves as hating people. And we're actively going around hating too much. But, but if we think of the word as hostility, and if we think of hostility as being very even the most minor hostility, I have now for the last few weeks, a wonderful Li complex relationship with ants in my kitchen. And, and I am doing my darndest to you know, to not have them in the kitchen without harming them and they're so persistent. Yesterday I woke up and I have certain things in wrinkle motes, you know, water things, you know, things that are sitting in the water and yesterday, they manage to get somehow across the water. I don't know if they are swimming and some of them are dead but some swimming across or whether one friend said they were there probably make a lot of bridges they hold on to each other and I don't know what they do but so there's certainly impatience that comes up for me. It's an annoyance. And

those, you know, if I look carefully at the impatience and annoyance, you know, I don't want to admit it publicly to all of you. But I promise I will. I will. I won't do i would i wouldn't what I won't admit this IP. I think that probably underneath that is some degree of hostility towards psychopaths. And so, you know, it's wonderfully complex, and I get to look at it. So that's a small thing, something like that. It's bigger and we're talking about feelings we have towards people. And that's why it's such a big thing in the news right now, because we have people killing each other are killed Other people out of this tremendous hostility and hate that exists. And, and it's hostility and hate, which is being praised, supported. There's a whole, you know, there's a whole community of people who furthered language of hate, hating the other, hitting the immigrants, hating the, you know, all kinds of races and classes of people and all kinds of all kinds of things. There's all these websites where people are meeting and community and people who study these, these website communities say that if a person doesn't have any, if a person indicates any kind of willingness to not just have pure hate for the other, they get pushed out to the community. That's kind of the language of it. That's kind of like the how they bond and what's supported. And so that just gets supported more and more. And so it's not surprising that some people get pushed into certain kind of diluted mental state. So that's all they're thinking about and they get some point they they get pushed over the edge

here that's interesting analogy, the for hate that's given in the ancient texts that hate is like a forest fire that burns the fuel that it depends on. So like you'd have a grass fire I think it's actually it's grassfire so you know, the grass, it's fire is burning on the grass, it's burning up the grass and when the grass is burned out and the fire goes out, so it's burning up the very thing that's depends on and so how does hate burn ourselves? Does it burn ourselves up? And some of the most erratic examples we've had of, you know, the killer gets killed. You know, it seems like something has burned up some kind of humanity has burned up inside, that a person who would do these things. The and so the poem says, hate will never end with hate, by non hate only will hate come to an end. And so how do we meet with non hate? There's one kind of story of the Buddha, the Buddha, the man Buddha had a number of people who are hostile towards him and angry towards him. So, you know, he didn't just gonna float in the cloud and everything was nice around him. And one, one man came to him and was saying angry things to the Buddha and showed up and started giving the good I guess, piece of his mind. And the Buddha apparently just sat quietly and listen to this. And then when it was over, he said to the men. If you You go to visit someone's home, like a friend, and you come with a gift, and you offer the gift, but the host doesn't take it. Who does the gift then belong to? And the man said, Oh, then it's still mine. In

the same way, I don't accept your anger. So that's a kind of interesting response. You know, imagine that that was not it. Maybe the tone of voice could have been hostile but I could imagine that said, could be said in a calm, relaxed way and it kind of kind of leaves the you know, the person had not doesn't have any impact the anchor, they had the desired impact, but the left leaves the person carrying it or feeling it or really, like I'm the one I've known not a few people who have struggled with something like anger, resentment for years and years towards Someone and you must have talked to meditators. So maybe that's why it's my examples are meditating people, but then in meditation or coming out of the meditation, at some point, realizing that the person they're resentful for probably as long since forgotten them, you know, it's been so long, you know, that person's not thinking about them, even though the angry person is kind of angry regularly, you know, and then realize, wait a minute, who's being damaged here who's being hurt here? I kind of wanted to get revenge and I keep having these revenge thoughts. But you know, after all these decades, you know, I'm the one who's harmed and in a sense, so some people will say that you're doing the work for your enemy. You know, the enemy wants to get to you, and they got to you and by you having is constantly living in hate living it living in anger, and all that And so if so to see it that way kind of reframes it and kind of takes away some justification or rationale for living with hate and anger, when we realize how much we're hurting ourselves. It's not easy to do the inner work of coming to the roots underneath and really seeing what's going on with when there's hate, but in the ancient Buddhist tradition, they point to two primary causes for hate and one is frustrated desire.

And so this idea that they want something and I need it or I have to have it and not being able to get it is a huge source of the momentum of hatred in the society. They're saying that somebody you know, a lot of these people who do mass shootings are young men, young white men, and in their early 20s, or late teens or something like that, and it seems like there's a lot of hatred towards women as part of it. And it seems like part of that hatred towards women is not having loving relationships with women. So there's this frustration bill is to kind of anger into hatred. And so underneath all that is to look at desire, and what's the nature of desire? And how do we relate to frustrated desire? What are the great benefits of doing a regular meditation and you have to do a kind of regularly it meaning you have to be kind of committed to do it so that all the different flavors of who you are get a chance to get processed through a meditation. If you only do a meditation when you feel good. You get you know, maybe you get the, you know, your, your ideal persona who you'd like to be. If you only do meditation, when you feel bad, you get in other impression of yourself, but you know, Do you suppose to do it regularly, so you go, you get the cross section of all the different ways you can be. But one of the great things about meditation, a really good thing about meditation that we don't say publicly in advertisements. Again, you know, you know if you can chart you can accuse us for false advertisement is, is getting uncomfortable. It's actually one want, you know some of that some of those times when you go cross section of who you are, it's actually phenomenally important that you have an uncomfortable meditation, that you have meditation that's really restless, when you're filled with venom. If you're filled with you know, greed, and you just like impatient and nothing's working, and you're really frustrated, you when that happens to you, you say, Wow, it's finally happened. Now my work begins, and to learn to sit with that. There's a number of things. One of the things is to learn Learn how to make your peace with that. Rather than having those feelings continue to motivate you to think act feel and unhealthy ways to learn to kind of step back and observe and just be present and breathe with it without it getting the upper hand. You have the upper hand by just observing and being it and so learn to be comfortable with discomfort is phenomenally important. And so when there is something frustrated desire that comes up, then we've learned how to be present for it without it pushing impelling us to do things that later we regret. You know that its pitfalls over into something like hate, or lol or anger or whatever we express. So to learn how to be with discomfort so we can be at ease with difficulties that come up in our life is a very important function of medicine. So not that I want all your meditations to be uncomfortable from now on.

But it's very this idea of the cross section of your life. It's reasonable that sooner or later, you'll come and have an uncomfortable meditation. And rather than feeling like you've failed, or it's wrong, or it's bad, this is actually a very important part of the whole path of meditation. And I'd encourage you to embrace it as part of the meditation. And, and be with it, stay with it, to see it through to the other side, or into the or to the depth. So whatever your metaphor you like. so frustrated desire as a cause for hatred. Another important one is fear. And two people get afraid, afraid of being hurt, free to be the threat that's coming. And so fear, hatred, ill will pushing things away, that are threatening is almost a deep instinct. But it's but if it's an instinct that it comes out of fear. What happens if we change our relationship to fear? If we do the same thing as it did about discomfort, when fear arises in meditation, Don't be in a hurry to get rid of it, fix it, analyze it, solve it. Learn first, to sit with fear and be afraid without how to say this. I don't say to have there be fear without you being afraid to have fear

present, but you don't identify with it or hasn't taken over or hasn't saturated you so fully that you know you I'm the one who's afraid. There's fear that's present. And, and then when fear arises, we have the capacity to bring mindfulness to it awareness to it presence to it, rather than it automatically triggering something like hatred or automatic automatically triggering you know, other other unhealthy things that fear can trigger. And to learn to sit with fear. And be quiet with air and wise with fear is also one of the tasks of meditation. So, if you feel afraid, in your meditation someday you should congratulate yourself. Finally, it's my turn. For some of you, your turn with fear will come sooner. Some of you it'll come later. Some of you it'll come sooner and later. And I've had my dealing with fear and meditation and my spiritual life. And you know, it says cycle through at different times and I've had to kind of look at it and be with it and get to the bottom of it. But just simply the, the idea of being able to breathe with fear and be present with fear and hold it in the body and just let it be there as a phenomena that's there, as opposed to it being my fear. That somehow, you know, identified where they're caught with or reacting to, is powerful. So to be able to understand ourselves more deeply as a response to some of the big tragedies that goes on and some of the big political things going on. I was perfectly motivated to talk about this because my, as I read the news and read the state of the current, not just United States but other countries in the world too. That hate now, I think has is kind of like this seems to me like what was 50 years ago was struggles over political ideology. It's not you know, where the, you know, you can talk ideology. Now. It's not political. It theology that's in the forefront, but rather it's the ideology of hate. You know, it's a hatred which is being perpetuated and developed. And, you know, money's going into support, you know, supporting and perpetuating evoking fear, hatred and people. And so as a society, we really have to look at this and see how it's being spread and how it's being supported. And, and, and so if we really feel really charged by this are really upset or really somehow has a big impact of we're seeing in society, the mass killings and goes on and on these things that go on. From a Buddhist point of view, from Buddhist practice point of view, it's not the only point of view you should have, but different Buddhist practice point of view. I think the appropriate response, one appropriate response is how Will I now be changed by this? How will I now become a better person by this? If we see what's going on in the world around us, whatever the tragedies might be, whatever the horrible things might be, and the way we think always is, they should fix it. The problem is out there. The they're the ones who are doing something wrong, virtuous, but they're that they're wrong. They're bad. You know, someone has to fix them. We have to get rid of them, them them them. From a Buddhist practice point of view, that's the wrong place to begin. From the point of view of Buddhist practice, the question is, given what's happening in this world, this has a big impact on me What just happened? I'm thinking about I'm concerned with it. I'm horrified. I'm upset. I'm motivated. How do I become different? How will I change if change begins with yourself with the person so if the topic is hate, if we're seeing huge demonstrations of hate in our society, how will I become less hating? How will I respond to hate in ways that are non hateful? How do I respond in a way that dissipates or, or reduces the amount of hate and the people that I encounter? You know,

some of these people who commit hate crimes are people who had horrific lives themselves. They were bullied, they were abused, they were neglected, all kinds of things. Who knows what person you'll meet later today? That if you walk by them and ignore them, you're just one maybe you're like the camel, the straw that broke the camel's back. One more person who kind of dismissed some way ignored them in some way that was painful for that person. What if you did the opposite? Maybe, who knows, maybe any one of us can prevent a mass shooting, simply because we met someone with kindness and care. I've known people whose lives have been changed completely dramatically by one person's simple act of kindness. These kind of Wow, they that's something usually the people who've been most dramatically changed by that are the people who are really struggling and having great difficulties. So who knows, maybe you'll never know that the person you stopped and was kind to you prevented something horrible happening in their family when they bring home or who knows how you benefited. But if the change doesn't start here, it kind of doesn't make a lot of sense to be focusing so much out there. But if the change can start here, that maybe puts us in a better position to think about the other issues, political issues and other things that have to be addressed. So I'd like to end with a story and kind of a fate kind of a fable. Once upon a time, there was a monastery. And as it's happening in monasteries, sometimes around the world, all that was left was half a dozen or so old. Monks and, and they were dying out and no one was coming anymore to the monastery. There's no new recruits coming monastery had been a living, continuing been continuously inhabited by monastics for 1000 years, they've been a thriving spiritual center. But it looked like you know, it was, you know, dying out coming to the end. And so the abbot, you know that we have to do something here and try different things. And he'd heard that 200 miles away there was a rabbi, who was really wise and even though was a different religion. This person was really wise. So the abbot went there. And that's the rest explained to the rabbi what was going on? And the rabbi thought about it for a while said, well, there's really only one thing that I have to tell you. Among view, monks there. One of you is the next Christ was a strange thing to say. So they haven't went back to the monastery. Everyone was waiting for the abbot, to get back. academically, here what the rabbi had to say, the wise person. And the abbot said, you know, he said this straight, He only said something very strange. And you know, all he said, was it one of us, it will be the next Christ. And they've also got strange. So they don't think about it too much. But over the next days and weeks and months, they started wondering, well, could it be so and so Charlie? I mean, he's, he's always cynical, but he's always ready to help. Or could it be Sam? He, he's like, you know, he's very, very quiet. But whenever he has something to say, it's always a wise, or could it be you know, and they kept sort of looking at each other in new ways, like, how could it be and they would look and wonder and they started treating each other kinder and nicer and with more kind of care and respect. And they started feeling kind of the atmosphere in the monitor kind of changed. And from time to time, there were young people from town who'd come to the monastery grounds for picnics. And some of them kind of picked up that something was different here. And they started kind of talking with the monks. And we're kind of struck by something, especially was going on here. And, and then some of the young men said, Well,

I'll go live there for a while and let me get ordained and become a monk and live the spiritual life. And within a few years, the whole place was now a thriving spiritual center again. So maybe just maybe one of the people you're going to encounter this week is the next Buddha. Please don't hate anyone. Because who knows? might be the next Buddha. If you Meet the person well. So study your hate, get to the bottom of it. Don't take these take things in the world as only things out there, from a Buddhist point of view, really reflect and think about how you want to change and how you want to change to be better. And what eyes with what eyes? Do you want to see the people around you. And if you look at, look upon our people as maybe that's the one who's the next Buddha, the next Christ, the next something, maybe will make a better world. So thank you. And then we can start now. And here is the idea that

since we have a few minutes before the tea, if maybe you could just turn around two to three For people around you, and if someone's around you and doesn't have a partner, invite them in and just say some simple little bit quiet words, because otherwise it gets too noisy in here about some some simple statements, short statements about what was evoked to you today in this talk. Thank you