

Six Principles of Goodwill

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So good morning, everyone, and welcome. I have a few announcements as well. The first is that kind of a celebratory announcement that I just came back yesterday from six days at our retreat center in Santa Cruz, Insight Retreat Center, where we had the final... retreat and graduation of our 15 new teachers here at IMC. So it's the first time that we've had our own teacher training, a four-year training, and it's quite a wonderful event, and graduated them on Thursday, and then had a day and a half of other things that we did together now as colleagues to each other. And so some of the most local people who already teach quite a bit at IMC are like Tanya Weiser and... Liz Powell and I think Dawn Neal teaches online and Ari Crellin-Quick teaches online.

I think that Lienchi Tran also teaches online for us in our regular programs. Ying Chen teaches our regular programs for us. So these are the kind of local that we celebrated their graduation. And in a sense, it continues the lineage. In Buddhism, often lineage is important.

And so now kind of Andrea Fella and I were both teaching it and kind of passing the lineage on. And but also reflecting a little bit on the lineage we've come from, given the earthquake in Burma. Both Andre and I practiced in Burma, very important for our practice and our ability to be here to teach from our time in Burma. Both Andre and I practiced in Burma, very important for our practice and our ability to be here to teach from our time in Burma. And a lot of the senior Western teachers in our insight tradition practiced in Burma, some of them quite extensively, or practiced with Burmese teachers who came here to this country to teach us.

And so we had this deep connection to Burma. And so there's this big earthquake that it's a poor country overall and a lot of conflict and challenges and challenges of bringing in humanitarian aid because of a civil war there and all kinds of things. But our insight tradition has some deep connections to a few different nonprofits that have ways of getting support in, aid in, money, and so if some of you would like to support the humanitarian cause for Myanmar, Burma... what we're recommending is to go along with the recommendation of this new, this not new, but this revived humanitarian organization that started at IMC and continuing that I'm on the board of, which is Insight World Aid. And Insight

World Aid has done research into different organizations that we're connected to. And there's one called Asia Partners that we think is the best place now to donate to.

And if you go to the Insight World Aid website, you can, there's a link there directly to Asia Partners and where you make a donation. And I think Jack Kornfield is on the board. He's deeply connected. He's on the board of Asia Partners. And if you go to the Insight World Aid website, you can, there's a link there directly to Asia Partners and where you make a donation.

And I think Jack Kornfield is on the board. He's deeply connected. He's on the board of Asia Partners. And they do really good work. And so if you'd like to support the Burmese, and for me, I'm supporting it. And, you know, to me, I do it out of tremendous gratitude for the tremendous support I received when I practiced in Burma.

It was remarkable to be a practitioner in Burma. And everything was offered for free. And it wasn't just a retreat and staying on the retreat and food and everything we needed. But it included medical care. There were times when I needed medical care and dental care.

And... They arranged for them people to come to the doctors and dentists to come to the monastery. They care for us, all for free. And it was just like, you know, and so I feel so much gratitude for how I was introduced or really kind of learned this practice of insight there in Burma, not only for the practice itself, but with a very open-handed way it was freely given and And so to a big degree, we're continuing that tradition of open-handedly giving these practices and teachings for free through our tradition here, including at our retreat center. So anyway, so you go to the Inside World Aid website, you can find the direct link to this where we recommend people donate.

So anyway, so you go to the Inside World Aid website, you can find the direct link to this where we recommend people donate. So for today, I want to kind of tell you a story, but also... offer you the teachings the Buddha gave for the monks at Kosambī. It had to do with the conflict in Kosambī. We sometimes might naively think that the Buddha was so so great, wonderful teacher, that there couldn't have been any conflict among his disciples in his time. Everyone was must have just floating on clouds and got along really well.

But there was definitely just because of human nature conflicts within his monastic community that in his own lifetime in the monastery where he was living even and so this happened in a town called Kosambī and and it had to do with a very minor monastic rule and it's so minor that you think is this really worth the level of conflict that arose? Yeah. And they had an outhouse and the way that people cleaned themselves because they didn't have toilet paper back then. They used water and they had these dippers for dipping water. And it was very important not to leave any water in the dipper when you finished.

And maybe because mosquitoes or I don't know why. And so there was someone who was an expert in the monastic rules. There was some monks who specialized in this. And this expert was criticized, was accused, of having left some water in his dipper. There was some monks who specialized in this.

And this expert was criticized, was accused, of having left some water in his dipper. Oh, these monks. Yeah. And so there was a, and he insisted he hadn't done that. Other people insisted he did.

And so there was two factions in the monastery. The factions were against him, the facts that they were for him. And they couldn't get in agreement. And eventually somehow, maybe the majority or something, voted to expel him from the monastery. But that even created more conflict in the community.

And there was all this arguing. And the Buddha was there in the monastery, and he said, cool it. You know, you know, you should get along and let, like, maybe let go of this. But they said, they said to him something like, you know, just leave us alone, venerable, sir, we'll take care of this. And they don't even listen to the Buddha.

And so they were continuing to argue and it was noisy in the monastery. And so the Buddha, he had tried to intervene. They didn't listen to him. So he left. He just went off to go someplace else.

But then the townspeople got wind that the Buddha wasn't there and that there was this conflict. So they stopped supporting the monks there. And support means feeding them because monks are not, they don't cook, they don't, they can't even keep food overnight. They're not allowed to store food. So every day they're dependent on what's offered to them as they go walk for alms.

They're not allowed to store food. So every day they're dependent on what's offered to them as they go walk for alms. So people stopped feeding them. So that got their attention eventually. They started to starve.

And so they went to the Buddha, or some went to the Buddha to apologize and say, you know, please forgive us and please come back. And so he came back. And so, but they were still kind of, you know, a little bit challenged by it all. But so he said, so this is the description of the how it went. Right.

Now, on that occasion, the monks at Kosambī had taken to quarreling and brawling and were deep in disputes stabbing each other with verbal daggers. This is not, you know, this is like serious. They could neither convince each other nor be convinced by others. They could neither persuade each other nor be persuaded by others. So there it is a standstill.

So... Someone went to the Buddha and sat down explained what happened. And I think what it says here, the Buddha called them to come to him. So he would go someplace. And so the monks all went to him.

And he asked them, monks, is it true that you have taken to quarreling and brawling and are deep in dispute stabbing each other verbal daggers? And so they're supposed to be honest for your monks. So they said, yes, venerable sir. And then the Buddha said, monks, what do you think? When you are quarreling and brawling and deep in disputes, stabbing each other with verbal daggers, Do you on that occasion maintain acts of loving kindness by body, speech, and mind in public and in private towards your companions in the holy life?

When you are quarreling and brawling and deep in disputes, stabbing each other with verbal daggers, Do you on that occasion maintain acts of loving kindness by body, speech, and mind in public and in private towards your companions in the holy life? That's a beautiful expression, asking them. And we can ask ourselves that. You know, there's people quarrel in families. Sometimes there's things fall apart.

People quarrel in communities, they quarrel in work, they quarrel in politics, they quarrel a whole nation is at standstill with each other and with verbal daggers for each other. It's not uncommon that we get in standstill around this tension and problems. So what do you think when you're in opposition with other people for whatever reason? Are you stabbing each other with verbal daggers? Or do you on that occasion maintain acts of loving kindness by body, speech, and mind in public and in private towards your fellow citizens?

How do you view people? And it's a call to always, always have goodwill. Whether this word *mettā* should be translated as loving kindness or not is an open question. For some people, loving kindness is a little bit too high a bar. A little bit too idealistic.

And maybe it is unrealistic, but goodwill maybe is more realistic. That you can always have goodwill, even for your enemies. You can wish them well, because then they'll treat you better, maybe. And so this is a really high kind of teaching of Buddha, very important teaching of the Buddha, to always maintain loving kindness. And so this is a really high kind of teaching of Buddha, very important teaching of the Buddha, to always maintain loving kindness.

And one reason is that an antidote to having ill will. Goodwill is the antidote for ill will. And ill will harms the person who has it. And why would you want to harm yourself? And that's one of the remarkable things that happens through this practice, is as we settle on ourselves more and more deeply in the present moment, become more embodied, more connected to ourselves in a deep, deep way, we've become acutely sensitive to the ways that we harm ourselves by what we do with our mind, our speech, and our body, acutely aware of the tension that builds up, the way we close down, the way that we do, even some kind of, sometimes I felt like violence to ourselves by having hate, by having greed, by having all these ways in all directions, including towards ourselves, towards others.

And we feel how we're harming ourselves. And why would you harm yourself? And that's the big question in Buddhism. When you really have settled deeply, deeply, deeply on yourself, really connected and sensitive to what's happening, which is a hard thing to come to because we're so distracted. We're so busy, you know, chasing after doing things and thinking about important things and that we don't, we're often somewhat alienated from ourselves.

And this becoming deeply connected, then provides us this important information about how we self-harm. And it's remarkably powerful to see this. And this becoming deeply connected, then provides us this important information about how we self-harm. And it's remarkably powerful to see this. And it goes against kind of the grain of how we normally think when we spend a lot of time blaming other

people, or blaming the world or the weather or something.

But as we get more and more deeply connected, we can feel the movements of ill-will, the movements of greed, ambition, the movements of even sometimes anxiety, doubts, how it kind of begins to twist something inside or close something inside, that irritates something inside, kind of harm something inside. And so to discover that goodwill... is not something we have to do, but is what is left when ill will has gone away. That's like a treasure to discover. So for the Buddha, he put a lot of emphasis on the importance of goodwill and loving kindness.

And so he starts with addressing the monks who are quarreling. When you're quarreling, do you have goodwill? And being committed to being honest, they said, no, venerable, sir. Um... And then he goes on and says, well, when you're quarreling and brawling in this way, what can you possibly know, what can you see that you take to quarreling and brawling?

What is it that you see, what is it when you deeply have insight or see clearly? What's triggering? What do you value? What's so important for you that you want to quarrel and brawl? What's happening when you hate someone or challenge by them or incal Really, so it's a request to really look deeply.

What's happening when you hate someone or challenge by them or incal Really, so it's a request to really look deeply. What are you going on in you at that time? And if you keep doing this, living this way, it will lead to your harm and suffering for a long time. And I'm struck by how many huge conflicts we've had in our world over the last hundred in what? 200 years or something, that were still living in the legacy of it.

The harm that was done by these major wars continues to this day. You know, I was, my parents-in-law were in the concentration camps in Germany, so I knew them until they died and knew the impact of that up until, I think my father-in-law died about, I think about 11 years ago. And so up until that time, right up to the day he died, I know that the effects of being in those camps were still with him. And the people who went through all kinds of things, there are Armenian genocide in 1910s and 20s. And they're still living with it.

We're still in this country, are still living with the challenges of the civil war that goes on. And some people would argue that the violence that happened for the American Revolution is still with us in some deep way, that it wasn't all good, the American Revolution and the independence, that somehow that act of violence that was horrible, there could have been another way, like Canada. And some people would argue that the violence that happened for the American Revolution is still with us in some deep way, that it wasn't all good, the American Revolution and the independence, that somehow that act of violence that was horrible, there could have been another way, like Canada. Maybe it got independent a little different kind of way. And so this idea of... of being connected to ourselves.

And this value of loving kindness instead of violence, instead of hate, is when the Buddha was championing. So then the Buddha had, this is this core teaching in this text. Then the Buddha addressed the

monks thus. There are these six memorable qualities that create love and respect, and conduce to helpfulness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. What are the six?

So these memorable qualities, sometimes they're called six principles of cordiality, which seems a little bit dry. One translator translates in the six principles of good-heartedness. Someone else tried to translate it as six principles of amiability. Once the last time you said amiable. But good-heartedness.

But I love this idea that they create love and respect, conduce to helpfulness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. This is one of the primary principles of Buddhism, is don't create divisiveness. Look to see how you can create concord in unity. So there can be conflict. There can be differences of opinion.

There can be, but how do we live in conflict? How do we live in challenges with loving kindness? With looking for how can we come together rather than be torn apart? How do we live in challenges with loving kindness? With looking for how can we come together rather than be torn apart?

We're always going to have difference of opinions. Does that have to tear us apart? And for the Buddha, no. So there's six principles. So he said...

And the three of them have to do with this goodwill. So it's kind of nice. And the idea is to do them in public and in private. And I think private means so no one knows about it. Isn't that nice?

You don't have to get any credit. And maybe it's even better, you know, to do acts of kindness, of love, of care, without anybody necessarily knowing that you're doing it. Maintain bodily acts of loving kindness, both in public and in private, towards one's companions in the holy life. So he's talking to monastics in their monastic environment. This is a memorable quality that creates love, respect, conduces to helpfulness, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity.

That's the first principle. The second is, maintain verbal acts. So first, do things with your body. Make a gift. Right? cook a meal and offer it to a friend.

The inside world aid that we've started up again, I think it's this Thursday, is starting up, is Thursday right, is starting up making bag lunches for homeless. And they're going to do it here, and they're going to make them here in Redwood City. We discovered that there's a small group of people connected to the Catholics workers. And they're going to do it here, and they're going to make them here in Redwood City. We discovered that there's a small group of people connected to the Catholics workers.

Here in Redwood City. They have a little house, and they're going to let us use their space to make these bag lunches. And I love the fact Catholic worker and Dorothy Day were very important social workers or caregivers of this country. And so they're still alive and going here at Wood City, and we're getting to use their space. There's information on the Inside World Aid website about that if you want to go and help make sandwiches.

So, you know, bodily acts of loving kindness. Then the second principle is maintain verbal acts of loving kindness both in public and in private. The third one is maintain mental acts of loving kindness both in

public and in private. So I don't know what a mental act in public would be versus private. Maybe it means like when you're out and about, you should, you know, in the society, just have good thoughts of goodwill.

And the private maybe means when you're meditating when you're alone. Think well about people then too. So the fourth one is... Use things in common. Again, a monastic uses things in common with their virtuous companions in the holy life.

Without making reservations, one shares with them any gain of any kind that accords with the *dhamma* and has been obtained in a way that accords with the *dhamma*, including even the contents of their bowl. Without making reservations, one shares with them any gain of any kind that accords with the *dhamma* and has been obtained in a way that accords with the *dhamma*, including even the contents of their bowl. So that means the food they get. So the fourth way of conducive for, conducive for loving kindness and immobility and good-heartedness is to share without reservations what you have. Even the contents of your bowl of food, even your food, that's quite something, because since they only get one meal a day or, you know, and...

And you're just lucky if you get enough food back then. And even if you don't have enough food, share with those who have even less. Always be sharing. That's a principle. Always share.

So we have a little extra in this country, so supporting Burma would be nice. And then the fifth principle... A monastic dwells both in public and in private, possessing in common with their companions in the holy life, those virtues that are unbroken, unblotched, unmottled, liberating, commended by the wise, and conducive to concentration. So here there's a call to be ethical. And live in such an ethical way, live by the precepts, live with the virtues, in a way that is unethical, unblemished, that somehow is just kind of a pure-hearted connection to being ethical.

And this was a huge surprise for me when I started doing this insight practice the first time. This was in Thailand. I kind of stumbled into it. I didn't quite know what I was getting involved in. This was in Thailand.

I kind of stumbled into it. I didn't quite know what I was getting involved in. And so kind of accidentally, my first introduction to this practice that we do here was on a 10-week retreat. And so that was kind of, that got much, so that was long enough to get my attention. And one of the things that happened, surprising things happened in the course of those 10 weeks, was I got so settled and so connected to myself, so at peace with myself.

So there was so little inner conflict present anymore that there was, I started to feel something inside which, according to my earlier life, based on principle, I wouldn't have appreciated it. It didn't trust. Right. It was kind of like they didn't trust this kind of words, the language concepts. And that was the concept of purity.

And I started feeling this amazing sense of purity within. And I could feel that if I had certain thoughts

that were not so pure, how it was a kind of violence or kind of darkened or colored or, you know, shut down this place of purity that felt so healthy and good. It felt like home in a way. And so this idea of virtue which is unblotched, unbroken, that inner selves, it's quite a remarkable experience to have as a reference point for how to live a life. And that's some here is called liberating.

And I wasn't liberated spiritually in the deep Buddhist sense during that 10-week retreat. And that's some here is called liberating. And I wasn't liberated spiritually in the deep Buddhist sense during that 10-week retreat. But I certainly felt free from a lot of the kind of inner conflict, the way that greed and hatred were a kind of loss of freedom because they kind of become compulsions that are difficult to put down. They kind of drive us.

And so there's a kind of freedom from living with a deep sense of virtue. But the most surprising thing around this description, it ends with the virtue that is conducive for concentration. And that's meditation. In order to be able to sit in deep states of meditation, to have this deep connection to oneself, this deep feeling concentration is also a feeling of wholeness. We're completely feeling whole and connected in some deep inner way.

Virtue is essential. You can't be unethical and expect to become whole in the way the concentration makes you whole. And feeling a wholesomeness or wholeness. So the idea of the virtue that's conducive to concentration. And I love this term because there's a safety mechanism built into this, that any attempt to live an ethical life that makes you more agitated... that somehow takes away your capacity to get deeply settled is probably not going to be ethical.

And not a few people think they're living in ethical life, but underneath it there is hostility, there's hatred, there's fear, there's anxiety, there's shame, there's embarrassment, there's all these complicated things that we have, guilt, that doesn't help concentration, doesn't help for this deep sense of peace that concentration can provide. And not a few people think they're living in ethical life, but underneath it there is hostility, there's hatred, there's fear, there's anxiety, there's shame, there's embarrassment, there's all these complicated things that we have, guilt, that doesn't help concentration, doesn't help for this deep sense of peace that concentration can provide. And so to connect ethics with concentration, I think, is a wonderful safeguard so that our ethics is really the right kind. And then to come to the sixth one. A monastic dwells both in public and in private, possessing in common with their companions in the holy life, that view, that perspective, that is noble and liberating, and leads one who practices in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering.

This too is a memorable quality that creates love and respect, conduces to helpfulness to non-dispute to concord into unity. So this is kind of what Buddhism is kind of the teaching of the Buddha is all directed towards. It's directed towards something in you, that is conducive to love and respect, to being helpful, becoming helpful person, to non-dispute, to concord, and to unity. Is that so bad? That this is kind of like, that kind of over and over again, this is what the Buddha is pointing towards this possibility.

I think it's really useful not to forget this, that this is the kind of orientation, or this is the litmus test for practice and for Buddhist teachings. How does it support our ability to do these things? Over and over again. I think it's really useful not to forget this, that this is the kind of orientation, or this is the litmus test for practice and for Buddhist teachings. How does it support our ability to do these things? Over and over again.

How not to succumb to ill will. How to live with goodwill. How to live with a kind of virtue or kind of ethics that is conducive to your own well-being, that conducive to concentration. Right. And virtue is really good for the world around us.

If you live ethically, the only people who might suffer a lot are the newspapers, the news channels, because most of the news is about people being unethical. And then sharing, you know, the sharing with others, the fourth quality. And now there's something about a view, a perspective that's liberating. And that frees us, that that also creates goodwill or creates helpfulness and unity, that we create a view that frees us from greed and hatred, frees us from the kind of clinging and resistance, the kind of obsessiveness and compulsivity, which gets in the way of goodwill, it gets in the way of caring for our community around us, it gets in the way of caring for the people who we disagree with. Is that possible?

And that's the idea. So I don't think that this teaching here is about monks not disagreeing over a monastic rule. I think this is, you know, rules are difficult to interpret and understand. But it's, even if you have a disagreement, never give up your loving kindness. I think this is, you know, rules are difficult to interpret and understand.

But it's, even if you have a disagreement, never give up your loving kindness. And hopefully it's a... You know, religious people speak in hyperbole sometimes. So you have maybe, hopefully what I'm about to quote, we can understand that just said an exaggerated way so that to really stress how important it is. The Buddha said, even if bandits are sawing off your limbs, maintain goodwill.

And when I was in... And there was a teacher, an Indian teacher named Munindraji, when some of the Westerners went to practice with him in the 1960s. I think there was a woman who was somehow a little bit accosted publicly in the street. And I think she fought off or got away from the person. But she went to the Munindra and said, you know, what should I do if I get accosted on the streets? Yeah.

And he said, with all the loving kindness you can muster, hit the person overhead with your umbrella. And, but that goes along with one of the rules, the monastics are supposed to live by. One of the rules is that they're not allowed to hit anyone, to strike anyone, physically fight with them. But there is one exception. They're allowed to hit out.

I think the expression is strike out against someone for two caveats, two requirements. They have to do it with loving kindness in their hearts. They have to have a good will. They cannot have ill will for someone when they do it. They have to do it with loving kindness in their hearts.

They have to have a good will. They cannot have ill will for someone when they do it. The second, they do it only for the purposes of escaping them. So you don't have to stand there. And just not do anything if someone's hitting you.

You're allowed to do what it takes to escape. But there has to be goodwill. And that's a high bar, right? I mean, how many people can do that when they're caught in their fear or something? But it is possible.

I've known people, the people I know, because that's my circles I know. Mostly, is I know practitioners, deep practitioners, who have in fact been, something has happened, someone was robbing them at gunpoint or something. And somehow they knew how to not succumb to fear, not to succumb to ill will. And they kind of, something, they were surprised themselves by what came out of them that settled the situation, made the whole thing go away. Okay.

One friend of mine looked at the person and said, your mother would be ashamed of you. And that was enough. Another person who was out in the desert and this man accosted her with a gun and wasn't going to be a good scene. And she said, you're no Christian, give me that gun. And that was enough.

And then she threw it in the bushes and ran. So I'm not suggesting any of these things, you know, as a strategy, you know, to try to do it. So I'm not suggesting any of these things, you know, as a strategy, you know, to try to do it. But somehow they knew what to do in the moment that settled it. And I knew one person, one friend of mine who did not stay calm being held up in San Francisco.

And he was the one that ended up in jail because of his ill will and what he tried to do. So the six principles of... goodwill, six principles that lead to love and respect to unity and concord. It begins with loving kindness, in body, speech, and mind, publicly and privately. Six that includes sharing, generosity, giving, even down to your last food and your own bowl.

Without reservations, supporting the people around us, this is one of the deep principles of Buddhism. And then virtue. And it's not just any old virtue, any old ethical rules, but the ethics that really does something to your heart, does something to your inner life, so that when you sit down to meditate, it's easy for you to get settled, to get concentrated. And then to have a view, to have a perspective that understands, that clinging to anything, grasping to anything, craving to anything is harmful. And the practice, the purpose of the practice is to let go of that clinging, to let go of all craving and clinging.

And it's those people who have no clinging and craving, who become second nature to live with goodwill, to live with caring for people, to be helpful for this world. And it's those people who have no clinging and craving, who become second nature to live with goodwill, to live with caring for people, to be helpful for this world. To be concerned with the welfare and happiness of everyone, the unity, the concord that we can live in. And it's a high bar. It's not easy when there's so much divisiveness in our society and so much is at stake and so much harm can get done.

And so there's a lot of tempting reasons to succumb to hostile anger. There's a lot of reasons to succumb

to fear and anxiety and distress. And the Buddha was teaching something else for us. And I find it tremendously inspiring and encouraging. He was teaching that in some sense that the world begins by you.

And if you want to live in a better world, begin with yourself. Live with goodwill, publicly and privately. Live with sharing, not with hoarding. Live with virtue. Live with ethics, not with causing harm, any ways through your behavior.

And understand something profound about a perspective that frees you from all harm-making, intentional harm-making, any greed, hatred that causes harm to yourself and to others. Live with a view that it is possible to be free. It is possible to have profound peace at heart, to be transformed into someone who lives for the welfare and happiness for the world, not because they should, but because it becomes who we are. So thank you. So those are people in the past, the ancient world, how could they live in conflict with each other?

So thank you. So those are people in the past, the ancient world, how could they live in conflict with each other? Shouldn't they know better time with the Buddha? We certainly know better now, don't we? One of the things that disturbed me about watching things like *Star Trek* when it was younger.

It was supposed to happen, you know, thousands, hundreds of years into the future. I was just so struck by how... ethically naive they were. I was so surprised that by that, you know, in a few hundred years, that we hadn't kind of become ethically and psychologically sophisticated and capable of caring for each other in a deep, profound way. So anyway, we live in this world where these teachings are so important and maybe we'll always need them.

Six principles of goodwill. Thank you.