

Seven Supporting Factors of Equanimity

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This equanimity. And over the years, people have come to me when times are challenging, either locally in a certain area or nationally or internationally. I said, Gil, please give a talk on equanimity. It's like the go-to thing that people are requesting. And when I discovered equanimity for myself, it was on retreat. And I was quite surprised to discover it and to understand how both sweet it is, that it's really sweet, that it really involves a tremendous clarity, and it's powerful.

It's an amazing thing. And I had no idea until then that equanimity was like a thing. It's a particular state that we can experience, a particular way the mind operates that can be known, that operates. If anything, when I thought about equanimity before, I thought it was like an admonition, like some like, stay calm. Don't be reactive now or something. Some a little bit, you know, like you had to do something, okay, I got to be an equanimous.

But to discover on retreat, as the mind got very settled and peaceful, that there arose this particular state of mind or this particular activity of the mind, in a sense, that is known as equanimity and how beautiful it is. That was a great, you know, a great source of joy for me. So... So the word for equanimity in Pāli, in the ancient language, is *upekkhā*. And it is a word that means something like to watch over, to have an overview of something. And so to have the big picture of something. And it's not a few times that if we have the bigger picture of what's happening, that we're going to be much more forgiving in the situation, much less reactive.

Right. You know, if someone, you know, is being unnecessarily snappy, irritated and irritable. And just like, what is going on here? You know, this is my friend or this is my colleague I've known for a long time. And it's easy maybe to get self-righteous or upset or critical. This person's doing me wrong.

But then someone tells you, you know, so-and-so just lost a very close relative. And they have all these personal challenges right now to kind of... Oh, now you have the bigger picture to understand more why the person is emotionally challenged. So, okay, let's give this person lots of permission. Let's just hold this person with care and kindness and not take it so personal that the person is like attacking me by being snappy. Yeah.

So there's lots of situations like this where we do this, maybe, or we don't do it because we don't have the overview. Maybe you're in the market checkout and you're going to the checkout and there's lots of lines and you see one place where the line is kind of short. And it's clear that you have the right, you're there right there ready to move into the next person in line and someone slips right in front of you. Like, how could they do that? They could have seen me and how could they possibly, this is offensive and then they see me and so many times people don't see me and... and I should give this person a piece of my mind, and this is not how good people operate.

But then somehow, maybe you start a conversation with a person, something happens, and you discover that the person's been kind of seriously, critically ill for a year. And this is the first time out. And it's challenging. The person's exhausted and tired. It's just barely able to kind of manage to get their food and get out of there. And they don't really see what's going on around them.

They just saw the line, and they were like trying to cope. And so they just saw this kind of gap and stepped into it without... They didn't have the bigger picture. But when you hear the story about this person's challenges, oh, please, of course you could have it be in front of me. No problem. No problem.

And so as soon as you know something, you have the bigger picture of what it is. And one of the remarkable things that happened to me many years ago was that I did a retreat with Stephen Levine, who was one of the premier kind of pioneers for the modern hospice movement. And he wrote a very impactful book at the time called *Who Dies About Death and Dying* and So I did a weekend workshop with him, and brilliant man, very insightful and attuned to people. And it was a death and dying workshop. And it was up in Marin at maybe the community college there, someplace like that. And before the event was going to start, all these people were milling around outside in the courtyard.

I don't know exactly, you know, I don't know exactly how to describe how I was viewing everyone, but I think I was a little bit, at the minimum, I had this view that these were just everyday, ordinary people. It might have been a little worse than that. But if I could remember it properly, I would tell you, but, you know, some view like, oh, these are ordinary, everyday kind

of people. And then we went into the workshop for the weekend. And the primary way in which Stephen Levine worked was he invited people to come up and speak about their challenges around death and dying. And then he would engage them in a transformative way very quickly.

It was remarkable what these two days were like. And the people who spoke, who were these ordinary everyday people, had these... dramatic, difficult, challenging experiences. I mean, some of them were literally, you know, dying while they were there. Some people had just lost their child, young child or baby or something. Some people, so all in accidents and this and that, that war zones, it was in the ordinary people, everyday people, with this huge, painful, difficult time.

And I thought, Gil, you just kind of viewed all of them as ordinary everyday people who don't have any suffering, kind of, or something. And I said, wow, I take people for granted. Who knows when I'm walking down the street what suffering, what background, what challenges these people have. Maybe everyone has some kind of serious challenge, background, and let's not take people for granted anymore. Let's not kind of assume that everyone is, I don't know what... everyday ordinary folks. Everyone has an emotional depth and background and conditions that I don't know.

And so that provides an overview, kind of a different attitude to how to be with people that lends itself to not being immediately reactive, judgmental, operating on preferences, bias, And so this idea of an overview, an equanimity from an overview, from seeing a bigger picture, seeing in a different way. The other word that's used for equanimity is a very ordinary three words that are strung together into a compound that sounds like a sophisticated word, if you don't know Pāli. It's the words kind of like this middle stand. Okay. Standing in the middle of all this. So it's kind of more of a sense, rather than an overview, it's more like having a balance, being in a balanced standing position, be able to take a stand and not be pushed around.

And this comes a little bit from being somehow emotionally or spiritually or psychologically strong. There's some kind of inner stability, inner balance that if someone comes and says something unkind to you, or if someone praises you, that that's not going to kind of hit anything inside. It's not going to tip you over one way or the other. You're kind of rooted in a certain way. That rootedness means that you're not prone to being pushed around by what's called the winds of the world, the praise and blame, success and failures and things like that. So these are the two kind of primary forms of background for equanimity.

And what they both do is they protect us from a reactive mind. They protect us from some-

how, and reactive in my vocabulary, is a... action, response in the mind, which is on automatic pilot that happens before we've decided it, decided anything, or come to conclusion, we just automatically kind of react to a situation rather than respond. Response can be more thoughtful, more considered, more kind of balanced, more coming from a deeper place. Reactivity is kind of like a surface reaction that, you know, after it happens we realize that we've done it. And so equanimity, balance protects us from this reactivity, which keeps the mind calm, calmer.

One of the natures of reactivity is that it agitates the mind. And the agitated mind is more likely to be reactive, which keeps it going. And some people unfortunately seem to live in reactivity. And sometimes what people are reacting to, and I've certainly seen this in myself, I'm reacting to myself. I have a thought, I have an idea, I have something, and that just like, you know, gets me agitated, you know, automatically. And then that agitation, then another one, another one, and it goes on and on.

And so equanimity is to come to a place where we're not prone to be reactive. We might have all kinds of feelings and responses that arise, But all those feelings and responses are held in kind of a wider field rather than generating an automatic response. So how is equanimity brought about? How do we find ourselves to be a equanimous? Someone tells you, be equanimous. What do you do?

There was a time when some, as I kind of indicated at the beginning, where if someone told me, Gail, be equanimous, I would have reacted to that. And one reaction is no. The other reaction would be, okay, I got to get to work. You know, somehow, you know, this is something to do. But I think that equanimity is not something we do, but something that we build, something that we create the conditions for so that it's there to support us. It's not a doing.

If it's a doing, it probably is not going to work. If we try too much to be a equanimous, it's probably not equanimity. But equanimity is almost like a byproduct of a way of living, a way of practicing, a way of being that we want to put in place that we can do. And so in doing them, then equanimity can become stronger and stronger. So there are seven things that I think of that are the conditions for the seven conditions for the arising, the appearance, the establishing of equanimity.

First Condition

The first is, and some of this kind of follows a very common kind of progression of practice described in the Buddha's teachings. The first is to live an ethical life. And an ethical life in the Buddhist teachings is a life that does not involve any intentional harming of anybody else.

That's the criteria for it.

And if there's no intentional wanting to harm someone through our body, speech, and mind, then that gives birth, according to the Buddha, to the joy or the bliss of blamelessness. That no one has anything to blame you. People can't blame you. based on what you've actually done. Of course, people will blame you anyway. But you know that your inner life was clean. You know that you're dedicated to non-harming and that you were not intending to harm someone, even though inadvertently maybe you did cause harm to someone or offend someone. Right. And then you maybe try to take care of that. But at least you have the equanimity, the balance, that you have nothing to apologize for.

You don't have to be worried that someone's going to find out what you did because you had unkind thoughts or you did something unethical. And so a tremendous value of living harmlessly, dedicated to harmlessness, that's based on no hostility, living a life without hostility. And to take refuge in that, to value that, to realize how important that is, so that if someone does blame you, so that if something, you do something that the byproduct somehow accidentally is, that it causes some harm or pain for someone, you at least don't have to worry about your intention.

You don't have to worry about the motivations you have in your inner life. You kind of feel good about yourself on the inside. You might not feel good about the consequences of what you did, and you might want to try to do something to alleviate the problem that was caused. But there's some balance or some non-reactivity. There's nothing in there that causes you to feel like you... did something wrong, that you somehow were off in your way that you went through the world.

So sometimes it's called the bliss of blamelessness, the well-being of knowing that you have nothing, you've done nothing that deserves blame from someone else.

Second Condition

The second support for equanimity is, it's often in English called faith, saddhā in Pāli, I like the word confidence. Confidence in the practice, confidence in the Dharma, confidence in these teachings, confidence in the purpose of this practice. That when there's a confidence about how to live, confidence about a practice we have to engage with this life that we have, if that is strong, then we know we have inner resources. and an inner direction, inner orientation, that will support us in any circumstance we find ourselves.

And so even though we don't understand what to do in a situation, we know that the practice is always there. I can't tell you how many times I've been in a situation where I did not know

what to do. But I've come to trust that in those circumstances, I can always be mindful of. And if I'm mindful, somehow things seem to work out that I couldn't have predicted. If I had not been mindful, I would have been caught up in my reactivity, my fears, my trying to figure things out, my kind of agitated mind.

But with a faith and confidence and mindfulness, I can stay somehow balanced and calm, non-reactive, and realize, okay, we have time here, let's just be present, right? Let's talk about what's actually happening here, what we can recognize and know. Let me stay close to how I'm feeling. And somehow through that, things work out.

So I have a tremendous faith in mindfulness. I have a tremendous confidence in cultivating calm, cultivating non-attachment, cultivating a certain kind of inner freedom. I'm not always those ways. Right? but have confidence in it. And that, carrying that with me, means that I'm much more likely to be non-reactive. It supports equanimity.

Third Condition

The third is a sense of, is a well-developed mind, or a well-developed heart. Our inner life, you don't have to put, I was going to say put up with, but maybe that's not nice. You don't have to just be stuck with the inner life that you have. Your inner life is malleable. Your inner life can change and grow for the better. Or your inner life can grow and develop in ways that are kind of harmful to you and the world. It can go to be a kind of beautiful inner life. Or it could be a fairly ugly inner life when there's full of hostility and hatred and and greed in a way that is not kind to the people around us.

And so to develop a good inner life, a strong, well-balanced inner life, to cultivate mindfulness so that the mindfulness becomes strong, to cultivate concentration and calm and stability, so those become strong. so that not that they have to be strongly mindful, strongly concentrated or calm all the time, but so that those are available to turn on when they're needed. Turn them on, or turn up the volume, or bring up the greater clarity. So there's sometimes, and I'm in a situation where this situation feels like, oh, now I've got to really be mindful, really be present for this. And I can kind of turn on the mindfulness muscle. And it's kind of like pulling the curtains from the mind. And so I'm not so caught up in my thoughts and my fantasies, ideas, myself. But now I'm really seeing, knowing, recognizing, noting, tuning in to the details of the present, the details of what's happening inside of me. And this is invaluable to have this heightened kind of capacity to be mindful.

There's a lot of circumstances where, because of my role as a teacher, I'm meeting one-on-one with people. And it's really important that I kind of turn this on so that I'm really attuned

to what's happening in me and the other person, really present. And I don't really, I'm not thinking about the past and the future too much. I'm not even trying to remember what people say. I'm just really trying to turn on and be present, be mindful, be clear, and track what's going on here.

There are, you know, and it's not always appropriate thing to do in all circumstances. I shouldn't do this too much at home, you know, with my family, my kids, you know. It's a little bit too much for them. But they have the ability when something is difficult to turn on the mindfulness and really know it's there, it's a strength we have. Or to turn on the calm or stability. to be able to kind of know how to kind of become embodied, how to relax, be settled, be here in an embodied kind of way that's soft, relaxed, calm, to breathe calmly. This is a great skill to have.

Both of these, to turn on a higher degree of strength of mindfulness, a higher strength of stability, calm, help then this non-reactivity to be there. We're less likely to react because we have this balance, this support.

Fourth Condition

The fourth factor is a well-developed happiness, well-being, to become happy. And this is one of the goals that is inherent or explicit in the Buddha's path to liberation, that on the way of this path is to become happier, to have more joy. to have an inner life that you're glad to have, you're delighted to have. There's delight in it. There's joy, there's happiness.

And this is, of course, a little bit challenging to hear for some people. There's a lot of people who their life is not like that, where they're quite challenged, quite sad, grieving, depressed, angry, hurt. You know, there's a lot, a lot of people that way. The Dharma, though, is here to support them with this practice, to hold it and be with it in a wise and compassionate way. But in the process, it is supposed to kind of slowly help people to develop an inner capacity for happiness, well-being.

So the inner life has the ability to feel, when it's appropriate, a friendly and welcoming a place to be. In a sense, in the Dharma, we're supposed to become our own friend so that our mind, rather than being an enemy, is our best friend. We're happy to accompany our mind or have our mind along because it's a happy place to be.

So one of the ways that's developed is to begin recognizing... more often than we normally would, when we have moments of well-being, when we have moments of pleasure and delight. I'm quite capable of leaving my house in a hurry. I'm late to come and teach the Dharma. And so I don't even know that it's a beautiful blue sky and recognize the clarity of light in the

early morning because I have important places to go. Or we can take the few extra seconds, a few extra minutes, to start enjoying and appreciating the simple joys of life, the simple pleasures of life. Not to be hedonistic, but in order to begin conditioning ourselves, acculturating ourselves, that it is possible to create the conditions for inner well-being.

One of the functions of samādhi practice is, in fact, to cultivate greater sense of well-being. One of the functions of mindfulness practice is, in fact, to discover how to put in the conditions of mindfulness so that a natural capacity for well-being wells up. One of the great surprises, one of the great pleasures, treasures of Dharma practice is discover that there's well-being, there's sense of joy and happiness that can arise for no good reason. Most of us, you know, we need reasons. When the lottery, we get a good date, we get someone praises us, all kinds of things that, you know, conditions in the world have to be a certain way. And some people are chasing the world, chasing conditions in the world, trying to reorganize things and make things happen so that they get the conditions, so they get things happen that make them happy.

In the Dharma, we discover that we don't have to find, our happiness doesn't have to depend on the world, the world being in a particular way, getting what we want. There can be the harmonious working of the inner life itself produces happiness and well-being. And it's really a delight to just feel this, carry with you an inner happiness not dependent on the world. And that's one of the lessons of this practice.

Fifth Condition

The next one is, so that's four. So ethical integrity, faith, well-developed mind, sense of well-being. And then the fifth is wisdom. To have some good understanding, street smarts about what goes on in this world. So I acquired some wisdom from the Stephen Levine workshop. And it wasn't so much about my own relationship to death and dying from that weekend, but rather was it much deeper understanding, appreciation, wisdom about the challenges that human beings have that when I was young was quite kind of eye-opening to see.

And so that gave me the wisdom to not take people for granted, to be ready to understand that people are suffering. And that wisdom gives me more ability to hold people with equanimity, with care. A very somewhat typical, I think, advice that hospice workers will give to family of someone who's dying if they're dying slowly and is to kind of warn the family that sometimes, I don't know what exactly how it is, three or four days before they die, the last week sometimes, sometimes more. People will go through kind of a maybe it's physiological changes, maybe it's hormonal changes in their body. Who knows what it is, why? But the dying person will become very hostile and angry to the people that they have loved the most

in their life, their family or spouses.

And it could be deeply distressing for the family to suddenly have this anger being directed at them from the one person they love. But hospice workers will often forewarn people and say, this is a known phase of people that are dying. You don't have to take it personally. And so then when it happens, oh, okay, we know why it's here. This is not the culmination of our relationship for 40 years. This is just chemicals maybe operating in their system. And so now we have a wisdom of how this works.

We might have wisdom about how our reactivity works. Maybe we've learned a lesson from many years' experience, slowly gained, that when we react, we get a headache. When we react, we feel stress and tension. When we react, we tend to make a lot of mistakes. And so to begin slowly to learn our delusions, our reactivity, our beliefs that are operating, that keep us from being equanimous, that's wisdom.

The... I mean, a few things that I had, I learned myself through these years of practice that was slowly gained because maybe sometimes I'm a very slow learner. But it slowly dawned on me that my success rate at predicting the future was abysmal. And I had, you know, I would have all these fear about the future, plan. I would try to set everything up to be just perfect, so it all would be good. And I was just planning ahead and anxious and wondering or expecting it to be a certain way. And over and over and over again, the event that happened was different than how I could have expected it to be.

And so slowly, slowly I learned that Gil... the chances are pretty high that your predictions of the future, your idea of what's coming, is not going to be right. And that created more, that wisdom created more equanimity for me. I have delusions. And so there was also a slow to recognize. So I've maybe mentioned this recently, but one delusion that I'm still operating under is I do a lot of writing, little essays and different things. And as soon as I finish writing at the first draft, it's done. It's ready to be sent out or something. Or I'm eager to send it to someone to help edit it or something. But it's done, you know, I've done my piece.

And occasionally I've, you know, had that idea in the evening. And then in the morning I wake up and I have new ideas. No. Or I read it two days later. I say, wait, this is not ready. Okay. So I don't know what it is and why I'm built in this kind of way that I come to these conclusions. Maybe I think to, I don't know what, I'm not going to guess. But I have a delusion. And that delusion was against there, slowly learned to see it. And now I see it when it's there. And so I don't bite. I don't give into it. There's equanimity and things are much easier for me with my writing because I just now give it the time that it needs or much of what it needs.

So wisdom.

Sixth Condition

The sixth is the wisdom of non-clinging. To not cling, or to have the wisdom to recognize when you do cling, and to know how to let go. To recognize we lean in, oh, I'm angry with someone, and so I'm leaning in to hold on to that anger. It's a very different to be angry and hold onto it tight, versus being angry and not picking it up, just letting it move through us.

We don't have to justify anger necessarily. We don't have to condemn anger necessarily. If we're not clinging to it, then we may be more balanced with it. Equanimously angry, meaning we're equanimous about being angry. Look at that. There's anger. Well, let's see how this goes. Rather than immediately getting on the angry bandwagon, to have a desire. Desires can be a dime a dozen. But again, when we cling to desires, that's where we might make problems for ourselves or that's where we lose our equanimity.

And so to learn to not hold on to desires, to hold them lightly. And, you know, rather than holding it in a fist, we hold them with an open hand so we can see them clearly. And we might then better be able to assess, is this a good desire or not a good desire, useful or not useful? So to learn something about clinging, it gives a lot of, contributes a lot of capacity for equanimity because most loss of equanimity, most reactivity involves some clinging to something.

Seventh Condition

And then finally, the seventh support for equanimity is the absence of clinging, the absence of holding on to some fixed ideas about life, ourselves, fixed ideas about who we are, who we're supposed to be, who we shouldn't be, fixed ideas of what is right and wrong, so that when something happens in the world, it doesn't hit... some attachment we have. It doesn't hit something we're holding on for dear life.

So, you know, the example that's given in the teachings of the Buddha is that conceit is apparently like a... the flag, the banner that an army, you know, a troop carries with it into battle, announcing that's there. And then everyone can attack. But without the flag of conceit, nothing can be attacked. So it's kind of like if you hold up something and you throw something at it, it can hit it and hurt it. And then there's a reaction. But if there's nothing there, then something's going right through. It's like a closed window, the neighbor's baseball will break it. open window, it goes through and lands in the living room floor, hopefully, and causes no damage.

And so there's a deep letting go that is possible that the Dharma teaches. And that deep letting go then means that we're not holding up pains of glass that the world can strike. and then we react accordingly. Things just go right through, in a sense. Things can arise and... So, you know, if one of you said to me that, you know, Dharma teachers who wear gray shirts, they're a sorry state. You know, I don't know. I think that would just like... That would have no... That wouldn't touch me at all. I might wonder about you. Maybe you need equanimity.

So equanimity. So one of the principles here that I'm trying to convey is that it's not something we do, because then it's probably not equanimity, but it's rather a condition that we have supported and grown. and come to appreciate, come to value, come to see that equanimity is really for our own best.

Equanimity makes room in the heart and the mind for the best qualities inside of us that come to the forefront. Equanimity is a kind of the condition that allows for the goodness we have inside us to grow. And part of what we're doing in Dharma practice is growing our inside, our inner life, so that it becomes a beautiful inner life. It becomes a valuable inner life. It becomes an inner life that is here to support the well-being and happiness of all.

So those are my thoughts on equanimity. Did you lose your equanimity in some way hearing it?

Questioner:

So I've been thinking about equanimity in the context of what's going on right now in the world, and particularly the news that we got last night that we seem to be starting yet another war, our country, that I'm a citizen of. And I came into this very troubled by that. I listened to your talk, and everything you said is correct. It makes sense. And yet, I'm struggling a little bit with how I can reconcile a deep sense of compassion and a feeling of wanting to alleviate the suffering that we seem to be on the brink of. with this, all the stuff you just talked about. Maybe could you give some guidance on how to hold this?

Gil:

So I don't know your inner life to know whether I can speak for it. But first I want to say I appreciate very much your compassion and desire to alleviate suffering in the world. That's a beautiful quality. And I think that to have that, I hope people will act on that. I hope you will act on that in some way. I hope you have the wisdom to know what's appropriate for you to do.

Sometimes we can't directly address the big things in the world that are happening. We read

things we read in the newspaper. But we can be changed by it so that we... can put more energy or effort into where we can make a difference. It might be that if you offer your care, support for the neighboring child, you might be preventing World War IV, World War IV. Who knows how this kid's going to grow up?

But it's possible that the one person was really kind and supportive changed the whole direction of that person's life. you think that's ridiculous. But there's a lot of small ways, acupuncture points of change in this world that are operating that are not, you know, and then to go and stand on a street corner with a sign saying, you know, no war, that might be nice, but it might not, that might not be the acupuncture point that makes a difference. And you're, so, so, but to figure out what to do, absolutely, absolutely. But the more interesting reflection of what you're saying is that, what's the complex ecology in you when you have this? It's one thing to be a equanimous. It's another thing to have no equanimity, to be caught in fear, distress, anger, confusion, but to be caught in the grip of that. Right? The desire to do good in the world, to be compassionate and alleviate suffering, takes a very different shape, depending which of those two ways your mind is.

And so the chances are, the way you're the tone of voice, the way you said this, and the way your face and everything looked, there's a lot of extra going on here for you. that's not needed. And so to not let that be unconscious so that it creates a power, a strength of distress and pushing, like something needs to happen here, that's being pushed by fear, distress, anger. That's what the Dharma practice, that's what deep equanimity helps us to find. And then we find that and maybe settle those things, heal those things, And then, maybe when we do engage in compassionate care for the world, we do it in a way that's more effective. And one of the ways it can be more effective is we become the example of what we want the world to have. How does that sound to you? Does that address your concern, or is it... Easier said than done. No. But that's why we have a practice.

And in some way, one responds to these kinds of big challenges of the world, the sufferings of the world. One very powerful response of what we can do is we can practice. And some people actually will throw themselves, dedicate themselves to a life of practice because this is the deepest response that we can do. Some people feel that's not for them, that response. So that seems like it's avoiding the problem. But in a sense, in a real sense, I saw the huge challenges of the world and when I was young, the distress of the world. And that's what I decided. I decided to take the route of the Dharma and the practice. And so now when I teach... I've tried to teach in such a way that support people in their suffering and freedom from suffering. But I'm also teaching, because I want all of us, I want everyone to become agents of

change, to make this world a better place, not just to sit and meditate, but to, whether it's the local children or whether it's, you know, capitals of the world, or that we try to make this world a better place. So that's a response to you that that dedicating yourself to practice is not a escape. It's a way of really getting to the bottom of ourselves, bottom of our reactivity or attachments and clinging, so that we can be much more effective and happier in how we deal with the suffering of the world.

So maybe if you think it can be a short answer, can you pass it there? Because the time is up now, and I'll try to be quick with my answer. Now let's see if I can be quick with my, and equanimous.

Questioner:

My question. I just remain confused, and I may be saying the same thing that the gentleman just did, but it seems like with practice that... compassion is essential or where I want to go and so is equanimity. And then I need to just keep finding a balance between those. And when I find I've gone so much with compassion that I'm overwhelmed, then I need to go back, work more on being equanimity. Yeah. I think... I went through, I'm not being short, am I? I went through about 15 years of being part of the Friends Meeting, the Quakers. And it seemed like both of those were something that was being worked toward, not always with ease. And the other day I...

Gil:

Let me respond since people, I wonder. May I? Okay.

So equanimity and compassion, maybe both of them, are expressions of something deeper that we develop. And so what we're doing in the Dharma practice, we're trying to get back to the roots that are deeper down. And so we don't want to be too quick to call upon equanimity as the response to the world. Too quick call on compassion. We might not be quite ready. So we want to develop a strong practice which creates the inner stability, the inner quiet, the inner mindfulness, so that we can actually start seeing the roots of what's deeper inside. It's those roots that have to be somehow transformed without knowing ourselves down to the depths. We're just rearranging the deck chairs in the Titanic.

Yeah. I don't know. I just, I drove by a church the other day and there was a big banner that said immigrants and refugees welcomed here. And it seemed like it wasn't a wild action, that it was a loving action. And it was very committed to ethics and compassion. Yeah. Sometimes I just really feel like in a very calm, loving way, it would just seem... like a group that I really love. It's devoted to those which...

Yeah, very nice. I love the Quakers. And I love the Quakers and different churches that are involved in social action. That's their mission, is to be involved in social action. And I think it's fantastic.

Okay, thank you all.