

## Vitality

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So, good morning everyone. Welcome. Happy to be here with you all. As I prepare to give this talk, certainly what's happening in the Middle East is very much on my heart. And, you know, when I teach the Dharma, sometimes it's not explicit why I teach. But all my teaching as a teacher is directed towards trying to address the suffering of the world, hopefully at the deepest level.

But there's so many different ways to get at that that sometimes it seems like I'm maybe not talking about that directly. So I'd like to dedicate today's talk to the people who are suffering in the Middle East and certainly the Palestinians in Gaza where so many innocent Palestinians are dying and injured and homeless. It must be hellish to be there right now. Very difficult. I think of all the children who are going through how difficult it must be for them. And how difficult it would probably be for them for a lifetime to go through this.

And the hostages that are also being held, Israeli hostages, and it must be also hellish to be there and part of that. And so I dedicate it to the welfare and happiness and the peace for all the people who are suffering in the Middle East. So conventionally that topic for today is effort. And the Pāli word that's often translated as effort is *vīriya*. And *vīriya* has a lot of different translations into English. And sometimes it's effort, sometimes it's energy, sometimes it's endeavoring.

Some people like the word persistence. The word in Sanskrit has association with courage or maybe even heroism. And we have in, I think in Tibetan Buddhism, I believe, sometimes this *vīriya* is translated as heroic effort because of the connotations that *vīriya* has. And the word that I'd like to use today is vitality. And having an embodied sense of vitality is a reference point for wisdom in Buddhist practice. And not just emphasizing the importance of making effort, but how we make effort is important.

And the source of our effort is important within us. And by paying attention to this, we can develop a lot of wisdom about how we practice. This topic of how we make effort is so important that it could be the only thing we ever need to talk about. Everything you need to discover in Buddhism will be discovered by how you make effort. Generally, I like to think that when we do Buddhist practice, 50% of our attention is focused on what we're doing, and 50% of attention on how we're doing it. How we're doing it, including the effort we're making as we do something, is as important as what we're doing.

What we're doing is important, of course. The Buddha said that if you're trying to make sesame oil by squeezing gravel, that's going to be unproductive effort. You have to know what to do that is to the point of what your intentions are and not be doing something that's not right. But then also how you do it is important. And so, as I said, some people like to translate *vīriya* as persistence, because the continuity of persistent effort is sometimes much more important than the strength of the effort. In fact, the turtle and the hare fable is very apropos to Buddhist practice.

That sometimes making heroic effort, really strong effort, is actually counterproductive for Buddhist practice, if it stirs us up. And it's so easy to be stirred up. Partly because when we make strong effort, there tends to be a lot of self or ego involved in it. And like, I have to do it, I have to be successful, or I have to kind of fix what's going on. And we gear up in a way that just kind of agitates the mind more than settles it. But if we can practice with a settled effort, but do it persistently, and sometimes it doesn't look very hot, the effort, but the fact that it's being done continuously, it carries the day, it carries the lifetime for our practice.

There was a, I wasn't there at the time, but I've heard now from a few of my friends who were there, of a large teaching that the Dalai Lama gave in Arizona many years ago. It's a big convention center and thousands of people were there. And he was giving some teaching. I don't know what he was teaching. But then there was a period of questions that he would respond to. And a gentleman stood up and stood by the mic to ask him a question and asked him something like, what's the fastest way to enlightenment?

And the Dalai Lama was silent for a long time. And as I was told the story, as it was told to me, tears started to go down his cheek. And he finally spoke. And something to the effect of, it was so sad, this idea that going for the fastest way to enlightenment. That just represented kind of a wrong way of practicing, a selfish way, or a caught up way, or misunderstanding of what practice is. And it just made him sad. For him, he's dedicated his whole lifetime to Buddhist practice. And when you give yourself the whole lifetime to it, I think it tends to be a bit humbling. I think we tend to understand how much there is to work with, and how much

there is to do, and how much there is to the work of freeing ourselves from all the little and big ways in which we're selfish, and the way in which we're afraid, the ways that we're greedy, the ways that we are, you know, have hostility or have ill will or aversion.

There's so many layers and layers and layers of ways we get stuck. And it takes a lot of patience sometimes to find our way through this practice. And so the persistent, just steadily keeping at it, keeping at it. And it's remarkable how slowly things begin to shift and change. The metaphor or the analogy that I love for this is, I don't know why I settled on this one, maybe because I heard it this way, or I used to swim a fair amount. And, but people who are like really, you know, athletic swimmers, competitive swimming, now I probably don't know what I'm talking about. But so maybe just the analogy, go along with the analogy, not the literal way. And that is that they'll do the same stroke over and over and over again, tens of thousands of times. And slowly, each time they do it, in a most minuscule little way, their body kind of begins to tune in to how to make it more efficient. How to make it just like a little bit stronger stroke, and little bit smoother.

And slowly, slowly, the stroke becomes more and more efficient and more elegant. But it's not something that they can figure out for their particular body by just reading a book and saying this is how you do it. You have to keep doing it over and over and over again so it begins shifting. Same thing with this practice. We do it over and over and over again and something begins shifting and changing. You see it in people's meditation posture.

And when people are beginners in meditation posture, you know, it's difficult, it's stiff, it's challenging. When I was in the Zen Monastery in Japan, like the real tough Zen Monastery in Japan, some of the new monks had just come from college. They would go to Buddhist college, some of them, you know, they'd go to get a bachelor's or something. And then from there, they'd go to the training monastery. But some of them had been athletes there. And for them, they hadn't done a lot of meditation. And I remember they were just in excruciating pain. And one of them, we all slept together in the meditation hall. And so before he went to sleep, he put a whole bunch of this, like, I don't know, like, I don't know, Bengay, or this kind of, this menthol cream on his legs to kind of get it to relax. And the whole meditation hall was filled with his menthol thing.

And, but you know, so it's slowly, slowly the body stretches and changes and in all kinds of subtle ways. And you can watch over a few years, I've watched over a few years, people's meditation posture change until it's kind of like a yogic posture. They almost like that now they can sit there in a way that's stable and upright and without fidgeting. But it's not a process that happens overnight. It's a slow, slow process that from the continuity, the persistence

of doing it, one of the things I'm maybe too fond of saying is, I'll say, I won't do it for you, I'll save you from it, so I'll just tell you what I do. Is I'll say, Buddha's practice doesn't work. I'll shake my head and it just doesn't work. And then I'll pause. You know, wow, Gil says that? Then I'll add, if you don't do it.

With the emphasis on, you know, you have to do it to make it work. And so some people will have this idea it doesn't work and they won't even try. The Buddha said that this practice that he was teaching, the Dharma that he was teaching, is for the energetic, not for the lazy. That's quite a powerful statement. For the energetic, not for the lazy. And some people I know who are really busy people are actually lazy. And the reason why they're not seen as being lazy, they're putting a lot of work into being busy, but their busyness is avoiding really facing what's difficult for them. They're being busy to get away because they don't want to take the time and the effort to really confront and meet what's really going on for them in their lives. Whether it's in themselves or in relationships they're in or something.

So, vitality as a possible aspect of this word *vīriya*, energy, and the reason I find that it's such a wonderful word is that vitality is not necessarily coming from self-conscious applying ourselves, pushing ourselves. There's many ways in which through the day that we gear ourselves up and push ourselves to kind of get something and have something. I suspect a fair number of people who drive cars are putting in a little bit more effort than they need to when they drive their cars. They're pushing, leaning forward, trying to get someplace. A little bit more on the gas pedal, a little bit more clutching the steering wheel, like they have to get there before the light turns red. And that kind of effort there. And that's certainly energy. And it may be a kind of embodied energy of gearing up and getting tight and muscles are working. But it's not the same thing in my vocabulary of vitality. Vitality is a natural arising of being enlivened without there being any stress associated with that kind of energy.

So non-stressful vitality. And the writer, the kind of a psychologist, religious writer from the 20th century called Joseph Campbell. He wrote this very interesting statement. He said something like, I'm not quite remembering it accurately, what people need the most, people think what they need is a sense of meaning. But most people are searching for vitality, for a sense of, I think he used the word aliveness, a feeling of being alive. And there can be this wonderful sense of being alive. Vital, that vitality of being alive, that satisfying in and of itself. That just, oh, it's so good. It's easy to be content. It's easy to be happy to be alive.

And sometimes we get that from doing certain things. You're going for a nice hike, or doing something really fun, like maybe sports, or playing a musical instrument, or something that kind of sets something free. That then we have, when we're finished, we feel a sense of vitality.

That is very different than feeling like we've been pushing and trying and working hard to make something happen. And so, this sense of aliveness. And I think that to maybe say the same thing as Joseph Campbell, I think a lot of the effort people make is to try to solve their suffering. Try to get away from it, to find something to do that can assuage it, to bring comfort, to bring safety, avoidance. That's often driven by, you know, to somehow deal and cope with our suffering. And sometimes in doing that, we're making the effort in a kind of in the wrong direction. We're kind of squeezing the gravel. Rather than turning inward to where the sesame oil in ancient India was pretty special.

And so to turn it inward and to pay attention to how we make effort, how we're doing anything at all, and what's the consequences of it? So one example, for me, maybe it's for some of you as well, that my effort can sometimes go into problem solving. I'm worried about something, concerned about something, trying to figure something out in my head. Or I'm involved in fantasy, all kinds of different things. And so I'll leave it to your imagination what a Buddhist teacher fantasizes about. And I can feel that the energy of that effort has gone up in the top of my head. And to me, it feels like it's going in spirals that are getting tighter and tighter, that energy. It's like it's working. Sometimes I have to feel this mental energy being caught up in the thought streams that I'm in. And it feels really agitated.

And rather than spiraling around in a faster and faster way, or tighter in a way, it just feels scattered, like ping pong balls are going on in there. And sometimes I can feel the effort of thinking involves pressure or tension in my forehead, in my scalp, in my head, in my shoulders, in all kinds of different ways. The Buddha described this analogy of how the mind works as being a puppeteer. And it has all these strings that go down to all the different muscles in our body. And the mind is kind of pulling on those strings, strings of tension. And we get tight in the shoulders and the belly with what goes on. And the beautiful thing about the freedom that comes from Buddhist practice is we no longer have a puppeteer. We no longer have this activity in the mind, which has this negative kind of tentacles that go out and affect the rest of our body in all kinds of ways. The body starts becoming relaxed. So the energy can be up in the head, the effort of trying to make something happen or figure something out, you know, whatever.

But the vitality is a whole different species of energy. Vitality is not dependent on what we're doing. But how at ease we are in ourselves. And how awake we are. How much clarity there is in our being and how we are now. For me, the word vitality has a feeling of being clean. Something very clean about it. It just feels good to be alive. Here I am. And once we have this kind of settled, relaxed, calm sense of vitality, some people might call it chi or ki in Japanese,

and now chi in Chinese. There's something, there's an upwelling of a nice sense of aliveness that's here that can buoy us up, that can support us.

So when we meditate, it's not a matter of applying effort when we meditate, but rather it's riding like a, maybe like a boat rides the waves or rides on the surface of the ocean. It's a matter of riding the natural vitality, the natural aliveness that's here within us. So it's not so much applying effort to pay attention to the breathing, but relaxing and allowing ourselves to float in the vitality, the energy that's in the body that requires us to be breathing. So it's kind of a floating on that sense of movement and energy and activity that goes on as the body breathes. And that's a very different feeling. The floating on top of it and allowing it that natural vitality, as opposed to being the one who has to have a laser focus. The one who has to, okay, now I got to try hard. Okay, let's try it now. Let's make more effort.

And so to start having a reference point for this clean vitality, this nice way of being alive, and using that as a, this is where the wisdom part comes in, using that to see how we start applying a different kind of energy effort in our lives. To be able to have that contrast between how to be at ease and relaxed in the body, in the body's vitality, and how we lose that when we start making self-conscious effort. Oh, I'm late for a meeting. I better get there fast. And we certainly can have a lot of energy and we get there and we've walked really fast. Maybe we even ran to the meeting. And we sit down and there's a lot of energy coursing through our body from all that effort and energy. But some of that will not feel like the delightful vitality. Some of it might. But it came from the stress of not wanting to be late and trying so hard.

And it comes along with energy that goes with being tense. And so then that tension carries momentum. That tension, because it's uncomfortable, stress that's uncomfortable, that generates more stress. We're stressful, we're stressed, so we try harder. We don't like the stress that comes from trying harder. And so it's uncomfortable, so the solution, what, is to try harder. And some of that is unconscious, but it plays itself out in what we're thinking about, what we're concerned with, and how the mind, it goes into these habitual loops of thoughts and ideas of what we need to do. But if you can start feeling the energy, the energetics of your thinking habits, thinking loops, and that's the how you're making the effort, or the energy that's there, the tension that's there. And then you say, is this the how by which I want to live? Which is kind of one of the central Buddhist questions. How do you want to be? Not what do you want to be? How do you want to be? And how do you want to be alive here and now?

And the what you want to be is certainly relevant and important sometimes. But I think that we have a culture that is a little bit too tied up in that what I need to be. The whole idea

of identity and identity politics and asserting yourself and being someone and being self-promotions is really big in our society. And yesterday I saw a website for someone who was a Buddhist teacher. It just seemed like a hundred percent self-promotion in the way that I've seen for other people who are trying to promote their services and themselves as being, you know, the leading person in their field and what they're doing. And I said, what is a Buddhist teacher doing with this kind of clear and making claims about himself that no self-respecting, you know, for a thousand years, 2,500 years, Buddhists, no self-respecting Buddhists would ever say such a thing. It just doesn't, you know, at least that I know of, the way I was trained in Buddhism, like where does this come from? This comes out of a culture of this kind of self-centered being someone and proving yourself and you know, and the self-promotion. And then, those of us who are following in the wake of that, it's so easy to, when it's in a culture, to kind of, little by start, it becomes normal. I'm supposed to do this. And then we go along.

I'll tell you a story of many years ago. When I first moved here to the peninsula, I lived up on Skyline. That's irrelevant to the story. But I had been given a, I think it was a 15-year-old Toyota Celica. And it was red, which was cool. But it was this kind of old car. And I lived in San Francisco first. And in there, I just drove this old car around, kind of. And there was no thought about it. I was happy, content with it, having it. And then when I came here to live on the peninsula, and I'd come down to Palo Alto to teach, after a while I noticed, you know, I had one of the oldest cars on the streets. It wasn't that old, right? But it was one of the oldest cars, being Palo Alto, even back then. And then, being there long enough, at some point, I had these thoughts, maybe I should get a new car. As long as I was living in San Francisco, there wasn't that kind of reference point. Everyone has new cars. But here in Palo Alto, there was that reference point. And it slowly crept in innocently. So this self-promotional kind of culture that we have, it kind of comes along and unconsciously seeps in. And then we feel like, I'm not good enough. I'm not doing the great and wonderful thing. I don't have a website yet.

And so, so a lot of this unhealthy kind of vitality that comes from pushing and trying to be something and proving ourselves or apologizing for ourselves or do these things, we can feel the different, how that doesn't feel good. And so the shift in Buddhism is for many people is to now pay attention to how am I right now, not what am I. And that's where Joseph Goldstein's little quote I think is quite significant. That maybe what we're looking for is a sense of aliveness that's been misplaced. In Buddhism we would say we're looking for a sense of freedom that has been misplaced. And maybe those two things are not so separate. To really feel a healthy sense of aliveness there has to be no longer the pushing, the straining, the

stressing, the self-assertion that involves a very different kind of energy than the energy of vitality, which can come from really enjoying what you're doing for its own sake.

And so that's one of the signposts of meditation beginning to really benefit us and providing a lot of wisdom is when we sit down to meditate, and the body has settled into the posture and we're at home in the posture. The mind has learned to calm down. We've learned to recognize how we strain and push and how we tend to beat ourselves up and be critical. And we learn to recognize these things and we learn to settle them enough. Then we begin paying attention to the quality of our inner life. How am I? And that quality of the inner life, one of the things to kind of become sensitive to, what's the quality of being alive right now? Is there a vitality that feels good? And this can be equally valid or important way of checking in with oneself when one is sick or injured as well. And sometimes it's actually more important in those situations where conventionally you don't have much energy. You're exhausted because being sick, chronically sick or something. And I've been sick. And it was wonderful to be sick or injured when I was in the monastery doing a lot of Buddhist practice. And I learned so much about myself in that environment where the practice was so right in my face. It's like always having to be close to the practice. And there were times when I was so sick that in order to manage I still had to go do the monastery work, or I did it. And in order to manage with it, I had to be very careful to how I was doing what I was doing. Not only that, I had to pay very careful attention to what I was thinking. And I could see if I thought certain thoughts, I would feel sicker. My vitality would diminish. If I thought other thoughts, it would come back. Not dramatically. But the difference between those two were enough between managing and not managing.

There was times also in the monastery where my back went out and it was horrendous for me. I thought I was so much pain. And there too, what was so wonderful about it was, ordinarily I have a lot of slack in my body. I can get away with a fair amount of things. I have a range where I can do things. But when my back went out, the range was so, almost no range at all, so much so I couldn't even think certain thoughts without it affecting my back. And so I learned this reference point of energy, of vitality, of stress that I carry in my body became such an important reference. Well, not become important. It became an essential reference point when I was really sick and really injured. Just watching it very carefully. And without thinking I had to be supervital, you know, like the embodiment of vitality for anybody. It's just like I was just trying to cope, but it was such a valuable way to understand myself. I learned so much about how my mind works when I was sick. And the difference it made, how to be present. So hopefully you don't have to wait until you're sick for that. But this is part of what



we do in mindfulness practice. If we start becoming more and more mindful of how we are, not just what we're doing. And one of the areas of how we are is our sense of vitality. And the kind of effort we make.

When I was a new Buddhist practitioner, the big kind of exploration was how to make not too much effort and not too little effort. And for a long time I learned that I was never going to get it right. But I could get the swings to be smaller and smaller. Just like driving down the freeway. I don't know for some of you, maybe now that some of you have cars or self-driving, they're straight. But I'm constantly, almost unselfconsciously, without any thought, making ever so slight adjustments as I'm going down the straight lane on the freeway. And just finding my way. So same thing with meditation effort. There's, oh, that's too much. That's too little. So there was long years where that was part of the reference point. Like, how to do that? And, oh, that's too much. Let's try to back off. And, oh, that I backed off too much now. And it was not making enough. And let's come back and finding my way. And then over time I learned that there are different kinds of energy in our system. And that there's the self-conscious energy, there's the pushing energy, there's the me that's making the effort. And then there's the vitality, which is the natural vitality, the chi of the system. That also varies over different circumstances, but to begin having that as a reference point is really helpful.

And I'll end with this. Because it's possible as you go through the day to pay attention to what is happening to your native vitality in the posture with which you sit in a chair. With your vitality by how you sit in your car seat if you're driving. The vitality about how you listen to someone else talking. What's the vitality in your body posture and how you are when you're doing something you don't want to do? What's the sense of energy or aliveness inside of you when you're in conflict with someone? What happens there within you? What is taking precedence? And what can you learn from that? Because when you're in conflict with someone and the sense of energy now feels stressful and tight, you're the one who's responsible for that, not the person you're in conflict with. You're the one's the source of the energy. And so, oh, is this really how I want to be? Is this how I need to be? Is there another way? Is there another way of being alive here, a how to be, where I'm actually more productive, more effective, more wiser in being in the conflict? And I've certainly learned that when I'm stressed in conflict, I can make a lot of mistakes. Speak out of turn, speak with things I wish I didn't say afterwards, be more unconscious about what's really driving me. But if I'm relaxed and at ease, in the conflict, I'm actually able to stay involved in a much more useful way.

So, what's your vitality? What's your sense of aliveness? Is it one that brings you satisfaction, feels good? It feels like, oh yeah, it's good to be alive now. Even if that aliveness is very

teeny in you, oh, there it is, that feels good. Or is your inner sense of aliveness one that feels difficult? And if it is difficult, what is it need from you? What is a need for how you are with it? Not what you do to it, but how you are to it. And then maybe you could meet it with some of the vitality, the aliveness of your own heart. To meet it with your kindness, with your love. So those are my thoughts for today. And we have a few minutes here if anyone wants to ask any questions or comments or testimonials about vitality. Push the felt to make it green. Got it. Thank you, Gil. This is really lovely. I'm curious to have, I feel conflicted because the question in my mind is one of when there's urgent situations where action is needed in that. And I often feel that the practice of Buddhism is about taking more time, stepping back, like you said. And that feels, I'm in conflict with that when there's urgent matters and how to take action in a way that keeps balance.

So I'm sorry that you feel in conflict with that. That's a strong word for me. But I'd like to say that that's a very wise concern. That you should have. Because that's often the association people have with Buddhism. You're supposed to do things slowly and calmly. And some situations, that's not what's called for. And what's called for is to do things fast and efficiently and quickly. And I remember a friend of mine many years ago was involved with a company that sent out and mail their product out to people who ordered it. And they hired someone from the Zen monastery to work there. And the person was putting the things into the box slowly, stood there a little while and observed how that was, maybe moved the product around the box a little bit and then closed the lid. You can't run a business that way. So the person lost the job. And then when I left the monastery, the San Francisco Zen Center still has, back then it had the Greens Restaurant in San Francisco, which is a little bit of a fast food place to work. And I was assigned, when we as monks had to go work there, now they pay people, but back then it was, I worked five and a half days a week and got paid \$60 a month. Were working there. But I loved working there. So I came from the monastery and I worked there. And it was obvious, being on the lunch crew, making lunch, that you couldn't do things slowly. And what I learned was how to do things fast. And mindfully, fast and calmly with inner calm. And I loved it. It was a dance. I was spinning around and multitasking. I had all these different dishes I had to kind of prepare at the same time. And the pizzas were in the oven. You had to do something else while they're in there. You don't stand in front of the pizza oven waiting for the pizza to be done. And the idea was how to be fully present and engaged without being stressed. And so that's the art. So yes, definitely. Let's not, we can we can learn to be calm. But and sometimes it takes a while to learn how to have a foundation of being maybe calm and slow in order to learn the basics. And then once you know it well, then we need to respond appropriately to the situation. But hopefully without any stress. It's

urgent. It's so urgent. It's so important. The last thing you want to do is to be stressed. Let's do it vigorously.

I grew up in I grew up in Palo Alto and so that message of try harder definitely has stepped in in many different ways. So one of the mantras that I like now is try softer. Then maybe we could add try softer but persistently. Just keep steady, keep steady. At least in terms of Buddhist practice. It carries the day. And also if you get enlightened slower, it might be a better enlightenment. Pass it back there.

So it was a follow-up question to kind of the question that the lady shared. During the time when you're working at the restaurant, what are some of the things that helped you? What were some of the things that helped you to stay mindful and calm in a fast-paced environment? Thank you. Well, the practice that I had then, what I learned to do in the Zen monastery, which then I applied to working at that restaurant when I came there, was the question for me was not how should I be mindful of the situation. Because sometimes that's a little bit removed from what you're doing, to ask how to be mindful sometimes. And rather I asked myself, the practice was, how do I participate more fully with what I'm doing? And I learned in the monastery how much I only participated half-heartedly, quarter-heartedly. You know, sometimes, especially if I didn't want to do something, I was like, oh, I'm not going to really give myself to it. But in the monastery I learned the joy of giving myself fully to what I was doing. And this full engagement, full participation. So when I was there at the Greens restaurant, that was my task. How do I participate in this fully? The consequence of that was that I had to be mindful. I had to be very aware of everything that was going on. But the awareness followed in the wake of participating, as opposed to the awareness leading what I was doing. And so, I became very present. In fact, by the time I left work, end of the work day, I was more concentrated than when I came. Because I was so fully present there for what was going on. And I wasn't lost in any particular detail. It was like I was participating in the whole thing and tracking many different things. And whatever came, and one of the things I loved doing was I was doing all this, I was fully in the present moment doing all this different stuff. And all these dishes and putting them up for the waiters to come and take them to serve to the people eating there. And then I also, at some point, I tried to have this, to have a conversation, a relationship with each of the waiters and try to remember what we had talked about between dishes when they came in and could try to have a kind of a meaningful connection with them on top of it all. So it was a fun time for me and I was much younger. So I had a lot of energy then. So probably what it would look like now if I worked at Greens. You know, I'd probably have to have a little bit of allowance to do things slower

and take breaks. Wholeheartedly now, full participation now would mean with the energy and the stamina that I have now in my age. Does that answer your question? Good enough? Because there's a lot I could have said, but it was a good question. Okay. Well, thank you for being here. I appreciate it very much. And one thing I could add as you're leaving is every year we do a year-end letter for kind of a fundraising letter for IMC. And we never really ask for funds here. I don't know if you never, we never ask for things. And in fact, if you leave, it looks like a fundraising letter. It smells like it. If you shake it, it shakes like one. And I actually don't ask, but there is a remit envelope. But this year I tried to write the, I write, I'm always the one who writes the letter. And this year I thought I want to write the less boring letter. And I want to do something that has some, something that's memorable in terms of the Dharma. So anyway, so if you want to pick it up and read it, it's on the counter as you leave. But I could well imagine people don't want that. That's OK. Thank you.