

Shame

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March 16, 1993

Keywords: *hiri, ottappa*, mindfulness, conscience, shame, compassion, *Saṅgha*, *mettā*, *Nirvāṇa*, Mahākāśyapa

He told him I was thinking of talking about shame, that someone had asked me to talk about. He said, “That’s a great topic.” But “use recoil” is what he said that I can be interested in. It’s only if I jumped in here and tried to say something about shame and life you won’t be interested in. And one of the reasons it was suggested that I talk about it, and one of the reasons I was interested in talking about it, is that shame is considered to be one of, or one of these, noblest virtues in Buddhism.

And I think that, at least when I first heard it like that, I thought that was pretty strange and unusual, that shame should be a virtue. When I was practicing with my first teacher in Thailand, I asked him at some point, “Why did you quit your top practicing?” Why think more exactly? I asked him, “Why did you become a monk?” Because he became a novice when he was twelve, became ordained as soon as he was old enough to do so, at eighteen, twenty. So I asked him, you know, why, at that young age, why did you initiate like that?

And the response I got was, oh, where’s this to a translator? And the translator said, and the reason why was because he had a very strong sense of shame and moral dread. And I said, “Oh.” It was the first I’d ever heard of this pair of virtues, often translated into English as shame and dread, moral dread. That is a way about me, and since then I’ve learned more about it. The Pāli words are *hiri* and *ottappa*. So I thought I’d talk a little about *hiri* and *ottappa*.

And while thinking about this, I thought of these words that are related to shame. I am in the same family, perhaps: shame and remorse and guilt and conscience and humiliation, embarrassment, dread, fear, regret, and disgrace, as I thought. And then I want to tell you a story. I start from, I guess, it’s from the Desert Fathers, the old Christian story. And there was an abbot of a monastery named, if I remember right, Anastasius.

And he had this beautiful book, maybe the Bible. It was on some very precious parchment. On the cover was decorated with ivory, lovely, very wonderful book that he was quite happy in having. And it was worth eighteen pence. And there was another monk staying, or visiting, in his monastery. He saw the book, and at some point decided that this book was worth a lot, so he stole it and left the monastery and went to town.

And at some point Anastasius discovered his book was missing. He decided not to do anything, because he realized that theft was pretty bad. But he was worried that if he reported the theft and someone got caught, if the man was caught, then the man might lie, and lying is also considered pretty bad, and you won't give the person the opportunity to sin even more. So he didn't do anything. But anyway, the man took the book to a bookseller in town, and he said, "Will you buy this book for sixteen pence?"

And the book dealer said, "Well, wait a minute. I have to go find out what it is really worth before I pay all this money. So go, come back in a couple of days. I'll take the book and ask an expert. Come back in a couple of days, work out how much, I'll tell you how much money." So the book dealer took the book and went and asked Anastasius, "How much is this book worth?" And Anastasius saw the book and recognized it as his own. But he said, "Oh, it's a very valuable book. It's worth at least eighteen pence."

So, "Are you sure you'd give me sixteen pence?" So two days later, the thief came back to the book dealer in the store. "Oh yes, I checked." And in secret, Anastasius, he said, "It's worth as much as you said. I'll give you sixteen pence." And the thief was shocked. What, anything else? And he said, "No, you said it was worth what it was worth, and I should pay that for it." And the thief said, "Well, I can't sell it. I can't sell it."

And he ran back to the monastery to Anastasius and said, "You know, I apologize. I confess. I stole it. Won't you take it? Take it back." And Anastasius said, "No, you keep it. Won't you keep it?" And I am going away. And he said, "I can't. If I keep it, I'll never have a moment of peace in my life again." And the story continues, and the monk decided to stay there with Anastasius. It's kind of a beautiful story.

And perhaps it is an example of shame, of a kind of shame, that probably this thief was shamed by this, by finding out that Anastasius, by the conduct of Anastasius, was able to discover that it was stolen, discover it was his book, and was unwilling to press him and demand it. And for shame, whatever emotion may be felt there, and shame, a good word for it, at first was compelled to confess and then to go even further and devote himself to religious life. And I think when I first heard about shame as a moral virtue in Buddhism, I guess I was surprised because I had no concept of shame being a virtue. I thought of shame being very

much related to guilt, as being a kind of unfortunate emotion.

When you feel shame for yourself, as putting yourself down or basing yourself on a kind of self-abasement. And I think often because in our culture people feel ashamed for many things which have nothing to do with their actions, moral or wrong or right actions, but have to do with things like their physical appearance. People are ashamed about their physical appearance. People have shame about, sometimes, their incompetence. In certain eras, people are ashamed about the body or sexuality.

Shame in our culture, imagine a man, as if someone happens to discover his fly's been down for life, and sometimes they feel some kind of shame. And I was reminded that the first emotion in the Bible, in Genesis, is shame. People ate the tree of wisdom, and that doesn't get wisdom. What's there is shame, a sense of shame and shame. I think it's that kind of way of seeing shame, much culture conditions that kind of emotion of culture, and we are in different cultures, have different precepts, normative precepts by which we live our life, and if you don't live your life along those precepts, then you feel ashamed sometimes.

So if you are in the circle of the students of Pythagoras, you don't eat beans, and probably if you eat beans you feel ashamed. And each culture has taboos that seem to have nothing to do with anything that seems in a mighty reasonable. In certain cultures, you're supposed to wear a veil, and if you don't wear one, or people are so sees your face, you feel ashamed. Oh, and else I must also mention that in a lot of books I read on therapy, psychotherapy, yes, and also a lot of books of spirituality, there's very little discussion of shame. And if there is, any shame is to be gotten rid of.

And shame and guilt are considered to be unfortunate emotions. And the goal of therapy often is to overcome all sense of shame and all sense of guilt and lack of worth and confidence, and so you feel kind of whole and good about yourselves, and can be perpetually happy. Maybe that's the kind of, that's a kind of fault, a kind of false caricature of therapy. But I think that there's some books you read, kind of psychology books, of that character. And in a lot of religious traditions, shame is actually considered a virtue.

When I looked into it a little bit, it isn't just in Buddhism. It's also in Christianity and Judaism. In Buddhism, these two virtues, *hiri* and *ottappa*, are considered to be the two great guardians of the world. The world is protected by these two things. And it's also considered that the greatest wealth that a person can have is to have these two virtues. And also that the whole world somehow is dependent on the motivation of the world. The world can revolve around it, to a cause. Without these two, there's very little to keep a lot of us from each other's throats.

There's enough of it to mean a miracle that I see what's going on in the world. I think it's been a miracle that things aren't worse than they are. And I looked in different books this week, books on Buddhism, to see what's a good translation of these two words, *hiri* and *ottappa*. And it seems like there's no one great consensus in people's minds how to translate into English. And maybe that's because even shame in English is a pretty vague emotion, not clear what it means even.

But I think the best translation that I could figure out is that *hiri* is closely related to conscience. *Ottappa* may be closely related to shame. And *hiri* has to do with what is internal. It's the internal recognition and desire to avoid doing anything with any kind of wrong view, an internal motivation. And *ottappa* is related to the word *tapa*, *tapas*, which somebody might know is an Indian word meaning ascetic practice or austerities. And Indian ascetics love to do *tapas*.

So *ottappa* has to do with feeling anguish, feeling some kind of inner anguish. But it is best translated as shame because it comes from outside. It has to do with what you think, or how you think, other people in the world react to what you do, the reproach you receive from others. And that, you know, it's very much socially conditioned. But in the Buddhist tradition, they say that a person who has a strong sense of *ottappa*, a strong sense of shame, doesn't have a kind of shame, you know, a normal kind of conventional shame about what society might think, but has shame about what is, little translation, the nasty, what the masters of faith will think of now, I guess.

What people who are quite developed, people who are quite developed in a mature spiritual path, how they'll react, how they'll see you. You're concerned about that. Maybe spiritual friends or some, maybe not today, maybe you are worried that they'll judge you, but you don't want to let them see you in that light. Reluctant. And I believe that as a person practices mindfulness, as mindfulness gets stronger, these two so-called virtues or qualities tend to become stronger in people, I think, too, naturally.

And certainly I think the first one, a sense of conscience, some people translate this as an inner shame. Oh, I think that conscience, I think as we become more mindful, the sense of separation between self and others begins to lessen somewhat, and we become more sensitive to our effects we have on other people, and the effect other people have on ourselves. And as we become more sensitive to how things affect others, I think we naturally don't want to do things which cause pain and suffering for others. And also with mindfulness is an increased sensitivity to any of our own shortcomings.

I think it's fairly common with people who start becoming mindful of their internal states. You

realize there's things in there you're not proud of. And rather than thinking of that as being unfortunate, I think that often many religious critics see that it's been a fortunate step toward maturity. Spiritual material. When I was ordained as a Zen monk about ten years ago now, I didn't expect it to change from the day before and the day after, you know. I didn't really believe the rituals had any effect.

I thought I'll go through this ritual, get ordained through a ritual. But actually, I was quite surprised that the ritual had a big impact on me. And one of the things I noticed very quickly afterwards was that somehow by becoming ordained, I became much more sensitive to my shortcomings. It was as if being a monk, I held myself up, or I saw myself in a different way than I saw myself before, so I had different expectations of myself. I became more sensitive to what I could do, to my shortcomings.

However, the nice thing was that at the same time I became more aware of my shortcomings, it was more okay to have these shortcomings. Not that I was merely accepting anything, but I didn't feel bad about myself. I didn't criticize myself for having these shortcomings. I recognized them. It somehow was okay. It was all held within some larger container, some being a monk, I guess, with a larger container, the wearing of Buddha's robes, as part of the *Saṅgha*, a child of the Buddha. So it's okay.

One of the things I practiced in the years after was, again, I practiced trying to be an open book. I was living mostly in communities and monasteries then, and I tried to not only answer any question anybody asked me about me, but without being obnoxious or something, let people know, my friends, whatever was going on. It was that I wouldn't keep anything private. I was practicing not having any privacy, psychological privacy. I wanted to be an open book. Didn't that be pretty vulnerable? Oh yes.

Something that the Buddhist tradition says about these two virtues is that the proximate cause, the near cause, for these two virtues is self-respect and respect for others. And that's really neat, that the kind of shame and conscience that Buddhism is talking about developing comes from having a strong sense of self-respect. And it's from self-respect that we have a sense of shame. So it isn't a sense of shame that comes from some external standards. Conscience doesn't come from the external standards of society and arbitrary conventions.

But rather, we have some sense of who we are, some sense of our self-respect, a sense of personal integrity, that somehow we don't want to transgress against because it's painful. To feel your integrity, it's painful to transgress against it. I like the word disgrace because a disgrace is to go against our grace. And maybe grace is natural, but maybe grace is kind of like a birthright. Grace is kind of like our self-respect. And when we shame ourselves, we

disgrace, we go against our grace.

And I think that as we practice, we get some sense of what is grace or integrity or self-respect, a sense of contentment or something. Sometimes they kind of come, and with that, I think, comes an increasing reluctance to transgress. Or so maybe a measure of whether shame is a virtue or a hindrance is whether it comes rooted in self-respect or not. Because often I think shame and guilt are experienced as kind of self-criticism, as aversion toward it. We kind of hate ourselves with it. We're disgusted with ourselves, or putting ourselves down.

I think the kind of shame that perhaps the Buddhists are talking about is shame which actually somehow supports our autonomy and supports our self-respect. When we feel shame, we feel motivated to align ourselves with our inner integrity. In my mind, I think of guilt as being a kind of stagnant emotion that drains us or anything, and I think of this conscience or shame the Buddhists are talking about as being something which is actually energizing, it's vitality. You feel something, you know, feel some danger against your integrity, and are motivated to do something about it, not to transgress.

In the Buddhist texts that talk about this, it's always talked about in the context of avoiding doing something in the future. It's never talked about what happens after you've done something. And I think it's a certain kind of shame that comes to that. And I think it may be that maybe in this context the word remorse is better. Maybe in my mind remorse is good. I don't quite know what it means, and so it has a mutual tone, and I think it's a sense of maybe, like this monk stole a book, a feeling somehow remorseful in some ways that you've done something wrong, but that remorse or encouragement compels you then, or motivates you, to kind of in future live more by your own inner integrity, your own inner sense of self-worth. You find your inner worth and want to live by it.

Yes, there's a story from the Zen tradition of a cook too. He's cooking a meal for the people in the meditation hall, and I guess he was cooking a turtle soup. And somehow when he served it up in the meditation hall where the monks ate, he got a message from the abbot that he had to come into the hall. And he came up to the abbot. And the abbot was sitting there with bowls in front of him, and the soup bowl. And he pointed to his bowl. Floating on the top of the soup bowl, there was the head of a turtle.

Somehow, when he cleaned the turtle, the head had kind of stayed. And the cook hiked up to the kitchen. All the cook did was he picked up the head and he ate it and walked out. And this is an entry called "eating the blame." He didn't say he was sorry. He didn't apologize. He didn't defend himself and didn't explain. Just there was the problem. He acknowledged it and the blame and went on with his work.

And then there's a story, a lama told another story. Hakuin was a Zen master from seventeen hundred, from Japan, and he was living by himself in the temple in the village. And a local sixteen-year-old girl, and the parents insisted she tell them who it was. At first she apparently held out, and finally said it was the local priest, Hakuin. So the whole town got angry, got up in arms, chastised him, and stopped kind of giving him alms and all. Hakuin, when he was accused of being the father, said, "That's so."

And then when the baby was born, the parents in anger brought the baby to Hakuin's doorstep and said, "Here, you take it. You're the father." And Hakuin said, "That's so." And then he kind of took the baby and took really good care of the baby, growing into a year. And after about a year, the girl, who had kind of misgivings about it all the time, but her lying or anything, confessed actually it was an apprentice to the fish maker. And so then the girl and the parents came back to Hakuin and said, "We're so sorry. There's been a big mistake."

And perhaps there's something you can do with such a story. Maybe I explain the story in a penis story. And then I finish. And there'd be two short points. Is that time? Maybe it is. Virtues, shame, and conscience, we're thinking about little bits. The Buddhist tradition takes them very seriously.

But one of the things I think that people are interested in, in my form of practice, I should do a kind of homework of some sort. I think what's useful is to increase your vocabulary of words you have to do with emotions and sensations, so you can be more discerning, differentiating more carefully what is going on in different emotions. So I read this list of things that could be overlapping each other in some way: shame, remorse, guilt, conscience, humiliation, embarrassment, fear, dread, regret, disgrace, and more. I think there's shades of difference between some of these, and it's possible to kind of start being more careful, understanding more carefully what the differences are, kind of increasing your vocabulary. The greater vocabulary you have, the easier it is to discern what's going on within you.

It's like when I studied art. My art teacher, I was so shocked that they wouldn't just say brown doesn't exist in the world of art. There are like a hundred shades of brown, all of a different kind, strange, brassy, I know. And I had to learn them all because they all, as you can recognize them later. I think a good artist or a painter is able to recognize the different shades of brown. I think a good mindfulness person can recognize the shades of your emotion. So that's kind of a suggestion as your homework, think of emotions.

And the other thing is, because a lot of emotional life is complicated, and I think the example of shame is an example of complication, a lot of emotions have two sides to them, the side which may be wholesome and the side that may be more unwholesome. And one of the

things that we can do as you're mindful is to start noticing the difference between a wholesome version of a particular emotion and an unwholesome side of shame. We're still using the same word, still willing to use the same word for it. You will find other words, and you can find, hopefully, I suggest that you find your own criteria for deciding what's wholesome and unwholesome.

But I suggest a few. One is this: does it increase or decrease our sense of separation from other people? Do you feel more connected with people or less connected with people when you have this emotion or that you did this action? How does it bring energy, or does it take away energy? Do you feel more uplifted or do you feel more depressed, more downtrodden? The effect that actions and emotions have on us is one of the things that is very useful to pay attention to. We don't have to judge it or add more than that. It is to recognize.

Can we, all of us, have an innate sense, do all of us have innately a real sense of personal worth? Realize it enough. And I think one of the things in *mettā*, one of the aspects of my practice, I learned to trust that. I learned to rest in a complete contentment of finding our own self-worth, which we have already. I hope that's the case. I need to stop. Like saying, I can never seek to recoil too much, but there. So thank you all.

That is why we go down and take the car and go. We don't know where to go. At one point, we go into the bad. In the while, we are free to go on. Or we like to go in. Don't let's tire. But every time we have reason, then go back. We would like to sit. In other words, not to go back.

And there are maybe people who come here who have the habit of shopping, buying a thing every time they have some spare money handy, and go shopping, and they buy things that there's no need for in the house. And one day they find, but I am sure they wanted to buy it too. Don't blame that. But the two of them, upon bringing the bread home, did not find in their good books, and then they are the derision of that, which is quite nice. Why not put a lid on them? But you know that the Buddha did not go to get her. He would tell the village, "When we help you get your death, and would have you go back to your death, and how and where and when."

I want to run away from it, and why you did not hide that way. Revolting beauty into the last action of a man reported the last. I had killed in order that man could kill, and would as well. I know that in my former life I have been tree and boughs and drops. And I know that by my desire, I see that I got into trees, bush, flowers, vegetables. And I know that if the ten are not able to do, humans are not very, and in our car we have been out so much that the earth has had here a long life.

Or when I am going, do I know I am going to my own, the action of that passion of mine? That is it. Before other cars had raged in and out according to the gone before. Or if I am to go, my definition, I go. I see that I do not bring in the car. That is why I practice. I would with water. And I know this walking in vision is very joy, very peaceful, very happy, because I know that my nature is a definition. I know that life can only be possible in the right moment. Therefore each step I lay brings me back to a place where I can come in, and it is that I may join.

And it's much better than that. A car, the car and I are one. I mean that if we think of ourselves as the master and it as an instrument, then we are quite, or that I had a tea or a toe with our intent. We become people, you know, a musician with it, and become more important. Its bosom had a very in and become very dangerous. And we note that humankind had become a very dangerous being. We had more than fifty thousand Indian wives, but if you want more. So I remember that we have enough already, and we may be ten, but why do we want to think more? That proves that we are not really master of our situation.

In the story of a man riding very quickly on a horse, a man on a horse appeared to be in a very big hurry. Maybe joy somewhere. So people asked him, standing on the roadside, "Where are you going?" And the man answered, "I don't know. Ask the horse." Because, sir, you really know where they are going to. We already have such an attitude to our life, and we go into the war. It's impossible to stop. It means we cannot work.

One day maybe they will hear our panic. It means that if we do not practice mindfulness, if we do not know what is going on, then life will not be peace. That is why I hope to overcome. It is only a hope of man. In our everyday life we have then something of the past and something in the future. That is why I forget the present. That is why we have to try the moment of stopping. We all know that life is only available in the present, and if we take care of the present, we take care of the future. My own practice is not in the future. My own is practice in the present moment.

The moment when we begin to breathe in and out, you go back to that. You may at once be standing. The way is clear, though there is clearly no way, and therefore the woman's being bathing in a way of mindfulness. You take refuge in the rule that would be to you. It is to tell more when you get here as well. You also are of Buddha, and the message brought by a simple mindfulness is wise. By doing the banana in the oven, by holding your child in your arms, be so that you and your child won't become drink. When you bring the cup of water to drink, you know to make the cup of water be.

When you are with someone, we spend one hour together, and I want belonging, the time to me to be in a real way. You may take some tea or some coffee. The real is ever to be our

business. The man that you are talking in love, and then the lady to the deed is not very real. But I made the suggestion: you enter the life and make it real. The deed had to bring his position into the deed, because the deed is calling you. And when the deed has become real, you also will be hungry, and we won't do any hunger like that.

So my advice is, when you wake washing, and maybe show you what to do and what not do. That is why I said that compassion is a kind of non-action in what you do not do, and in turning the fame of the world that they went on doing another thing. And I am often asked, "What is the way to live my daily life?" It is to be at length with compassion, with mindfulness. And even if you don't do it yet, I imagine the person sitting in bad posture, taking refuge, all they very often experience this. Very often they are caught in calm and a giggling mood because he or she can come home.

And people may say, because they do that, "Oh, he is the same way," and so on, or that we are perhaps harmless. They will say, "Silly." But when you have this mind, you become wise, you become serene, you become happy, even if you have not made your way of vision. Suppose I am a wisdom-yielding father. I don't say that you agree with me. I only ask you to do this. That's my way. All visions I have.

Well, when I lose my way and then you bring up your way to me, look very deeply. Now that I open, I see. It is just enough. You will see very deeply the nature of it. You will see that in order to make peace, in order to make understanding and love, our graves and more ringing alive, our brain, to make peace and understanding, is just you and these people. We are wholly only great, and we may not change the phrase. And if I make my life by looking deeply into the nature of my being, then I may see. And if I see something like that, that insight is the fruit of my mindfulness. It makes me stop and look deeply.

So stop. When you have money, when you go where money is going, you have to stop looking. The other day, you have to stop. Your mind can be the money in the machine. We are perhaps in need of observation to the mode. And the best thing is for us, as we are, to hold to what is always in the arms of being, and then become our friend. And if I am lonely, the true nature with you, and you find out that we ask, I am there in a man and more, and be so many as I am born in a man.

And when one has that insight, he or she has compassion. So if we do not have insight, we cannot have compassion. And if we do not have compassion, we cannot act on that in a relieving way. Compassion is a kind of energy, you know. Anger is a source of energy. But rather than anger, can I recognize that compassion is my energy? It is not merely, but it is not at fault. With compassion in your heart, you can have compassion to not suffer and offer

happiness. Without compassion, you cannot have passion, and compassion is an art in my mind.

And compassion is very manifest. If you do not understand the poor fellow who will end like a husband and wife imagine they are all, we do not understand each other. It's impossible for them to love each other. The more they love, the more they make the other suffer. This is very clear. If there is no understanding in love, then as I do the poems, they begin one of that burden, the vision of water. Otherwise, those that love, that hold as who they are, over human. And then wickedness to love. But it is the fact that the more love, the more one's own, and therefore there is understanding in love.

I tell you, by the name of love, if you do, then we become free from that. If you do not do this with your love, then you cannot make peace. And therefore those who love have to go back to this time, thinking, "I love you, and because I love you, I make you suffer." Well, that is to open the door of death. If today you go home, sir, take back all your wife and now then, you see that I have made you suffer so that I can find the way in that vicious moonlight. And you begin to cry. And there are now all you know, body or happiness in some does not mean that you will lower yourself in many days and more.

You may look at things in your daily life in order to see that human nature, and once you see your leisure in it, to understand that that is likely, that is unlike. And then one brings out compassion. And, oh, you know that, sir. There's no doubt that doing no war now, that maybe they think I wanted to help you. Well too, we won't undo the war. We try our best to tell the other world that we don't want the war. We don't want to. Where does the heavy man now come from? China, Russia. We need not manufacture here. All we manufacture are weapons either. But things came on our side and we need one, but both pushed us together.

And as we try our best to see that we don't want it, please let alone. Our life was lost and we thought that you begin very much to be the Russians, be daring and enraged. And so I had to burn out our life to hope that the message will come. We thought that we are kind to the later. We tend, you have no way of knowing. And even then you can't be. And we are here if we be, or I was in it, or this time with the thing can be given. And near and our heavy comes in bringing manner between death, obsessed by dying people.

Then know that the sugar makers went too. We do both very happy, and happy should have been so to do that. And if you think that all. I saw a young man who hired a room to sell something at a price, and he begged that he could not tell that his fame was out at night. He led a tree, turned round, and his son, very angry, saw a rickshaw driver. I saw all that, laughing at it, and ran on that way. The feet, you see, that lay taught that nobody wanted

that. I saw a letter which ran like that. I only happened that on a car, and I saw that.

We need the return toward understanding, and I mean that in being a code, or the children here, living with the children, being onto them, I feel that the children are harmed, and I see we have no happiness. That's why now foreigners are coming, and they were life. That is our higher standard. I feel that our share of the children and the soul, more than the Philippines, was made simply and happily. So even if he had a good intention to help, we might harm him or go on. It's not because we have a lot of money that we can make people happier.

And then what I have learned, because the wedding is going in man much, that passion may be bold and vulgar. We admire man. There is not a corruption, and therefore compassion in action, wings, and anti in action. Without understanding, compassion is impossible. Therefore our heart is to see. And then out on the invasion of the people belong to him. That is very why at once we see the reality of the people, the real aspiration of the people. And even if a people happen in an old way, therefore a politician, bad time, I would make compassion into the center.

I would like very much for the problem of our means and end. Usually we think that what we do now in this moment is the means to achieving an end, the end being our peace, our joy, our liberation. But Buddha tells us that the means are the end. When a mindful step is realized, you realize peace, joy, and understanding right away. At that moment you don't need to wait ten years to attain peace and joy. We must know one day the right way of my life can bring peace or joy and understanding because the enlightenment is already in our way, and therefore there is no way to peace. Peace is the way.

Leave your very life in a mindful way. That can make it possible. Is there a way? There is no way to peace. Every way is peace. That means your way you say, act, may show them. There should be a way. There is no way to peace. Rather, may it then be happy, say a word and be in a word. And therefore the joy a man truly realizes in the very moment. The monk, no sir, will I see matter and land? And dear sir, this is the story very well.

Once upon a time, there was a river running very quickly, thinking that her destination is the great ocean. And although she ran, she was not happy, because running was not happiness. He said it was the need of happiness. It is not a way to be happy. So very well, when the river water comes to the low end, it could not come very much longer. And then we suffer because it sees that way. The river wanted the ocean very quickly, and why you told the lie and the notes. The dark clouds, and now she spent all time. The clouds are going away, and she passes in canes, but she never grows.

One was buried all the time alone, and crying, and she may no longer be. And one after the clouds leave, and a way, so that even not one day the world is born that way. All the lords of the sky, and the sky was a beginning. She thought that she could not be alive like these mingles of it, nothing in her at all. So she wanted. At night she had to go back here more now. So she had the first idea to sit and reason. Her father warned her against the land of the old. She hung on something dead. There is only a button on me, and why there is in an *ātman* what she has been. There is already in her.

She doesn't run after anything, so she feels something very musical, for it was time. She doesn't feel the need to run, and therefore she is all. She does not need to feel any more, and she begins to bathe in happiness. And she saw the blue sky for a long time because in a month she did not pay attention to the sky, so peaceful. She only paid attention to a cloud. She did not know that the blue sky is the home of the cloud. She has been running beneath the fear, for peace, for happiness, for something common.

And in the afternoon the cloud came back in. Now she was an old girl in the cloud, white at me as the cloud hangs on. She waved that, smiled, and read one or two signs. She asked, "Mingle now, something?" And, you know, this is what I know. I resumed to tell you that in our days the idea of riches will not train us. There has been in a more rigidly. I mean that you go and push your way, you can do something and eat. If there is some death, that vision of non-being is not a day. No shape in you. You have tied yourself, even in you.

So she ran after, or she, they are easy at evening when opening her heart through the sky. She saw the very beautiful moon, the full moon. So the cloud and the moon, imagine that night. Then the clouds are taking, holding the hand of the moon, and the moon holding the hand of the cloud. They are walking, enjoying. I should like, sir. My own mindfulness is going on. Well, if I see a vision here, we just take it in and we can see everything.

So when I anticipate fear at some food, I look at a plant and I say, "So in my brain, is my brain empty?" A few moments before you eat, my food is made of millions of children and of ours. They had their hanging by a log, and they were there in need to eat too. I remember that. Every day thousands of children die for lack of food. So why eating? And here I see the vision. Before eating, they seem proudly. And they raise the bowl, and then I should remember the children who are starving in the world. That is mindfulness. As you may enjoy that, or see what is going on in the world, so that if a child or an adult in the world has no food, another child in the world is of mine.

So we live our daily life, and yet you should go and ask what and how. This was who are walking mindfully. They are in the world. They are every day in a very enraged way. They

are having children and ego was of in and the pot or the in and emigrant. You should live our life in such a way that life is possible. And also I finish, ladies and gentlemen, by asking your attention to the fact that mothers and fathers and others are suffering in disasters. Please recognize that our brothers and sisters are of interest and tranquil. Live in such a way that can be so.

And so monks and nuns and others are suffering in prisons. Please also remember them. And our brothers and sisters also suffer under heavy burdens. Ask the crowd. Sink into a beginning for me. This is the time, as they had the opportunity to learn before being born in a Buddhism giving a war. I hope that in a long time soon, the happy will be saved by me, by us. And so I have come. I wish it were deeply possible of me and here much.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to share with you some of my experience in the practice of Buddhist meditation. I think a Buddhist practice of meditation begins with breathing in and breathing out, and it will continue with that breathing in and breathing out for a long time, because the breathing, the breathing, is very enjoyable, and it makes life possible in the present moment. When you breathe in a deep breath, you say, "Breathing in, I am going back, I am going back to myself." And when you breathe out, you say, "Breathing out, I smile." And that can have a wonderful effect on your life, not only in the present moment, but in the next moment.

Breathing in, I am going back, I am going back to myself. This is to restore your person, to make it alive to be yourself again, because in our daily life we may be dispersed sometimes. Our body is here, but our mind is elsewhere, and we are possessed either by the past or the future, or by anger or by anxieties and so on. We are not really ourselves. But the moment you begin to breathe in consciously, "Breathing in, I am going back to myself," well, something miraculous happens. You recuperate your own person. You are yourself again.

And when you breathe out, you say, "Breathing out, I smile." Smiling means that you are in control of the situation. You are smiling to yourself. You are making yourself relax. You know that you have sovereignty over yourself now. In that moment it is possible for you to encounter life in its entirety. Suppose someone comes to you with a flower. It is very nice.

And if you are still possessed by your worries about the future, your regret about the past, and you are not yourself, then you have no capacity to receive the person with the flower. And the person may be only a ghost, the flower also a ghost. Life is not existing in that moment. Therefore, "Breathing in, I go back to myself. Breathing out, I smile," is a wonderful practice that makes yourself into a whole person again. I have been a Buddhist monk for more than forty-five years, and I still enjoy that breathing in and breathing out. And I think that is one of

the things that I consider to be very precious, and I would like to share with you right away.

Sometimes we forget to go back to ourselves and life just disappears. And therefore, in a Buddhist temple, we use a bell in order to remind ourselves of breathing and going back to ourselves. As a novice, I had to learn to go back to myself. In the beginning, I was told that every time I hear the sound of the bell, I have to stop my thinking, stop talking, and hold on to my breathing, and go back to myself. "Listen, listen. This wonderful sound brings me back to my true self." And by doing so, I make life possible in the present moment.

And life is sometimes awful, but life is also wonderful. And going back to ourselves, we have the chance to be in touch with life in its awful aspects and also in its wonderful aspects. We have to suffer in order to become a real human being, but most of our sufferings are useless. But in the Buddhist tradition we know that we have to be in touch with suffering in order to know what is really going on in ourselves and around us in the world, because if you don't know the situation of the world, the suffering there, you cannot really be a human being in its real meaning.

But I have said that most of our sufferings are entirely useless because we have created this kind of suffering for ourselves and for people who live around us. And the practice of mindfulness, that is the good, the practice of mindfulness through mindful breathing, is one of the wonderful ways to go back to yourself in order to stop this kind of useless suffering. And you only like to suffer in order to be with the suffering of the world. Compassion means to suffer together with other people, and that suffering, that compassion, can only help you to grow and to be fully a person. But suffering is not enough. We cannot live by suffering alone.

Therefore we have to live with joy and with happiness, and joy and happiness are possible with mindful breathing. When I go back to myself, I feel that I am a wonderful entity of life. I feel that the elements of happiness are everywhere within me and around me. For instance, I know that I have eyes that enable me to see all sorts of colors and forms. And if I am aware of that, I open my eyes and I see the blue sky, the beautiful flowers, the beautiful eyes of my child, and so on.

And happiness is possible with the presence of mindfulness. You know that every time you have a toothache you are enlightened. You know something very well. You know that not having a toothache is a wonderful thing. But when you do not have one, you don't seem to be very happy. And that is our fault. We are happy all the time, most of the time, but we don't know that.

And therefore, to have eyes, not to have a toothache, to have a nose that can breathe, not

to have a migraine, to be able to walk on our beautiful planet, all these things are positive elements of our happiness. But we are not aware of this because we are always stuck to the future. We believe that our happiness is in the future. We look for everything in the future. Our peace should be something in the future. Happiness should be something in the future. *Nirvāṇa* is in the future. The kingdom of God is in the future.

But according to the teaching of Buddhism, everything should be sought for in the present moment: now, by now, happiness, joy, the kingdom of God. If you miss the present moment, you have nothing. One day the Buddha was standing in front of a community of one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, and he was holding a flower like this without saying anything, and the audience was perfectly still, silent. Everyone was trying to find out what is behind that kind of gesture, and everyone was thinking very hard. And the Buddha stood like that for a long time.

And after, I think, about ten minutes, he smiled. He smiled because someone there in the audience smiled to him. Out of one thousand two hundred and fifty people, one person smiled. And the Buddha said, “Ladies and gentlemen, I have a treasure of insight, of wisdom. I have transmitted it to Mahākāśyapa,” the monk who bears that name, who smiled at the flower. He was smiling at the flower because he was not thinking. He was breathing and smiling, and therefore he could have direct contact with the flower.

When someone takes a flower and shows it to you, it’s very clear that he wants you to be in touch with the flower. And if you continue to think, to try to find philosophical meanings behind that, you miss the flower. So the practice of mindfulness is to go back to yourself in the present moment and not have thinking as an obstacle, not have worries as an obstacle, not have hope as an obstacle. Because there are many obstacles to our happiness and joy in the present moment, including wealth, including our intellectual pursuits. And therefore we have to learn how to liberate ourselves from all these things in order to be really alive in the present moment.

If you practice, “Breathing in, I go back to myself,” and “Breathing out, I smile,” you see that the first function of conscious breathing is to stop your thinking, and this is very important. Many of us think too much, and so to the point that we cannot sleep during the night. There is a cassette tape in our head turning all day long, and that is one obstacle to our being alive. To be or to think, you have to choose between the two. And Descartes seemed to be very proud of it when he said, “I think, therefore I am.” But thinking is less than being. That’s my experience.

If you think, you miss the flower. If you think, you miss your child. If you think, you miss

the most wonderful things in life. I don't mean that thinking is a bad thing, but most of our thinking is useless. The second function of conscious breathing is to help you recuperate yourself, to make you ready to encounter life. When you stop thinking, you are ready to be in touch with life, and you can live deeply each moment of your life. For I remember that term, that when Jesus.