

Dharmette: Love (84) Conclusion: Wise Love, Not Hate

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So we come to the end of this long series on love. And I think this is the 84th little talk on love. And I would have thought when I started in the beginning of January that I would never have this much to say about the topic. And I've enjoyed it quite a bit. It's been just really a wonderful way of spending these months, to be reflecting on this, living with it, loving, caring about this topic. And so I thank you for kind of the ability, the occasion to be able to do this.

And I think what I found for me is that Buddhist practice naturally brought me into this realm itself of goodwill, love, friendliness, care, compassion. And it's been a wonderful adventure of this life this way. And I hope that for you, you'll now be able to appreciate that this practice opens into a greater care for the world, a greater care for others.

So, some people are saying they're trying to post the Zoom links. So anyway, don't worry about it for now. If Zoom links don't appear on the chat, I will post it. And where they're found is on IMC's website, on the homepage under What's New. It's also on IMC's calendar for 7:45. You'll find it there. And there it is. There's the link. So let me continue here. And then maybe everyone's distracted now.

So this wonderful adventure of love. And also, I'd like to offer it as a challenge. And I think this is one of the very profound ways of working with something like love, working with peace, working with the calm, working with the benefits we get from this practice, is to have it as a reference point to help us see clearly how we live other ways, to clearly see other choices we make, other things we give ourselves over to, we succumb to. When we don't have love, when we don't have peace, when we don't have mindfulness, what is the attitude, what is the way of being that is how you most want to live? And how is it that you're not that way?

And with the field of love and care, have the ability to look at what you do that is not so ideal, look at what's difficult, look at your difficult attitudes, your difficult behaviors, and meet that

with love, with care. To meet that with some kind of heartfulness and goodwill and maybe compassion. This life is hard. It's hard what the heart, the mind produces for us, the attitudes, the fears, the resistance, the ill will. It's hard. And to hold it with compassion, to hold it with care.

Or, for some of us, what seems the most profound is not to hold with love, but to hold with an open awareness, to hold it with space, with a tension, a tension which is not for or against, and a tension which doesn't perpetuate the lack of ill will, perpetuate the ill will. And so to have a reference point, to really have that reference point, and that reference point make us a better person, to make it easier to be with what's difficult, not harder, not to measure ourselves negatively because we're not living up to the ideal, but to make it easier to be with what's difficult. But it really helps us to meet what's not ideal, what's difficult in us, in a whole different way. In a whole different way of care and love and attention.

And to be able to do that for the world, do that for others. Of course people in the world are not ideal. Of course they don't always behave well. It's very difficult and complicated, all the causes and conditions that people are navigating and working with and struggling with. And it's a difficult world people live in. And of course, in all this difficulty, people are frustrated, people are afraid, people end up doing things which are not ideal.

Is there a way of not adding to the suffering of the world, adding to how difficult it is? Can we not add anger to an angry world? Can we not add hostility to a hostile world? Can we not add despair in a despairing world? Can we not add anxiety to an anxious world? Can we not add greed, craving, conceit, me versus you, in a world where all that is so much?

Just because it's in the world and other people are doing it, don't let it justify that we do it too. We want to care for the world. We want to create a better world. We want to take care of ourselves and create a better world for ourselves. Can we find how to do it with love? Can we find how to do it with non-reactive awareness? Can we find out how to do it so that it supports the deep generative goodness of care, love, wholesomeness, which is in everyone?

There's a story I'd like to end with, which is very meaningful to me when I heard it. And it has to do with this poem that I call it the poem of peace that the Buddha taught. And I've talked about this often enough, but almost as a ritual way of ending this series.

As we know, during the end of World War II, Japan surrendered. And the United States was in part one of the conquering countries, but in fact a lot of countries had claims to make against Japan for how much atrocities Japan had inflicted on much of Asia. And so for a while Japan lost its sovereign nationhood and was under the control of the occupying forces of the United

States. And the question is, what was going to happen? Was Japan going to be sliced up and divided up among different countries who had conquered it and had a right to owning it? Would there be a serious kind of taking funds from the Japanese treasury or something to repay all the damage they had done elsewhere? What was going to happen to Japan?

And so there was a big meeting of heads of state or foreign ministers of some 54 countries, 50-some, many countries, came to San Francisco Opera House. I think it was in 1954, so almost 10 years after the war, to decide the fate of Japan. It was still not a sovereign country again. And there was a lot of discussion, and no one could agree, and a lot of strong opinions, and it didn't seem like they were making any headway to find out what could happen, what their choices were around what should happen to Japan.

And the foreign minister of Sri Lanka stood up and gave a speech. And in that speech, he said that he did not want to ask for reparations. He wanted to see Japan as a friend and as a nation of friendships, to support their sovereignty and allow them to grow again. Something like that is my rough paraphrase. But then he recited the poem of peace that the Buddha taught so many years ago.

Love, oh, hate is never overcome by hate. Only by love is hate overcome. This is the ancient truth.

So first, a country that had been inflicted damage by the Japanese, harmed by the Japanese, was not going to hold it against them, but was offering, suggesting that we meet hate with love. And that statement changed the room. And the decision was made to give back to Japan its sovereignty, its independence, to be a full citizen in this world as a country. And that made a huge difference.

And that quote, that poem of peace, is now, there's a plaque in Japan, in Tokyo, memorializing what happened here in San Francisco in 1954 that gave Japan its sovereignty. So it's, of course, modern life has changed. We have all kinds of opinions of what's happening. But the ancient truth, hate is never overcome by hate. By love alone, it's overcome. May we remember this.

May we learn to love more. May we not. May we be careful when we think that there's something better to do or more effective than love. Love is not naive. Love shouldn't be naive. It shouldn't be simplistic. It should be intelligent. It should be strategic. It should respond appropriately. It should be well-considered how to respond with love.

To simply respond with love is naive. But how to respond is the wonderful art that hopefully we always are thinking about. And we become wiser and wiser to be able to know how to live

in love and care, in a wholesome, effective, and beneficial way. May we all bring this to the world and make the world a better place. So thank you. So for those of you