

Lojong Class 9

as always we should always cultivate pure motivation. And, and this is definitely, we should cultivate pure motivation before we practice Dharma together, but really you can do this all the time. And, and what we're trying to do later on today, you're gonna see that we're gonna start to do compassion meditation, and that's kind of the core.

It's like, it's like the foundation of mind training is trying to get away from this self obsession that each one of us has had since we were born and according to Buddhism since beginning less time. Okay. So we're trying to get away from that. We're trying to shift our perspective a little bit so that instead of being really narrow minded and narrow focused on me, me, me, we're trying to open up, right.

We're trying to, instead of being shut, we're trying to open up and become more vast and cultivating pure motivation. Does that. You know, when, when you start to forget about me and the self obsession that we've been carrying and think as a result of me practicing today, may this benefit all sentient beings.

That's a very precious and pure wish. Now some, some people say, well, I can't benefit all sentient beings by practicing today. That's a, that's stupid. Why am I gonna do that? And that's a sign that somebody doesn't really understand that the way that the, the, the thought the way the mind and the body work is first thoughts come and then actions follow thoughts.

So first you have thoughts and then you have speech in action. So by consistently repetitively cultivating thoughts. It's gonna change our behavior. It's gonna, it's going change our speech. It's gonna change our action. It's gonna protect everybody that we come in contact with, including us. Okay.

So that's when we do those prayers, you know, we do the four MES may, all beings have happiness. May they be free from suffering, et cetera, et cetera. We're doing these repetitive things. Every day. Every time we practice, we're doing the same refuge, prayer, the same four measurables and the same Manah offering and creating these repetitious behaviors, plant seeds in our mind to start to change the way we see the world.

So that's really what all this stuff is. So anyway, cultivate pure, pure motivation of love and compassion. As a result of us practicing today may have benefit all sentient beings. Okay. That's what you should always be trying to cultivate. And

you can do that when you wash your hands. Cuz like I said before, don't take this literally you can say, as a result of me washing my hands may have benefit all beings.

As a result of me feeding the cats may have benefit all beings. As a result of me working today, may I benefit every one of my coworkers and may every customer that we serve as a company, be benefited from my actions. You can start to develop these thoughts as often as you can and it will only help you.

Okay. As usual. I always put this up here as a disclaimer. There's a ton of different offerings from IBC. We have meditation Monday and Wednesday morning, 8:00 AM meditation, five 30 Tuesday evening. And then on Sundays, there's three different offerings. There's an 11:00 AM intro to Buddhism, a 1:00 PM Sashi zPo and a three 15 teaching with Gela.

And then Wednesday nights, if you're interested in prayers and chanting, you can do that at six 30. So now we're still on 0.2. This is class nine and we're still on 0.2. Believe it or not. The, the first part of 0.2, the emptiness takes a long time and quite honestly, the preliminaries take a long time.

A lot of the time when the Tibetan masters teach these seven points, they'll do it in two or three days. Okay. The reason that mine is taking so long is because we had a lot of folks joining us that maybe haven't been studying Buddhism for a long time. So 0.1 was incredibly important because you want that foundation.

Okay. So we're on 0.2. And we're, we're on the very last point of two a, which is the ultimate training and the ultimate awakening mind. Okay. And, and what that is, is that is emptiness, as you guys know. Okay. So 0.2 a, the very last piece of this is in the intervals, be a conjure of illusions now what does this mean?

It, it means that the simple answer is that all these things I see in my environment, including myself and others living beings and non-living beings, all the phenomena that I see when we see it, we think that it's independent, permanent, and that it exists from its own side, but that's not how things exist.

There's no such thing as costless phenomena. I think everybody by now, if you know nothing else, I think you guys know that by now. So what we're doing is we wanna understand that we're, that we're our perceptions are not pure. We're not seeing reality. We're not experiencing reality. We're, we're, we're we have a veil that covers what we see.

So therefore we can't really understand the true nature of reality. So the perception of self and others, the external environment and the beings within and so on arise, it's our delusion that causes non-existing things to appear as existing. When he says non-existing things, he means. Things that don't inherently exist.

Right. Cause we know everything's dependent. Okay. But we look around and we see all these things and we don't think they're dependent. Okay. So the instruction is, as you go around in your life, don't take things so seriously, right? Don't think, oh, that guy that cut me off on the highway is a jerk and get really crazy and mad.

Start to see it as an illusion. Cuz what it is is, is we are projecting onto all this stuff. Okay. We're saying, oh I like that guy. He's good. I don't like her because she's with this one political party. I don't like that person cuz he's a Christian. So I don't like him by the way. I don't feel that way.

But some Buddhists do, some Buddhists are kind of hard on other religions. Okay. The point is it's all an illusion, right? We're placing these opinions that we have on all these things. But really we don't understand that a lot of it's coming from our minds. Okay. So I have a, I have an image here and this image is a holograph.

There's a, there's a circus in Germany that stopped using live elephants, which by the way is great because those circuit circus animals are not treated very well. So that's a, that's a holographic elephant. Now what a holograph is, is it's a machine that projects light, right? I think there's a mirror and there's a, there's a light projector and somehow the mirror and the light.

Produces this image where it looks like you're seeing something, but it's just light. If you were to take your hand and move it across the elephant, your hand would go right through that elephant. Okay. So that projection is a really good analogy of the world, because everything we see is a dependent arising.

It's the result of a previous cause. Okay. But when we see it, we don't think that's what it is. Right. When you see your coworker that you have a hard time with, or when you, when your friend or, you know, something that you feel strongly about when you see that you're not like, oh, that's a dependent origination, but that's something I'm just labeling.

That's not how you see it. Right. You see this right. Or if you like, it ha right. Whatever it is, we are incredibly swayed. We're swayed. It's like, we're on,

we're on these waves and we don't have a connection with reality. So we need to start to develop that. And as we go around the world, Start to try to see things like, oh, that table seems really solid and real to me, but actually it's, it's like a holograph because what it actually is, is a result of all these previous causes.

Right. And then it's the fact, the, the fact that it's a table and it seems like a re a truly existing table. That's false because actually it's a basis for the conceptual designation of table that comes from me. I label it that way. Right. So we need to start to try to use this technique. And as you go around, you can, you can start to be like, oh, well, that's, it's, that seems serious.

And I'm getting drawn in emotionally, but it's more like a holograph. Okay. So in the, in, in the interval, meaning the interval between meditation practices start to try to see things don't take 'em so seriously understand how much of the thing you're seeing is conditioned by you putting opinions, labels, concepts onto that item.

Okay. That's that's what we wanna start to try to do. I'm not gonna spend a lot of time on this cuz we've spent weeks and weeks on it. Does anybody have any questions though, before I move to the next point?

No. Okay, cool.

Now we're moving on to 0.2 B, which is very, very beautiful. And by the way, ironically the compassion piece of cuz remember to Maha Yanna, Buddhism, which ti Ben Buddhism is a part of has two wings. It's like an Eagle with two wings, right? The first wing is, is emptiness that's point a the ultimate truth emptiness, right?

The second wing is compassion. Okay. An Eagle that only has one wing doesn't really make a lot of progress, right? They just kind of chill in the cave. They can't go anywhere. Eagle with two wings can soar in, in the vast expanse of the sky. So you, you have to have both, you can't just have emptiness because if you just, if you just contemplate emptiness, you're gonna start to have this kind of, this lack of warmth, this lack of love energy.

Okay. If you just have compassion, you get drawn into these things and you start to take the suffering of all living beings as, as, as way too real. And then you actually can really suffer a lot. So there's this balance between the two emptiness and compassion. Okay. So now we're getting into the piece of compassion.

Now, just FYI, everything is empty, but yet we're gonna have compassion for living beings. Now, does anybody hear that and think, well, Jason, if false sentient beings don't truly exist, then isn't it a contradiction to study compassion. Does anybody wonder that or have that question? . Yeah. Okay. So when I first started coming in and, and, and practicing back in 2014, I was like, this is baffling, cuz on one hand, the masters are telling all phenomena are empty and that living beings are not living beings.

They're merely labeled living beings. Right. But then on the other hand, they're saying we should have compassion. Okay. Here's the thing.

When we deepen our understanding of emptiness, when we deepen our understanding of how reality exists and by the way, this isn't easy training an emptiness and cultivating that view, it's called the view. It takes a long time, but when you start to do that and you start to have these sort of realizations or moments of awakening, you can literally be moved to tears from meditating on emptiness because you understand that all the suffering that living beings experience are their own creations.

Okay. So actually emptiness and compassion fit together perfectly. Okay. So, so not only do we do emptiness, actually one of the true markers of understanding emptiness is that you become more compassionate. Okay. So the two actually fuse together very, very seamlessly and very well and very logically.

And then when you practice emptiness. You're eroding this view of me as the center of the universe. So what starts to happen is by pulling down yourself, grasping and self cherishing mind, it actually makes it more realistic for you to understand emptiness. So when you practice compassion, it strengthens emptiness kind of indirectly.

Okay. And then when you study emptiness, as you start to really understand it, it can strengthen your view of compassion. Okay. Any questions about that? Does that make sense? Yeah. Okay.

Now we're getting into the core of of Loong remember Loong is mind training. Okay. Now we spent a long time for several weeks going over emptiness, and I'm pretty sure I discombobulated everybody's brain with a lot of deep study on on the philosophy of emptiness. But believe it or not, that is, that is definitely an important part of LoJo, but compassion is more available for us.

Right? Compassion is, you know, there's, there's somebody here that's homeless and they're, and they're on the side of the road and they're begging, I'm gonna give them something. Okay. It's that? And it's a real, genuine feeling that you can build within yourself. One of the things that's beautiful about Buddhism.

Is we are not fixed entities, Buddhism, the whole thing's about Carmen. It's about cause and effect. Right? Right. We've, we've studied a lot of this. Every everything that arises is a result of a previous cause. Okay. That means that we are not fixed entities. That means you can learn anything. You can do anything.

You can be anything you can strengthen the beautiful parts of yourself that are maybe a little bit not obvious. Right? Hey Jason, can you mute yourself please? Oh, sure. Thanks. But and then you can really strengthen the parts of yourself that are beautiful and you can diminish the selfish, ugly parts of yourself.

That's the whole foundation of Buddhism. Okay. So has anybody here seen the show, the Sopranos way back in the day, some of you're too young for that. Okay. Some of you have seen it. Some of you might have been five years old watching it, which I'm I'm questioning if that was the best show for you. but it, it was, I was a young Marine when that show started coming on and I loved it.

I would watch it every Sunday night. I think it was on Sunday nights. I would watch it every Sunday for, I don't know how many years this thing went on now. Does everybody remember the character, Christopher Malti? He was he was Tony Soprano's nephew. so Christopher mal Sani was this horrible guy in the SPRM.

I mean, all these gangsters are horrible. They're they're violent ruthless. I mean, I shouldn't use the word horrible. That's harsh, but they, okay. Let me, let me rephrase it. They cause a lot of pain and destruction. They kill people, et cetera. Now, interestingly, Christopher Malti and later on, you can Google this.

Don't Google it now, pay attention, stop Googling it. Later on you can check this out. He is a Buddhist. So I was, I was reading my newsfeed the other day, which I don't do very often, but, and I, I came across and I was like, what? Then I found out he took refuge vows with one of my one of my teachers, Chen Che.

And I was like, and I've taken refuge vows with him too. And I was like, how beautiful. And he said in, in his interview he said what really drew him into Buddhism was the fact that it's the ultimate chance to work on ourselves. You know, this is the ultimate chance to transform who we are. And by the way, it works flawlessly.

If you stay with it consistently, it's not easy, right? Because all of a sudden we're stepping into this practice where we're like, I mean, if you really wanna transform, you need to sort of open up and, and be honest about all your, all your misgivings, you know, like, like you really. Most people in the world have really strong defense mechanisms.

And what this practice we're gonna move into now is called Tonglen. Okay. And it's giving love, and it's taking the suffering of others onto on ourselves. This starts to erode the defense mechanism. We have, you know, it starts to erode our selfishness. Okay. So this is kind of where it all starts. So Shanti Dava is a, is a master, a very well known Indian master Geier law is teaching from his book on, on Sundays, it's called the bohi sofa's way of life.

Okay. And he said, if you do not thoroughly exchange your own happiness for other suffering, you'll not become a Buddha even in, so sorry. You'll have no joy. We live in. So, sorry, by the way, this is called the, the cycle of existence birth, old age sickness, death, over and over again. So Buddhism believes that you reincarnate again and again.

Okay. And it's based upon the karma that you accumulate. So he said, what, what Shante Davis saying is if you don't exchange your own happiness with others, what he's saying is we stop being selfish. Me, me, me, and we start caring about others more. We start to have more respect, gratitude, love, appreciation, admiration for others.

We, and we stop obsessing about ourselves. Cuz all of our suffering comes from self obsession. Right. Oh my God. Does this shirt make me look fat? Oh my God, what are they gonna think about me? If I wear a mask and they don't have masks on, oh my God, am I gonna look stupid? How often does this thing keep going?

Right? It's it's perpetual 24 hours a day. We have this thing and this voice in our head and the center of attention is this me, me, me? Right? So all suffering comes from self cherishing. So the exchange of self and others is to stop worrying about me and start worrying about all these beautiful living beings out here that are no different than me.

They just have different suits on different skin suits. That's it, or fur suits or insect suits, whatever suit they have on I'm talking about their flesh and their skin. They're all the same as us. They just look different. Okay. So what Shanti's David Shanti Davis is saying is from now on to lessen the harm to yourself and

pacify the suffering of others, give yourself to others and protect others as you would yourself.

Now you have to understand, and this low zone path is gonna help you understand all suffering comes from self cherishing. All suffering is a result of self obsession, self grasping self importance. Self-absorption self-centeredness, that's where suffering comes from. Suffering does not come from the outside world because two people can have the exact same experience and one of them can, it can, it can destroy one of them and then they can plummet into this horrible state.

And the other one can say, well, that, that was my karma. And, and I purified whatever negative thing happened. And then they move on. So, so different people can experience the same type of life event in totally different ways. And your degree of selfishness is, is directly proportional to how happy you are.

So the good thing is, although most of us are sort of naturally selfish. And I don't say that to be to like insult anybody, please. Don't I'm not saying this about you. I'm saying this about all living beings. There's this innate selfishness. Okay. And we can change it just like Michael Jordan became an amazing basketball player from practice.

We can change and shift our thinking, right. People have done, you know, think about this, the human race, put a man on the moon. Right. That was something they thought was impossible. And then one day later when that happened, the impossible became possible. Okay. And we can make the same type of rapid transformation inside our own selves from selfishness to.

not thinking about the self so much and thinking about how do I serve all living beings? I have a, a question. So when they say suffering, do they, they not include physical pain or are they saying you get to a point where you don't even feel physical pain? Because like, if, if someone cuts off my hand, I expect I'm gonna feel that pain.

I may be able to get past it quicker with spiritual development or yeah. But I'm still gonna feel that initial pain. Yeah. This is a really important question. And I'm so happy you asked it Francis. So here's the thing, right. There, there's sort of two answers to this. The, the first answer is what was the initial cause of that pain.

Okay. Now it might, it might seem like the initial cause of that pain was the, what you see with your own eyes. Okay. But Buddhism doesn't doesn't agree

with that idea. Buddhism agrees that every remember we studied this, I don't know how many weeks ago the causes of all negative karma or I'm sorry.

Negative karma produces all suffering. Okay. And, and, and that is any action we take with desire, aversion. and ignorance desire is I want me, me, me, I want that Coke, cuz it tastes gray. That's a very simple example. I don't want to hang out with Johnny because Johnny is, he believes in this one political party.

I don't like him. We're done. I'm blocking him. Right? So that's desire. And then there's a version. And then ignorance is what allows that whole thing to happen. Ignorance is what makes us actually think that things exist the way they appear. So when we create negative karma, karma is reliable in that the results will arise.

Okay. So let me give you an example. Actually let me finish this train of thought. So the bottom line is whatever arises, right? Whatever suffering or pain, you know, somebody cuts off your hand when that arises the cause you, you might look at it and think the cause was this crazy guy came up and cut my hand.

Buddhism says no Buddhism says the cause for that guy coming and doing that was that you had a carmic debt with him. You did something to him. At some point you created the cause for that, for that suffering to arise. Okay. So, and, and may, and maybe a better example is like you create a really close connection with another person.

It could be a relationship. It, it could be a romantic relationship, it could be a close friendship. Right. And, and you just love this person, like everything about them. Right. And, and then you get really attached. Right. And then, and then six months later, the relationship breaks up. Okay. And, and you're like, well, this relationship broke up because he or she is selfish.

But, but, and then you think you're suffering because of them. But the truth is the cause of that suffering was the grasping, right. It was this grasping where we were holding onto this person. So that's the first thing is it's really important to remember nothing arises without a cause and everything is a result of a previous cause.

Okay. So that's the first thing is that that suffering arose from a cause most likely it was actually not most likely unequivocally invariably, beyond the, the shadow of doubt it arose out of, because we took selfish action. We were doing something that was all about me and most likely it caused harm to others.

And then later on it came up. Okay. Mm-hmm then there's the question of more directly, first of all, does that make sense that the cause and effect thing does that the way that I explain that make sense. Yes, it does. Okay. Now there's still the question more directly of if somebody comes in stabs me or, or cuts off my, I think you said cuts off my hand.

Am I saying that that suffering's not going to arise? So I would actually say the way that we experience the world is so heavily colored by our opinions, our likes and our dislikes that it distorts our own version of reality. Okay. Now if, if you go and cut the hand off of a fully enlightened Buddha it is, it is stated that they're not going to feel the same type of pain that a regular human being would feel.

Okay. I don't know what that's like, cuz I certainly have never been a Buddha, but I do know from, from my own personal experience that when it comes to pain, if you are looking at the pain in a way that is not analytical and you don't have the, you haven't been taught the skills to deal with pain, that pain is going to completely consume you.

But there are skills that you can utilize when you experience pain that can actually help a lot. So, what I would say is that yes, we're still gonna have the sensations. Okay. But if we're very, very unselfish, those sensations may become so negligible or so unimportant to us because if we've made our life's work caring for others that pain may, may, we may not even really give it much attention.

Right. So yes, we'll still have sensations, but those sensations, the, the way we perceive them can be dramatically shifted and changed from transformation of the mind. Did that, does that make sense? It does. Yeah. Any follow up questions or comments about it? No. I just want to understate make sure I understood exactly what you were saying when you said that it's a really good question because when you hear this stuff, you're like, well, wait a second.

You're saying that all sufferings, cause from self grasping, if I stub my toe, did, was it, how was I selfish? Right. That's yeah. It's, it's a, it's an important question. Mm-hmm . So there's the initial cause that that happened at some point it could have been now, or it could have been 10 years ago. So that's the cause.

And then what the, the pain you're experiencing now, Buddhism says is a result of a previous cause that's the first point. And then the second point is the way you perceive that actual pain, the more selfish you are, the harder it's gonna be.

Right. Mm-hmm the less selfish you are. Your mind becomes so vast that you might not even care.

Oh, that's pain, whatever. Or that's a sensation, but I'm more worried about helping Johnny, right? Mm-hmm or Susie they're both. Yeah, that's true. The often, like if you're going through a tough time, if you think of helping someone else and focus on that makes it easier for you. It's like magic actually.

yeah. I mean, it's really powerful. I, I learned that when I was in my twenties and it was like, cuz I did a lot of volunteering by the way. There's a book called the science of compassion by an author named Kelly McGonigal. And she's a Stanford researcher. She's a PhD and there are all these studies out there about the effects of compassion on things like our, our longevity.

People that volunteer live longer, for example, but only if they volunteer for unselfish reasons when they volunteer for their credentials resume, oh, I wanna look good. Cuz I'm a board at this. I'm on the board at this one, charity. It doesn't work. But when people volunteer for legit reasons and, and I mean compassionate reasons, they're, they're they live longer.

This is, this is data it's there's data studies and there's a ton of other there's a ton of other scientific experiments they've done. So compassion is, is, is unequivocally beneficial for us across the board. So it's really quite wonderful. And this slide kind of gets into that. So in Buddhism, there's these things called the, the for MAs a Mara is kind of like, it, it means like a evil demon or like a monster.

Okay. M a a, I think that's a Sanskrit word. And, and in fact, when you do Tora visualizations, I don't have anything here, but when you do Tora visualizations in the, the Montreal or the advisory a lot of the time the deity is standing on a corpse and that corpse actually signifies one of, one of the four marrows is attachment to this body.

It's attachment to this human body. So the, so, so Buddhism really believes, you know, self cherishing in the thought of me, me, me, and self grasping, which is thinking that there's an independently existing self is like an, like an inner demon, you know, because that inner demon destroys all of your peace.

And, but you think it's your best friend. So it's kind of a, it's a very weird situation that's going on here because on one hand we think that we really are important and we really should do everything to make ourself happy. But that thought is like the most ruthless person that broke into your home.

And has you tied up and bound and gagged, and they're beating you with a club and you're like, I love this guy. And he just keeps beating you with a club. So it's weird because we really believe that this, if I do all these things, I'm gonna make myself happy and that's the way I'm supposed to live. But really what that is is this guy just beating you with a club and you're like, you're great.

And he just, he's just hitting you in the face. So it's, it's a strange situation. Our ignorance is strange. So self grasping ignorance is just kind of going over this. So, so that self grasping and self cherishing are two different things. Okay.

Sorry. So it's really important to understand the difference between self grasping and self cherishing. Okay. Self grasping is believing that there is an inherent self which exists independently of causes and conditions, parts, and conceptual labels. Okay.

Self cherishing is, is simpler. It's it's me, me, me. I'm the center of the universe. You know, you're doing your mantras. Me, me, me, me, me, me, me, me all day long, all year long, all month long. It's all about me. That is our Mo that's our, that's our mode for most of us. Even if you think you're unselfish, let's say you volunteer on Fridays at the homeless shelter.

That's one hour out of how many hours are in a week, the other thousand hours in that week. What are you doing? Me? Me, me. I want oatmeal. I want this. I want that. I hope they don't think I'm fat in this suit, in this suit. I want da, da, da, da, da, da, all day, every day. Me, me, me. That's what we do. So that, by the way, it's not only self, self cherishing is not only I want this.

It's also this sort of self-centered. Self-consciousness right. Am I smart enough? Am I handsome enough? Am I strong enough? Have I achieved the right career that I want? Oh, I should be a CEO by now. I should be a CEO. I'm only a vice president. Oh, I'm making, you know, I'm making this much money. I should be making three times this that's selfishness, right?

That's self cherishing. It's this, it's this thought pattern that never stops. And you just get swallowed into this self absorption. Okay. These things are, are the root of all evil. There's no piece to be had when we think like this. Okay. Now going back to self grasping, all suffering comes from ignorance that it's, it's dualistic ignorance that separates self and other, and then believes that they exist as self and other.

But these are just thoughts. These are thoughts that we conjure up like a children's fairytale. If you were to go and read a four year old, a bedtime story

about Rapunzel or whatever, she was the one with the long hair. Wasn't she Rapunzel. If you go and read a kid, a Rapunzel story, and then you're like Googling Rapunzel.

So you can go meet her. Wouldn't people be like, yeah, I think I'm gonna send this guy, this guy, or a girl to the psych ward. She's trying to find Rapunzel. No, you're like Rapunzel doesn't exist. It's a bedtime story. That's how we are. We, we see reality a certain way, but it doesn't exist that way. Okay. So, so self is just a word.

It's just a. So there is no inherently existing self and that's, and that's what self grasping is. And it makes the, the self grasping ignorance paves the way for self cherishing. Cause if we think there's a self, then we're, then we're gonna cherish it. Okay. But the thing is, is if you take your body and look at every part of your body is any one of those parts of the self is yourself, your nose, anybody is yourself, your nose.

Is it your elbow? Is that yourself? When people are like, oh, Johnny is, is a jerk. Are they talking about his elbow or his left shoulder? None of these, right? No part of your body is the self. The self is, is a conglomeration of all these parts. And then we, and then we see these parts and we label it as self, but there's no inherently existence, self.

It's just a thought, it's a concept. It's a word. Does that make sense?

When you, when you were born there, you didn't come out of the, your mother's womb with a tattoo that says SEL F it just didn't happen. Right? It's it's a thought. And your name is the same way. Your name is, is an idea that your parents came together and agreed on, by the way, my dad wanted to name me R. My mom saved me.

I would've gotten beat up. I already got picked on for being a McDonald, right? McDonald's oh, McDonald had a farm. Oh, do you want fries with your big Mac? Right? You know how kids are? Kids are silly. If I would've been Rory McDonald, it would've been ugly. Thanks mom. Wherever you are. So, so does everybody understand this self grasping is thinking there's a self, but there is, but self is just a merely labeled concept.

That's what self grasping is. Self cherishing is I want this, I want this. I know that you're, you're doing all these things for me. Do more for me. And if you ask me to do something for you, then do more for me again. That's it's me, me, me,

right? That's what self self cherishing is. Does everybody understand the difference between these two columns?

Any questions?

No. Am I confusing you guys self grasping? Is this thinking that things are that, that the self and everything isn't empty self cherishing is just self-absorption, self-centeredness, I'm more important than everybody else. Okay. That's the simple thing the antidote to self grasping is emptiness. We spent a lot of time studying that the antidote to self cherishing is love and compassion, and that's the practice that we're gonna start to get into.

Okay. Love and compassion. Any questions? So everybody's gonna do get an a on the quiz.

All right. What time is it? We'll go for five more minutes and then take a break. So what causes suffering? So the Budha taught that there are 84,000 mental afflictions. I've never seen all 84,000, but if he taught this, I believe it. So there's 84 affliction, meaning like a negative emotional state.

Okay. If you condense this down, it's it's called the five poisons anger, attachment, delusion, jealousy, and pride, by the way, those are a good five to, to memorize anger, attachment delusion, jealousy, pride. Okay. And then if you distill those five down, it's self grasping ignorance. So literally self grasping ignorance is the cause of all suffering.

So now,

how do we change our vantage point? See the problem. It's gonna be hard for anybody. That's raised a capitalistic society where you're taught from a very young age to be the best, get the best grades, be the best in sports. Get accepted to the best college, da, da, da, get a good husband or wife, blah, blah, blah.

There's all this pressure on us to be the best. And there's not a lot of pressure on us to develop love and compassion for others. I hate to say it. There's just not, it's not really woven into the fabric of our society. So we need to learn how to, how to change lo John, which is what we're studying. It's about shifting it's about shifting our vantage point so that we're not so blocked by our selfishness.

So every day we do these four measurables, right? May all living beings enjoy happiness and its causes. Okay. So what LoJo is teaching us is that self

cherishing and self grasping are like a deep, painful splinter. But remember, like I said earlier, it seems so logical to do everything, to make ourselves happy.

Okay. It seems like, Hey Logan, What's up bro. Logan's in Mexico guys. So he just popped in good to see you brother. So basically we have to shift our, our mind from thinking that it makes sense to go and do all these things in the pursuit of making my own self happy, because those pursuits leave to misery suffering and sadness.

There's no happiness, there's no sustainable happiness that can come from just getting what I want. But if you go and you start to do everything for other living beings, you're going to get this self sustaining happiness that can last forever. In fact, they've done studies when you do an act of generosity, whether it's, you know, donating money or trying to help somebody or saving a life like an animal life or, or I like to go before COVID, I, I haven't done this lately, although now I can start doing this since I'm gonna be fully vaccinated next week.

I used to go and buy crickets and worms and I would release them and say prayers. And just thinking of those things makes, makes me way happier than getting a big check from work because the selfish stuff that we're trying to chase, it doesn't really deliver any sustainable happiness. Why is that?

It's because. there. It's dependent. It's dependent, happiness. Right? You drink a soda and you're like, it tastes good for a second. And then a few months later, when you have diabetes, it's no longer so fun. It's not so great anymore. Right. It seems really fun and enjoyable when you first take it. But then eventually it's not.

And that's what self, self cherishing and self grasping are. They seem like they're gonna make you happy, but they won't. So it's really important. We have to learn how to contemplate the defaults of self cherishing. And , I wish I could tell you, this is gonna make you immediately happy, but it's actually not.

Okay. When I first came in to study the Dharma, I started studying all this stuff and I was like, oh yeah, I totally, I totally agree. I have no doubt that my own selfishness causes all my suffering. Right. And I was like, okay, now I got the knowledge. So I'm gonna be peaceful. Nope. Nope. That's not how it worked.

What happened was once I had the knowledge, that selfishness makes me really unhappy. Then I was more mindful as I was doing selfish stuff, getting in arguments at work and you know, being mad at my boss or whatever. So

actually this Buddhi path path is not like a, it's not like somebody's sprinkling dust on you and you're instantly relieved of your suffering.

There's a process. There's a process of tension. Has anybody heard the term. Cognitive dissonance, cognitive dissonance is when you have two opposing thoughts in your mind, right? Thought one is selfishness causes all suffering, right. And then thought two is man, I'm doing all this stuff for my boss. And he doesn't understand, he doesn't even understand how to do a tech startup, and I'm doing all these things and he has no idea when I explain it.

He doesn't listen selfishness and then I'm, and then I'm enraged. So then these two things are meeting, right? And you can't have both of these things living inside you at once. So what's gonna happen is it's almost like don't they say, when you get a diamond when they find diamonds, they're really dirty and they have to be polished is how it works.

I think I'm no diamond expert, but I, but I think when they find a diamond, it's like that it's like covered with like like a hazy covering and it's not shiny and they have to like rub it and clean it. Right. And that's kind of what, what has to happen to us is we have to, we have to embed this understanding its selfishness is the real demon deep in our hearts.

And then we have to go out and be selfish because that's our natural thing. And then we have to start to, it's gonna start to push on. If we're honest with ourselves, it's gonna start to push on us. And then we're eventually gonna come to the conclusion that I, I really legitimately wanna change. but it doesn't happen overnight.

And you have to learn how to be gentle with yourself as you go through the process, because it doesn't really help to beat up on yourself. It does help to be honest and to see your faults, but you have to learn how to take a very gentle approach with yourself.

Can't phase me stuck with me. Even one that fits that those three criteria. Is there a self? Is there a me, the, the self is merely conventional. It's just a label. It's a word. so there's no, so there's no independent self, right? So there, but is there, is there a dependent self that, yeah. Okay. Yeah. Every everything is exists dependently.

Right? So, so everything that exists exists in that CPM criteria. So there, there is a merely conventional, a merely labeled self, but it's not what we think it is. Right. Anybody ever here ever been like, you know, like when, when something

happens, like you're like you, like somebody sneaks up on you in a room and says hi, and he, he scares the heck out of you.

Anybody ever had something similar to that happen. Sure. Right. Okay. That feeling you have at that moment, that really deep, it's almost like beyond words, words don't really get at what you feel when somebody scares the heck outta you. That feeling deep down. Is a, is a, the thought that a self really exists independent of the body and the mind it's this thought that there's an inherent self that has existed forever and that's deep in our subconscious.

So we think that there's a self that exists in a totally different way than it actually does.

Okay. I had a follow up question. It's from like, Francis's question earlier, but so somebody comes up and cuts my arm off that act itself is a result of my bad karma.

So

I'm having a really hard time understanding that just because like like just say like a child that's born into like an abusive household and is like that, like that, like a, I don't know, result of their bad karma. So like you elaborate a little bit. Yeah. And, and it's, it's, it's subtle and it's nuanced, so never, ever.

Okay. Ha have you, you know, Americans think karma is what goes around, comes around, right. okay. Have you ever heard anybody get mad at somebody? And they're like, oh, Karma's gonna get you. You've heard people say that. Right. And maybe we've even said it before right now. That is not how we're supposed to use karma.

You know, we're not supposed to think of it that way. Right. We're not supposed to think like, oh, that guy was born into a poor family and he gets his dad beats him. He get he's getting what he deserved. You know, that's not, we don't, we don't want to take that. And I'm not saying that you're saying this at all.

I'm not saying you I'm not even, I don't even think you're coming from that place. I think you're coming from a place of compassion where it's like, I don't feel good saying that he got what he deserved. I think that's where you're coming from. I don't wanna put words in your mouth. Okay. So it's, this is a subtle topic because I'm gonna go out on a limb.

Most of us here cannot see our past lives. Most of us here may be on the fence and not even know if we believe in reincarnation. Right. And that's okay. Right. Nobody's this isn't about, you must believe, or you're gonna, you know, this isn't one of those type of situations where you're gonna be judged more.

So it's like, you have to start to analyze to get to a place where you might believe in reincarnation. But yes, that is Buddhism's belief is that there is no causeless effect everything results from a cause. So when, when bad things happen, Buddhism does believe that these are a result of a previous seed that we planted and it's coming to pur it's, it's, it's coming to fruition and then it's purifying that bad action.

But when we, when we look at somebody, we should never, ever use karma as a punitive framework. Right? So w we, we're gonna be training on compassion for anybody who's suffering, which by the way, is all of us, we're all in some sor and we're all suffering. So we want to develop deep love and compassion for all living beings.

And we're not even really spending time thinking like, oh, he's getting what he deserved. That's why he's born into a abusive household. Rather than that, we're thinking, please may I relieve him of his suffering? May his suffering come into my heart and may he be free? Right. It's a, it's a very complicate karma is one of those, one of the very few things in Buddhism that is so complicated.

And so nuanced that most of the masters say, just try to keep an open mind because a normal person cannot see the inner workings of karma. And I can't, by the way, I can't, I don't remember last lives or anything like that, but. I believe that there's nothing that arises without a cause. So I kind of take the Buddha on blind faith for that topic.

Yeah. Any follow up questions. Cool.

So again, just sort of recapping it's, it's really important that we develop a deep understanding of the disadvantages of self cherishing. There's really no good. That comes out of self cherishing. Okay. I wanna do a quick exercise with you guys. So. I want you guys to, to think of one challenge that you're dealing with right now.

And it can be a challenge that's been going on for a long time. It could be a new challenge. Okay. But try to think of a specific situation. It could be a work problem. It could be a relationship problem. It could be something with your

family. It could be financial, I, whatever the problem is. Okay. So I want you guys all to come up with a definitive issue that you're dealing with right now.

Okay. And then once each of you comes up with one, just kind of raise your hand for me so that I can know when I can start the exercise. And I'm gonna think of one too.

Everybody's got their issue. Looks like, okay. I'm trying to find mine real quick.

Okay. All right. Now,

normally when we experience an issue, we don't like, what do we do?

What do we do when stuff that we don't like happens pretty simple. It's not a trick question. What do we do? Run away from it. Boom right. Run away from it or push it away. Right. And then, and then what that really means is we, what we kind of close don't we tighten up close, make sense for everybody. I mean, there's kind of the common thing.

Most of us do. I want the issue that you guys just pulled up in your mind. Okay. I want you to open to it and let the feeling tone that you have about it. Grow for a moment, fight the urge to run. And I want you to think about this issue that you're dealing with right now. Let it, let it sink in, in your mind and try to relax yourself as you're thinking about this, fight, the urge to run and to push it away like we normally do.

Okay. Just open up to that feeling tone for a moment. So you've got this issue that you're dealing with. Just open. Just try to open up your heart, relax your body. Just kind of sit with it for a second or two. Okay.

Feel free to breathe. Make sure you're breathing in and out. Just relax.

Now I wanna shift the story line for a second for you. So in this situation that you're dealing with, I want you to metaphorically pull that splinter of selfishness outta the situation. And I want you to take the situation you're dealing with and pretend you're, it's like a movie you're watching and somebody else is dealing with that situation.

So whatever it is that you came up with, the problem you're dealing with, I want you to pretend there's a show or a movie on TV that's playing. And one of those characters is dealing with the stuff that you're dealing with, but it's not you it's somebody else. So just contemplate that for a few minutes.

Okay. Now, did anybody experience a shift?

I want to hear about it. Somebody speak up. What, what, what did you experience by going through this.

Be courageous. Somebody talk to me. I think I looked at it as looking at somebody else. Just, just do this, get it resolved. You can do this and move on. So, and then before that, what were you feeling when you were looking at your own situation? How did it feel? So how did the, how did the, the emotional part of it, did it shift for you?

Yeah, I guess somewhat, yeah, I think more mentally than anything, but yeah. So how, like, when it, when it first came up, when you were thinking about it for yourself, how would you describe that part versus in the end when you saw it on TV? I don't know. I guess looking at the options that, that were out there, it was kinda like, eh, whatever, figure it out and you know, it's just gotta do something and then move on. Yeah. So there wasn't like the, it wasn't as heavy, right. It was more like, just fix it. Right? Yeah. That's kind of what you said.

Exactly. I love that. That's really, and that's, that's what the difference is the self, the selfishness. And then when you pull that self out, everything changes. Take my own advice, right? Oh yeah. It's easier to, it's easier to say this than to actually do it, but this shows us, if you can experience this shift, you're like, whoa, that's interesting.

who else I'd like to hear from every somebody else? What, what did you guys experience?

Well, when I was thinking about me being in this situation, I felt kind of vulnerable and like a tightness around my heart. And then when I thought about it as a movie that like, I felt completely relaxed and I thought it was a very boring movie. yes. It, it, it goes from being the center of everything.

Right. So like one minute. So like me, I'm gonna have to go to the doctor and get a colonoscopy and endoscopy. I don't, I'm not trying to gross anybody out, but I don't like doctors. Okay. But I got issues. I got health issues that I gotta deal with and that's gonna be in June. So like, in my mind I was thinking like, yeah, that, that makes me, gives me anxiety thinking about that.

Right. And then I think about it as a dude on TV and I'm like, he's just gonna just go do it. Like Steven said, just go take care of it. Amazing. It's absolutely

amazing how the simple shift, this was just an, you're just using your imagination. Right. So what does this mean about what this self actually is?

Think about this for a second, if by shifting the way that you're seeing a personal situation to seeing something on a, on a movie, if it completely absolves and dissolves your concern and your tension, what does that mean about the actual nature of what, what we are, what the self is? What does that mean?

Can you pose that question one more time? did you experience a shift, David, when you did the thing a bit? Not much. I mean, I, I found myself really wrapped up in the original emotion and kind of got carried away with it. So, so maybe the second part didn't come to fruition, seeing it on the TV. Maybe not immediately, maybe with more time though.

Okay. So, so the question is, so, so I know at least three of us and everybody hasn't weighed in on this, but at least three of us saw a immediate shift. Okay. So when we looked at our own self in this situation, there was a heavy. There was a heaviness. We were taking it as real. There was a vulnerability, there was a tightness in our heart.

Maybe some fear, maybe some anxiety. That was the way we saw it when, when ourself was in the situation. Okay. And then when we shifted and we saw some dude or some lady on a TV screen as though they're in a movie and they were dealing with the situation we're dealing with, and it was just a movie, all of a sudden the whole thing changed and yet it, and yet it was, it was all going on in our mind.

And, and what I'm trying to, to get across cross is that all of the, all of the baggage and the sadness and the depression, anxiety, fear, you know all of the negative emotions that we, that we experience are just playing on a repetitive loop in our mind. And that's why if you start to look at it, like, it's like, if somebody on a movie, you get some space, right.

It opens up a certain space and you're no longer a prisoner to the situation. What this should teach you is that the self is an idea. It's just an idea. There's something here. There's some atoms, right? There's, this is like a, it's like a piece of dirt. Now there's an awareness that comes along with all this dirt.

It's like a clot of the earth. There's an awareness that comes along with this. And, but there's, but there's no self, there's no independent self. It's a word. It's a concept. It's an idea. And that's why, when we looked at it as if it was a movie,

all of a sudden we were free. It's, it's really amazing. And if you didn't get it the first time, you may have to practice this a few times.

You might have to, you know, you might need 10 minutes instead of the three minutes I gave you. And it was like, Hey, Russian, do this. But you may, you may need a few minutes and, and, and see if this is happening to, to the, what I call me. Right. If I'm experiencing this thing, then it seems like the world's gonna end, or it seems so sad or so difficult.

But then if there's some guy on TV experiencing the same thing, whatever it's cause it's all in the mind. Does that make sense? Any questions?

So the feeling tone, what happened to that feeling tone is we open the biggest thing I want to say before we start getting into the actual Tonglen Meditation practice is I want, I want to say that when we open, generally speaking, when we open up, things become much more manageable and it's very, very important with this meditation on compassion.

We have to open to the ideas because Tonglen is a practice where you're envisioning that you're breathing out white light and you're giving it to all living beings and that white light symbolizes your happiness, your wealth, everything good. Every, every high happy, enthusiastic moment you've ever experienced.

You're envisioning that you're breathing it out to all living beings. Okay. And then that's when you breathe out, you're envisioning that then when you breathe in, you're envisioning that you're taking black smoke out of these beings and you're breathing it in and you're taking it in your heart. That's sometimes difficult for people to do.

The more selfish our mind is the more, the more selfish habituation we have. It might be really hard for people to breathe this in. That's why part of this is about opening and, and, and it's about opening and it's about the effort to let go. Of your strong wall that protects you. It's like opening up, taking off the mask and just giving it a shot.

Right. And seeing, can I, can I become willing to take the suffering of all living beings? So I just wanna say that a lot of this, what we're gonna go into it may not be easy for people to do this, but just open the door a little bit. Right? Right now the door's shut, open the door a little bit and let the light come in.

And then you can start to practice this. And over time you can get to a point where it's literally something you can do between meetings. It's you can be

walking around on the street, doing this. You can be in the airport. One time I was in the airport and I was with a friend of mine and we were going on a trip and he was like, you ever, some people get nervous when they travel.

This was before COVID, by the way, you know, the airport is not a peace Haven. right. You know, you go to the TT what is it T the, he that organ, the, the security. TSA. You gotta say TSA, right? You go to the TSA thing and what happens. People start frenzy. They're getting laptops out and they're putting their shoes on the conveyor belt.

And they're crazy. I mean, they're bad shit crazy. You ever see that nobody's like calm and placing their laptop. They're like, they're getting it outta their bag and they're just totally nuts. And then it starts to spread and then everybody's in a frenzy. Now. I think everybody carries that with them when they travel.

And so I was with a buddy of mine and we were traveling, we were going overseas and he was kind of nervous. He was like, oh, I hope we don't miss our flight. Oh, we got, look how long this line is. And while when he was freaking out, I was doing Tonglen. And I was like, I hope we missed this flight. It would be so wonderful because, because what you're doing when you're doing Tonglen is you're learning how to say, let whatever, let all the bad things come into me and let everybody else have all the good things, because see if you get okay with this, your happiness is indestructible.

Think about this for a second. Right now we're imprisoned. In a tiny box. This is Jason's tiny little box of what Jason wants, right? There's this whole other world that's, that's unimpeded and has no boundaries, but here's what Jason needs. And Jason demands of the world, the universe better give me everything I want in my little tiny box.

And then I'm imprisoned in my box. There's no freedom. Right? So Tonglen is a powerful way to learn how to embrace all the potential negatives that we could extract from other living beings and free them from their suffering. So on one hand, we're developing compassion and love for all living beings. But on the other hand, we're developing a strength and a courage.

Let whatever come, come. It's fine. I embrace it. Okay. So this is a very, very powerful teaching and this Tonglen, this is the, this is the foundation of the whole Tobe and Buddhist path it's called bohi Cheeta bohi Cheeta is the wish to become a Buddha to benefit all living beings. Bohi Cheeta is fueled by love and compassion.

So this is the whole,

it's like the foundation of this whole path. Okay. So the way I'm gonna, I'm gonna give you guys we're we're gonna go over the instructions. Okay. And then I'm I always drop these files in the In the slack meeting, but you first, you need to learn how to do this. So the way we start is you visualize your mother.

Now, if you have a Rocky relationship with your mom for one reason or another, and you can't, she doesn't evoke feelings of compassion and love for you. You can use somebody else. You can use somebody that you really, that unconditionally loved and supported you. Okay? But the Tibetans say, start with your mother.

The first thing that you're gonna do is you're gonna develop gratitude and appreciation. So if you're new to Tonglen, you really should not start by trying to start thinking about compassion for all living beings. Because if you do that, you're probably not gonna be, it's not gonna be genuine. And, and what we're going for here is a feeling we wanna get to a feeling where tears come down your face out of genuine compassion.

So you're not gonna get that feeling. If you start thinking, oh, I want, I have compassion for all the Bumble bees. you're not gonna get the may. All the NATS in my yard have happiness. Like you're probably not gonna feel it that way you would. If somebody that you truly care about, you're developing compassion for the people you really love.

Okay. So we start think, start thinking about this for a moment. Logical. Now I'm a man and I, some of you didn't know that I am a man. When I eat too much, I'm sure nobody here's ever experienced this. You know, when you eat too much and you feel like, Ugh, right. Like, oh man, why did I do that? And you can't move.

And you're just like, ah, that was so stupid. Right? You, you guys felt that right now. I don't know if anybody here's ever had a child. I know the guys most likely have not had children, but I just think about the, the, the tiny amount of pain I feel when I eat too much. And then I think about my, my beautiful mother, she carried me for nine months.

She was probably vomiting all the time. She probably her back hurt. She couldn't get out of bed cause she couldn't do anything because I invaded her body and I was, it was my apartment. Like, Hey, I'm just gonna TA I'm gonna

take over, get ready. And I mean, to me, it's nearly, it's almost like I can't even understand the kindness of a mother, you know?

So you, so you, you start to visualize your mom and you think about how much she did for us, you know? And it's not something that we usually think about, but there's this amazing quality of what they went through for us. And then there's the child birth. My mother was I'm about five foot eight and I'm, I've been stocky since I was born.

My mother was like five foot tall and she tried to have regular childbirth for like three days. I mean, it was horrible. So I've been difficult since, before I got to the earth. I mean, I've been a pain in the ass the whole time. Right. But you, you think about the pain that, that, that your mother went through for you, whether it was a regular vaginal childbirth or a C-section either way it's painful.

This is, think about this for a moment. It's amazing what, what our mothers did for us. Again, if you don't, you know, if you're having trouble with the relationship with your mom, you're going to have to extrapolate out this process and you're gonna have to create a mental picture of what this other person has done for you.

But the Tibetan to give this because most people can, can feel the appreciation for their mother pretty easily. When you were born, we we're helpless. We're like a helpless little bug. We can't eat, we can't feed ourselves. We can't clothe ourselves. We can't use the restroom. Our mothers do this for us.

So for nine months long, They're they're completely uncomfortable. Their food doesn't agree with them. I, I think they're, they pee. They, they have to pee all the time. Their stomach hurts, their back hurts everything. It's just, it's awful to experience this. And then when we come out, then we dominate their lives.

They can't do anything. They got no freedom because of us. Think about this for a moment. Even if your mom wasn't perfect. Right. Which none nobody's perfect. But even if you have difficulty, your mother still did all this amazing stuff. Right. And so it's pretty easy to start to, to cultivate this feeling of genuine appreciation for what they did.

And by the way, you can really, this is an analytical meditation where you sit down and you start to, you start to go over these points. Okay. And what you, what we're going for here is deep appreciation. A feeling that we have like, wow,

look what she did for me. Right. And then once you were born, you dominated your mom's life. She couldn't go anywhere. She could. She had to watch you 24/7. And how long did that last? How long do you have to watch a kid? Three, four years until they're that's 12 years. I don't know. I mean, I don't have kids, but I can tell you about dogs, but the bottom line is.

They our mothers. And by the way, you could add fathers to this too, but our mother taught us everything. I can tell you for me. My mother taught me love. You know, everything that we are now to some degree is a direct result of our mother's kindness. Another thing is we, you know, our, our, our parents taught us how to talk.

They taught us the English language. None of us could sit here today and learn the Dharma if it wasn't for our mom. So in a way she gave us access to the Dharma.

So now the first part that we just went through was kind of this, you're trying to develop this genuine appreciation, and you should be feeling something when you're going through this, you should, you should be sitting there and really trying to hold this, hold these points. And you should, you wanna get to a point where you feel something.

Okay. And then, and so that's the appreciation and the, and the love. And then there's the compassion. A lot of what our mother did for us actually has caused her to be very attached to us and, and, and Buddhism. Attachment's never good. So in a degree to a degree, we kind of

bottom line is we caused a lot of hardship for, for our moms. Okay. So there's a, there's a great deal of suffering. Every one of us, by the way, side note, there's a immense suffering within our lives. Whether or not we notice it because everything we want is is, is temporary. And it's gonna dissolve like mist, whatever we want is gonna dissolve whoever we love, that relationship is gonna dissolve.

Even if you're in a 20 year marriage, one of you's gonna die at some point, and that relationship's gonna dissolve. So Samara is very cruel because

we have addictions to all these things that are IM permanent, you know? So, so you're working really hard for a promotion and then you get promoted and then the company folds, or you get fired. So that's the thing is our mothers have the same thing. Maybe they didn't get enough love from the family. Maybe they did everything for us and we didn't, what did we give back?

How could we possibly give back as much as they gave to us? So they're suffering and, and we didn't, you know, we, we probably never really. Focused on this and understood how much they did for us. It's very unlikely that most people do this. And then you're focusing on this one person and you wanna get to a point where you feel unbearable, compassion, and it's not, you're not just thinking you want evoke a feeling and you want to get to a point where you, you do have those tears for your mother for not only what she did for us and how, how much she did, how much of a sacrifice, by the way, most of our mothers would've gladly died to save us without a question.

Okay? So you're, you're developing this love and appreciation. Then you're developing a compassion with the understanding that just like all other people, our mothers are trapped in this. Most of our moms don't have Dharma. They don't understand all this stuff that we're learning. So they're suffering, they're addicted to what they want.

They're highly opposed to what they don't want. And then they don't understand the true nature of reality. They don't understand what all this stuff is. Okay. So now we want to expand this. Once we get this feeling with our mother, we wanna expand it.

And the most logical way to do this is you start to think about the other people close to you. It could be your father. It could be your siblings, your close friends, the people, you, the people you're close to, you start to expand the same mental calculations and analytic exercise. You're doing this to everybody.

Okay? And then you wanna feel a great deal of love and compassion for them. And remember, it's very important to understand all living beings, whether you're human animal insect, all human, all living beings, they want happiness, right? You ever met anybody? That's like, I wanna be so measurable. I can't wait to be measurable.

Of course not, man. You never met anybody like that. You all living beings want happiness and they wanna be free from suffering. Okay? So we look different. Our faces are structured different. Some of us are big. Some of us are slim, tall, short. We look different, but inherently we want the same thing. It's we're no, we're all the same.

We all have awareness, which is bud in nature. And we all want happiness and we don't want suffering. So when you start to expand this, remember your mom wants happiness. And she doesn't want suffering. Every living, being, they just

want happiness and they just want, they wanna be free from suffering. And you might even say what truly what most people crave.

If you're honest with yourself is we just want to be loved. We wanna be loved for who we are, right. So you start to expand it first. You're expanding it to the people you're close to. And then you can start to expand it to people that live in war torn countries. You know, you think about Syria. We, we can't even fathom what those people are living.

Our, our troubles man. This is us is they keep taking a break each week. Pick, pick your favorite TV show. They're they're always taking breaks during COVID my shows. Aren't on . These are our problems, right? Our problems are like, we, we think they're real, but they're, they're nothing in comparison to the suffering of so many beings or people homeless.

You know, now it's gets down to 40 at night and we're like, well, it's not so cold. What if you're living under a bridge downtown Indianapolis. So there's a lot of people suffering people. There are people that can't eat. We get mad when our, we don't, we, our favorite pizza delivery place doesn't deliver on time.

We get mad, oh, this, this is an hour. Ah, I'm not ordering from that man. And then you got people that can't eat. So there are people right now on their deathbed. That they're taking their last breath and they ha and they're, and they're racked with remorse because they didn't give enough love to their kids, or maybe they didn't fix the relationship with their loved ones.

So there's a lot going on right now. And we're so narrowly focused these things on ourselves, these things don't even come into our consciousness usually. And that's why this Buddhism is so powerful because it's teaching us how to shift and see more of reality. So instead of just being pinpointed on what we want, we're opening, we're opening to the reality that there are all these living beings that are suffering.

Okay.

There's a lot of people that are doing really bad things, and

I'm always careful about politics, but there might have been certain elected officials that were in office for four years, that certain people didn't like, I'm not saying that I didn't like that hypothetical orange colored guy, but it's all hypothetical, but some people might get mad at a hypothetical orange colored

guy because they think he lacks compassion and they might hate start to hate this guy.

But here's the thing it's really easy to have compassion for the homeless person or the, you know, the people that are really suffering. But guess what? It's just as important to have compassion for the offender or the person that you think is wrong or, or mean, or heartless the per the serial killer that kills 20 people.

Can you have compassion for them? Because they're as sentient being and that karma they've just created, they're gonna suffer unfathomable amounts of pain in the, in the coming in the future. So this compassion thing is we're trying to expand so that nobody is left out. Nobody, no human, no animal is left out.

Okay. And then, and so we started with our mother. We started to expand our circle and then we're expanding it to all living beings. This, if, if somebody really takes this journey, I want, I want to explain one thing for you. If you take this very serious and this becomes your life practice, you're going to, when you're doing this, you're going to be crying and it's not always gonna feel good.

It's gonna, it's gonna be a little bit painful, but there's a part of you deep inside of you that knows it is the most beautiful thing you could ever do. So it's very strange because on one hand, It's not necessarily this blissful piece. When you sit down and meditate on your breath, you can get to these states that are V very blissful.

Okay. Compassion. Meditation's different because what, what happens first is it evokes and energy inside of you that kind of jars you, and it's not always comfortable. And then you, you might start to cry about the beings that you're concentrating on, but deep inside you and the deepest part of you, you know, that this is special and perfect.

It's the most perfect thing you could do ever. And it might take time to get to that point. So I just want you all to know that if you start to do these practices, it may not be all comfort. It's the compassionate path is not the easy path. Look around, turn on the news. You got people going on, killing sprees in grocery stores, right?

There's a lot of hate and a lot of selfishness out there. So this path is if it were easy, everybody'd be doing it, but it's not easy. So then as we're thinking about all beings there are they're all suffering and, and nobody wants to suffer. Nobody wakes up and they're like, I hope today's really, I hope my chronic pain is bad today.

I hope it's so bad. I pass. nobody does that. Right? People, everybody wants to be free of suffering and they want to be happy, but, but most people are not creating the causes for happiness. Most people are creating the causes for suffering. And that's the simple way of explaining that is just selfishness all day long.

We do what we think's gonna make us happy. Rarely do we do things for others.

Now what we're trying to get to, as we're, as we're doing these practices is you want to get to a point where you feel like I've gotta do something and I'll tell you from personal experience, the more you do this, the more it becomes not enough. And that's absolutely perfect. If you start doing this and you start thinking this, meditation's not enough, this I'm not really, I'm not really curing anybody.

I'm not really healing anybody. I'm not really taking anybody's pain. And then you start to feel this feverish drive and you start Googling and saying, where can I volunteer my time? What charities can I donate to? What can I do? You start to be catalyzed into this action. And then you move from what's called aspirational bohi Cheeta.

So this Tong line is called aspirational. Bohi ch. and then action. Bohi Cheeta is where you're taking action and you're serving Santa beings. You're removing their pain. You're, you're removing their sliver of selfishness. You're removing their sliver of suffering and that's beautiful. And that's what we want.

Dai Lama often says, my reli is my religion is kindness. And if you're practicing a religion and you're not changing and you're not becoming more loving and more compassionate, most likely you're doing something wrong. So this is about self transformation. Okay. And it's, and so as we do these compassion meditations, if you really take this seriously, I guarantee you you're gonna be moved to a point where you have to act because you will feel like if I don't act, I'm a fraud.

If I don't take action, I'm a fake, that's how you're gonna start to feel. And that's great if you feel that way, that is beautiful because then you're gonna go and serve beings. And there's nothing more important than any of us could do. I must help them. That's that's what we're trying to get to.

Now, everything I've been explaining so far is, is preparation. And we're preparing for this practice where we start to do Tonglen that rides the breath, as I explained earlier. Okay. So up until this point, none of this has been based on

the, in and out. This has all been analytical. You're trying to moist in your mind with love and compassion, and you're starting with your mom, then you're moving out to people you're close to.

And then eventually you're moving out to all living beings. Okay.

So then we get into the breath and we're kind of outta time. I wanna open it up for questions because I know I dropped a lot on you guys. So shoot,

maybe just a comment. I feel a little anxious about this. Honestly, tell me more. I don't know, feels feels a little scary on some level like, oh, this is gonna, this is gonna not feel good. Probably. Hmm. This is going to be uncomfortable. Hmm.

What else?

I, I think just a lot of that.

I feel like one likely has to confront a lot of things that one does not want to confront.

So on one, on one level, actually when you, when you say that it's gonna be uncomfortable, which which parts of it are gonna be uncomfortable, like what, what, what part of it is that in your mind, which part of it is gonna be uncomfortable thinking the thinking about negative things, I suppose, heck even some positive things.

I could imagine. Some people in my life that the idea of thinking positive things for them while good might hurt a little bit, as well as thinking about the negative things in their life. So thinking about somebody you love and the fact that they're suffering is gonna evoke difficulties and emotions and that kind of stuff, right? Yeah. For sure. Yeah. Thanks for your, for your courage in telling your feelings, man. That's great. Who, what else guys? What else, what else are you guys feeling?

I've looked into this and studied it for a while and tried it. And I think you said it the best that it in one of the slides that. it's real easy to fabricate the compassion versus really filling. And that that's like a huge hurdle, huge obstacle to try to overcome. Sure.

Thank you. What else guys?

Personally, I'm I'm a little, I don't know if it's fair to say this, but I'm excited to start practicing this. I don't know for you guys this past year, especially, it's been super overwhelming and it, this honestly felt like a few times, like kind of like you feel helpless. Like, I mean, I felt helpless.

Like I couldn't, there's just so much going on. Couldn't do anything. And I don't know. I'm just really excited because I feel like this is going to challenge. You see challenging, but yeah. So I'm excited. Are you eating again? Thank you for sharing. That's great.

are you eating again? That's great. Thank you, Kyra. That's that's beautiful. Frances, Jason and Thomas. Haven't heard from you guys. What do you think

on the. Oh, go ahead. Oh, I'm a little apprehensive about doing it. Cause I'm gonna, I worry that people are gonna think I'm depressed because I'm crying all the time. Weird.

Thank you. Hm. Thank you. Okay, Francis some things feel very difficult to take on like some of the, some of the more serious things or I don't wanna qualify what's more serious or not, but like, you know, thinking about the, you know, people that are living in like Syrian, constant fear for their lives, never know when their next meal coming from and that's, I, you know, like that's something we're putting myself in that situation.

You know, that, that would be very difficult for me to get through. Yeah. So it's hard to imagine taking that, their suffering on me. Yeah. Thank you. I think for me, I'm, I'm pretty good at I guess repressing my emotions and. Not being an emotional person, I guess. So I'm afraid that I'm, I'm not gonna like actually be able to feel anything.

Hmm. Is my main concern. Thank you, Tom.

There's a there's a bohi sofa by the way, a bohi sofa is a great courageous awakened being. Okay. So I think everybody is getting the picture here that this is this compassion thing takes courage. You guys are getting that aren't you? This is, this takes courage. This is not the path of club men.

Like, Hey, we're on vacation in a Villa. This is not that right. This is the path of the courageous lion of love that takes this concern for others and, and, and leaps past their own selfishness. There's a, there's a great Bodi Safa named father Greg Boyle. He's a Jesuit Franciscan priest. If those two are not idiosyncratic, I think he's both maybe, or, or one or the other.

I'm I don't know a lot about Christianity, but he's a, he's a Jesuit priest in Los Angeles and he has a book called Oh, tattoos on the heart. And what, what father Greg does is he opened a organization called homeboy industries. It's a gang rehabilitation organization in Los Angeles, and he's been doing this for 20 years or something.

And predominantly he's in a, a Mexican area of Los Angeles with the biggest concentration of gang activity. And so what he does is he, he has these businesses where like, like there's like a bakery and there's all these businesses where he puts reformed gang members to work. And he, he's always in the projects around all of these gang members and, and he's had to bury like 230 or 240 young people.

Right? So, so it's a path of, of difficulty and courage. But the,

the one thing I could tell all of you with no question is that it's not easy, but it's, it's beautiful. And your heart knows it's beautiful when you start to do these practices and then you'll start to take actions. And then when you start to do these actions, you will remember these things that you've done.

and whenever you pull them back into your mind, you'll be as happy as when you did them. So there are these studies that they've done, where reflecting on a kind act that you did makes you as happy as when you did it. So ki so generosity and kindness is proven to make people happy, but it does, but there's no shelf life on it.

So if you can remember something that you did and you bring it back up, it'll make you totally happy. So this is not a dreary path. It, it may not be easy, but it's absolutely beautiful. And it is the, the most precious, meaningful thing anybody could do. And I can tell you that from experience I'm not the best Buddhist scholar.

I don't have everything memorized, but I've done a lot of compassion meditation. And I can tell you just from my own personal experience, it's, it might be the best thing any of us could do in our lives, because it will change everything. And basically, instead of kind of having infinite number of people that are potentially against you, cuz everybody wants their own way.

You, you flip the script, you flipped a script and you literally. like, there are certain martial arts, like Akido, where you take somebody's own body weight, and you let you use it against them. So if they attack you, you let them fall. And

basically what we're doing with compassion is we're letting the natural inclination of all living beings.

We're letting the power of that come into us so that we can heal them. So it's actually difficult, but then it becomes completely easy to do. So I know we're over on time. Any other questions or comments before we close

everything? Everybody good. So I'm gonna put the slides in the in the slack meeting and I would encourage everybody to start reading those because you kind of need to, you need to get familiar with it so that you can start to practice it. And then next week we'll do some Tomlin. We'll do some, some breathing.

Tolin breathing out white light and loved all living beings, breathing in black smoke. And then one thing, if you start to try this, and it's very difficult for you to breathe black smoke in as a visualization from other living beings, you can start with yourself. So instead of like doing it with your mother, you can say, you can visualize your own self in the morning and try to take your own self suffering.

Then you can visualize yourself up tomorrow. So sometimes people do that because it's doing it for others evokes too much fear or anxiety. So you can start with yourself too. Okay. All right. So just to be quick, I'm gonna do a very off the cuff dedication instead of doing the formal prayer as a result of the practice that we did together on the topic of precious love and compassion, as a result of whatever merit has arisen for us we hereby dedicate this merit to all precious living beings.

As a result of us dedicating this merit to them may every one of them may, all of the potential suffering that they could ever experience be completely eradicated and may they all become blissful Buddhas. Okay. All right. Well, thank you guys so much, really appreciate you all. If anybody has questions please never hesitate to contact me.

If you wanna message me. If you have a question about the teaching or you just wanna say hello, feel free to do that. So, okay. Thank you guys. Take care of yourselves. Be safe, please study the material and then next week we'll do the compassion meditation on the breath. Okay. Bye guys. Take care. Thank you, Jason.

Thank you. Bye guys.