

### 3\_11\_26 Talk\*

\*This is an automatically generated transcript, so there are errors.

**Rick Hanson:** [00:00:00] So I'd like to comment first on the type of meditation we did there. It was what's called a concentration meditation, or an absorption meditation, in which one is deliberately focusing on something to become increasingly absorbed in it, minimally as training for steadying the mind and often additionally becoming absorbed in something that is itself a factor of healing and awakening. For example, in the Buddhist system there are seven factors of awakening that were identified in early Buddhism, and they are mindfulness, investigation, Tranquility, concentration, and equanimity, and I'm missing one of them which will come to me. Anyway, tranquility is one of the factors of awakening. It's not a suppressive numbing, it's not apathy, it's tranquilizing, it's releasing, it's coming home to a fundamental peacefulness. And the seventh factor that I now recalled is bliss, or great happiness. Positive experience that pervades our consciousness.

[00:01:33] So in this meditative practice, we had an opportunity to engage at least one, if not two, of the factors of awakening, of peacefulness and happiness, and marinate increasingly in them so that we concentrate in two senses. We concentrate on a particular object of attention, and we become increasingly concentrated as it. Like a sauce that has become increasingly concentrated. Now that aspect of contemplative training is one of the three great pillars of practice in Buddhism that consists of, could be translated as virtue, mental training, and wisdom. Pali, a key language of early Buddhism, Sila, Samadhi, and Panya, Samadi. Sometimes people leave out that aspect in their training of deepening in their concentration, but it's a really fundamental aspect. And here, I just went for it. I was okay. You know, it's, you know, here we are online, like, all right, let's just totally marinate in the inner peace now. You know, 15 minutes in. Go for it. It's not so easy. So if it's challenging, that's totally normal. There's a muscularity in concentration practice.

[00:02:53] On the other hand, concentration practice is a good foundation for open awareness practices, which are often taught as the entry level, you know, just kind of be mindfully present with whatever's going on by in the stream of consciousness. But wow, if you don't already have some concentration training... It's hard to do open awareness for more than a few minutes without being swept away somehow by some of the flotsam and jetsam in the stream of consciousness, those trains of thought that carry you away on the express. So both are important. I'll probably do some more stuff down the road about concentration practice and pitfalls around it of trying too hard or getting critical with yourself that it's not happening. On the other hand, just ignoring the value of becoming absorbed in and absorbing into yourself these very rich, emotional and somatic states of being. Just bypassing them is a mistake. And sometimes people do bypass these very emotional, somatic, felt qualities of being for just pure insight. And yeah, then you kind of have maybe pure insight into impermanence, but where's the emotion behind it? Where's the inner peace? Where's lovingness? Where's joy? Where's contentment? Where's bliss?

[00:04:21] So those parts are really important as well. And if your attention, understandably, isn't becoming readily absorbed in something as boring as the sensations of breathing at the upper lip, it's really okay. To shift the optic of attention to something that's a lot more luscious, like hopefully there was a juiciness, a pleasurable-ness and peaceful-ness. And you can also explore blends as I have found more and more useful in my own personal practice, blends such as a calm and loving heart, peaceful and warm, loving-ness, and at ease. Just whatever those, that was the two for one kind of blend here. That we were doing, that's okay too, to explore. Alright, good. And I like the attitude that

people are bringing here in the chat too. You know, a quality of sort of playfulness. It's interesting that if we are helping ourselves change for the better, which includes coming home to the good news that's always already been true, but coming home it as a kind of change from our inner homelessness. That's the kind of prevailing condition for many people now in the modern world, inner homelessness Um, as well as tragically, of course, for refugees and others, you know, in outer homelessness, being on housed, et cetera. Still, where was I? If you're coming home to that, you may find that it's more attractive. It's more appealing to yourself. It helps to stabilize your attention. It enables you to concentrate, to turn your attention to qualities that are rewarding to you and, you know, maybe more rewarding than just locking your attention on the sensations of breathing at the upper lip.

[00:06:12] Now, what I'd like to do is something I don't believe I've done in, I don't know now, since COVID, teaching this Wednesday meditation online, I'm gonna share my screen and share with you the slides from part of the talk I gave recently about an expanded view of compassion. Then I'll come back to the group as a whole and see what you'd make of all this. I presented these at a recent conference in Puerto Rico. That was a joint conference, to give full credit, for the University of Puerto Rico's Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience, founded by the previous board chair of the Global Compassion Coalition, Dr. Mauricio Conejo, and also co-sponsored by the Global Compassion Coalition which I founded and I'm now happy to say I've handed off, you know, operational management, executive management of it to Dr. Michael Gaynor. Whoo, what a relief. And I'm now the chair of the board of this 501c3 nonprofit. Anyway, so this was where it was presented. I'm gonna move through this.

[00:07:21] So think about the simple essence of compassion. Imagine a friend who has suffered a loss. What's your natural response? You know, maybe it takes a few seconds for the knowing of their loss to start become a feeling of, oh, how that loss has landed on them. You know a sense of their suffering. Very often, not just a sense of their suffer and then comes a caringness toward this friend. We're not just neutral. In our awareness of their suffering, ah, we wish them well. Which then moves us into a kind of a motivation, as I'm saying here. Like, oh, maybe I could relieve their suffering in some way, if only by being comforting. Well, these three elements of our very human and evolved, as we'll see soon, response to suffering of us has these three essential components, three essential elements of compassion we see here. These are described in various ways by various people, but they basically boil down to three.

[00:08:35] And you can recognize these three qualities as distinct and also trainable and cultivatable. In yourself. Empathy, benevolence, caring, benevolent, you wish them well, and motivation. You move to do something about it. These are the three essential elements of compassion. Now this is the base case. Empathie, which is typically extended to people we like or are included in the circle of us or are not to blame for their suffering. That's kind of the base case. And benevolence typically expressed in sort of soft, tender, oh, you know, like your friends or you see a child, your child perhaps your own, has fallen and skinned her knee, let's say, and oh, poor baby, let me kiss the owie away, right? Tender.

[00:09:31] And then third aspect, motivation is applied typically to the immediacy of the issue or to sometimes extending. To its psychological or interpersonal causes. This is the base case of compassion. Pretty typical, pretty understandable. It's sort of what people usually think of, I think, or usually teach or talk about. And imagine a world without it. Ugh, be terrible. Still, is this all that compassion is or can be? And this is where I think there are

some expanded opportunities in how we think about compassion, how we cultivate it in ourselves, and especially how we express it in our world. In this world today, people are calling. For a more expansive notion, even a more radical vision of compassion that responds first to our times of differences and polarization and divisiveness.

[00:10:39] Second, responds to a kind of numbing and callousness in part promoted by social media, to just other people.

[00:10:49] And third, our times in which there are very powerful systemic factors such as wealth inequality. Rising authoritarianism, global warming, war, poverty that create all kinds of suffering. In this view of expansive compassion, which is what we're gonna be talking about here, particularly the first of the three aspects of expansive compassionate, empathy then can be extended even to those we dislike or disagree with or oppose vigorously or are harming us. We can still expand our circle of moral concern for our own sake because it opens our own heart and helps gradually to free us from clenched fist of me, myself, and I to expand that circle. And because that expansion is a factor in making a better world, which benefits us as well, of course, while we still benefit other beings.

[00:11:47] Second, in terms of benevolence, we can express our compassion in ways that are not just tender and really sweet, but are courageous, persistent, penetrating, even fierce, passionate expressions of compassion. And third, in terms of motivation, in addition to responding to the downstream immediacy of suffering, we can start to deal with causes of suffering that are more systemic and structural upstream that are pushing beings into the river of suffering that we have compassion for downstream. That's a more expansive view of compassion.

[00:12:28] So here, I would like to focus on widening the circle of us. And that's a way into this, is to appreciate how our human capacities for compassion have literally evolved and been driven by evolution, especially over the last several million years. Nervous system has been evolving for roughly 600 million years. Mammals arose around 200 million years ago. You know, two thirds of the way down that long journey, just a third of, you know, 200 million ago. There's some evidence for very, very simple forms of empathy and caretaking and tending that you'll see, let's say, in reptiles and fish and invertebrates, certainly in octopus, octopi. And, you know, it's especially with... Emergence of mammals and then primates and hominids and humans, that you really see the full build out of the underlying neural architecture that supports our human experiences and expressions of compassion today. The evolution of compassion is deeply rooted in the mammalian caregiving system between parents and young who are born and need tending. Whether it's these little rat pups that need the care of their mothers or moving into primates caring for their young or human beings.

[00:13:59] As our hominid ancestors began manufacturing stone tools over 3 million years ago with brains roughly a third of our size today, as the brains of humans or early hominids got bigger, childhood needed to get longer. Because if you're going to walk upright, there's kind of a hard limit on how big a brain can be to give birth to a child. For example, the brain of an adult chimpanzee is about twice the size of that of a newborn chimpanzee. The brain of an adult human is about four times the size a newborn human. Well, for that brain to quadruple in its size, childhood has to get longer and longer and long. That created more and more vulnerabilities and dependencies for the mother, who was the primary caregiver for a young, you know, hominid child, and certainly a young human child, which then called for deepening of relationship and compassion for the Mother-Baby Unit, which created more basis for mate bonding, which then got extended increasingly in these small bands in

which our hominids and human ancestors lived. Until about 10,000 years ago, when farming and herding became more prevalent and larger populations were possible, the requirements to enable the physical growth of the brain drove the evolution of compassion and other pro-social qualities in an upward spiral. As the brain got bigger, pro-sociality was more possible. As pro-sociality inside the bands, cooperating and caring with each other inside the band. Became stronger and deeper, that enabled even longer childhoods in an upward spiral.

[00:15:50] Now, to be clear, bands competed very aggressively with other bands very often. So those human capacities certainly are present in us, and yet still, inside the band, humans evolved a fundamental form of social life grounded in what's called caring and sharing, distinct from what's called holding and controlling, which is the fundamental basis for social life in all of the other hundreds of primate species. So caring and sharing is our deep nature inside the circle of us. But what happens? When now you have over 8 billion people around the world, how do we expand that circle of us to return to the compassion and justice, the caring and sharing that is deeply woven into our nature? That's a challenge that faces us today.

[00:16:48] So it's really important to appreciate, as you can see in the slide here, that the way we live today, for most of the people in the world. In a structure in which there's great wealth inequality, there is very little recourse for injustice and systemic injustice. And the economic systems of the world function largely as a wealth pump, extracting resources from below and concentrating it at the top. That which we casually take for granted is, oh, I guess postmodern capitalism, that's how the world works, is a complete aberration. The kind of extreme concentrations of wealth and power that we see today were impossible in the hunter-gatherer bands in which we spent most of our time as a species over the last 300,000 years on this planet. This is a simple fact. It's reality. It is not left or right, liberal or conservative. It is just the truth of things. So in these small bands, the circle of us was obvious. Daily life. And we could afford to be morally lazy in a sense. We didn't have to work hard inside our band to know who we cared about. And this sense of us was frankly reinforced in conflicts with other bands. So empathy was naturally evoked in the conditions of daily life, we didn't have to train in it, we don't have to do anything for it.

[00:18:20] On the other hand, today we're surrounded and affected by all kinds of people who are them. You know, those people that you don't know, that you walk past on a city street. Those people who you're aware of on the other side of the world, who affect you and you affect them. Them, and maybe you don't like them. Maybe you disagree with them. Maybe you think they're bad. Maybe you think they're wrong, right? As soon as there's a sense of difference, the neural circuitry of empathy starts becoming inhibited and tends to go offline. A lot of research on this in which you can show people pictures of those who are like them. They belong to the group that they're part of, perhaps by gender or social class or style of dress or age. And then you can show pictures of people who are you who are suffering, and you start watching the neural circuitry of empathy and related to that compassion surge forward in activity.

[00:19:21] On the other hand, if you take the same degree of suffering. In situations that those people are in, except make them quite different, then for most people, you know, empathy starts going offline. This also becomes a basis for others to exploit. As you know you can just see in history and you can certainly see in the world today, the way that leaders of different types will exploit a sense of difference to build up their own power base and create grievances against them. Those who are doing it to us, that reinforce and sustain their power and along the way, often, you know, protect if not even add to the

various forms of wealth they've acquired. So, what are we gonna do? We either just get swept along. Ask yourself, is that in my best interest? Or we can deliberately expand the circle of us. We can deliberately look for similarities, shared values, common ground. Being very clear that we can have empathy in the larger context of us, we're all in the same boat. You know, there's only one planet earth fundamentally. We're all on this lifeboat earth, right? I think Buckminster Fuller used that phrase. Maybe somebody else did anyway. You know, as we look for these similarities, we can still be very clear that we can disagree with people, we can oppose them, we can be mad at them, we can seek justice for, you know, regarding them while still realizing like me, you know you love your children, like me. You will die one day. Like me, you face physical pain. Like me you enjoy chocolate. Like me. You want your sports team to win, right? Like me, fill in the blank. We need to, you know, consciously expand this. Talking here about the widest possible circle.

[00:21:30] Think about someone that you have some kind of conflict with. Bring to mind someone who is moderately challenging for you. Right here, right now, a little experiential practice. Bring to mind someone who, like I'm saying, is challenging for you and being aware of your irritation with them, maybe your grievance about them. Your critique, I can do this myself, you know, maybe they're politics. See what happens with regard to this person that irritates you, maybe you're in conflict with. What do you share in common? And it can literally help to name this to yourself, kind of a noting practice in meditative terms. You know, I'm thinking of someone right now that, in my view, has attacked me unjustly, and attacked things that I care about unjustly. And so I'm think here, well, like me, you are male. Like me. You were pretty dorky as a kid. Like me, you really care about your partner. Like me, you have moral concerns. Like me you are vulnerable to feeling devalued. I'm already getting a lot of value from this.

[00:23:23] So you might think about this for yourself. And you can come back to this simple practice, if you like, and being clear, and you might need to do this to be able to do the practice, you can still really disagree with that person. You can still be very discerning about what the facts are. You can be very affirming of your relevant values, relevant to them, while still expanding that circle of us. And what happens inside when you do that? I suspect, as often happens for people, it certainly happens for me, that there's a softening inside you. You start feeling less upset yourself. Paradoxically, the more you expand that circle of us to include them, you feel less burdened by them. And I think in a funny way, this is analogous to doing what's called parts work, where you expand the circle of inclusion, belonging to parts within yourself. And paradoxically, as you give more room, at the table for these sub-personalities that are kind of annoying, critical, pushy, bad-mouthing you, et cetera, et ceteras. You make more room for them, they paradoxically get quieter. They kind of move more into the broader ecosystem inside your own mind.

[00:24:52] Similarly, when we make more room for people that are challenging for us, we are more inclusive about them. We open our heart more to them. Typically feel less upset about it. And also we get less hijacked by our reactivities regarding this challenging person or group. And as we get let's hijacked by our re-activities to them by expanding the circle of us to include them, we're then going to probably act more skillfully. We're not going to discredit the validity of what we see and what we value and what plan. By going overboard. We're not going to undermine our kind of moral authority in the conflict by getting excessive while other people watch you, kind of, whoa, going over the top. You know, it's good for you. It's good for you to expand the circle of us paradoxically with people that, You've exiled, you know, over there. Broadly, in terms of whatever your maybe moral commitments are into the world altogether, you can just see the ways in which it helps the world to expand that circle. It helps that other person that you're in a

conflict with and widening out from there in widening circles. It helps the word and in turn that of course helps you.

[00:26:27] Open this up now to discussion, right? At the widest level, I think that whether it's in the politics of your own country or in your family system, in your communities altogether, I think really at this time in our history, this is tied for first place. I don't think there's anything that's more important than mindful efforts at a vast scale. To expand the circle of us to include all of humanity, the one whole human tribe. And further, to include all of life itself at this tipping point era in the history of our whole planet, in terms of species extinction, climate catastrophe, and all the rest of that, to expand that circle of ours. And now I want to stop sharing my slides. We'll post these slides. Fear not, we'll post them. We'll probably put them, we'll put them in the recording somehow. And you'll be able to see the full slide set, which I'll start completing in the next two times we get together. I'd like to bring it back now to particular situations that one may understandably find really challenging in one's personal life, right? So I'm kind of bringing back big picture politics, whoo-hoo, you know, wow. Down to, okay, how about your family? How about your in-laws? How about you neighbors? How about that co-worker who... What a, you know, wow. Let's bring it down to earth.

[00:28:18] To kind of get the pot boiling here or to, you know, start, you know, naming some things, I want to name two or three things that I think are really helpful for expanding the circle of us. So one is to cognitively look for similarities, because it's the cognitive perception of difference that starts the immediate slippery slope in terms of our own neurology that tends to down-regulate our capacities for empathy, which is then a basis for real compassion. Without empathy, we're kind of phoning in our compassion. You know, we're not letting our suffering land in our heart. So empathy, you know, is really foundational.

[00:29:07] One is to really recognize similarities and remind yourself of similarities. What do you share in common? How are you like each other? Even in, as I did myself in that example. That's a very simple thing to do. To just simply take a moment to focus on similarities, how we're like each. A second thing is to more emotionally imagine that you have a kind of field of moral concern. Moral concern is a technical term, you can find research about this, that has to do with your own fundamental stance in the world. How do you want to be in the world? You know, the circle of moral concern for an adult lizard. Is, you know, as best we can gather, just themselves. Can we expand that circle in which others matter too? Well, it's down to mattering. You know, there's an emotional sense of, and you can even say it in your mind, you matter too. I disagree with you, I'm mad at you. You know? I think some justice ought to be served upon you. You matter too. Your suffering matters too. It too belongs in the field of moral concern, right? That's kind of emotional.

[00:30:37] And then last, you can do things visually that are kind of cool. You know, I've done practices like this and talk about them where you imagine the circle of us and you start with people who are easy. Your partner, I'm thinking of my wife, you know, our kids, you know my friends, my neighbors, and then you just deliberately widen it. You know you visualize like your whole neighborhood, including people maybe you don't know well at all. Further out, people who are sort of like you in your maybe a community, a city perhaps, or that you're in or nearby, and then people who're not like you. And then widening even further, everybody in your whatever regions make sense to you, or state, country, world, all of humanity. And then you start visualizing all the living creatures in the land, the sea, in

the sky, the air, all of it. The whole little beautiful planet Earth altogether. You know, visual can also be a way into this too.

[00:31:41] Okay, so questions, comments. Okay, key point. So Catherine makes a comment, I don't believe that if you jail someone that they will feel your compassion. So two things here. Whether others feel your compassion or your empathy is not the consideration here. If they do. You know, it's also really true that very often people will not register your empathic concern because they're not aware of it or they don't wanna recognize it. So if your empathetic concern is contingent on their recognition of it, that really constrains and limits for you the benefits of widening your circle of empathic concern, right? Point one.

[00:32:32] Point two, I am deliberately dropping in considerations of justice. And doing that in a context in which humans evolved a unique strategy for living together unlike any other primate species, this is a fact. Strategy involved both caring and sharing, compassion and justice. Compassion without justice is very difficult to sustain. Justice without compassion can become very cold and harsh, the two together. And in our primate bands, one of the things that enabled us, crucially, to evolve out of the holding and controlling alpha dominant strategies of all other primate species, was that increasingly with our developing brains, we were able to, as a group, to regulate bullies and freeloaders. If you cannot regulate bullies and freeloaders in your group or in your society, there's little basis, certainly biologically, for the evolution. Altruism, kindness, generosity, and lovingness, because it's against the survival of an individual to share their food or other resources with others in their band.

[00:34:06] So it's important to realize that we need to be able to regulate bullies and freeloaders, literally grounded in our evolutionary history, to be able to sustain societies and communities that work for the common good. And you can look back at history and its characteristics of Game of Thrones, you know, for most of the last several thousand years, and to realize one of the defining characteristics is runaway bullying and runaway freeloading. Preloading includes externalizing costs on others and not paying your fair share. A great example for that today is, you know, the excretion of carbon into the sky, knowing that the price for that will be paid for thousands of years to come by future generations.

[00:34:55] So I think it's important, you now, now obviously justice does not equal injustice as it is enacted in many countries, including in various ways in America, you know, I'm not advocating that, but I am naming, for example, the possibility of including someone in your circle of us who has wronged you while you're standing up for yourself and pursuing fairness in some way, if only making sure that they know that you know that they did something wrong to you as, you know, so I'm, I'm including that. I think there's a place for that. Obviously, as we pursue justice, we have to be really careful about pitfalls of righteousness and ill will and vindictiveness, vengeance. We're very vulnerable to that. Be careful about that. But there is a place, I think, for justice seeking at all scales, even with people that you have compassion for. Think about that, you know, reflection. What's really interesting is that caring and sharing. Was practiced for 290,000 years, roughly, as the human species, until surpluses of food and resources began to enable larger populations and concentrations of wealth and power.

[00:36:13] Actually, what I'm describing as so-called utopian is deeply embedded in our nature. And the question that faces us, and I think it'll be the defining question of the 21st century, is can we find ways to come home at scale to that which is most promotive of the

common good, most supportive of individual wellbeing, which is society's grounded in compassion and justice. Grounded in compassion and justice. And that's the fundamental mission of the Global Compassion Coalition, to do our part to encourage collective action to occur at larger and larger scales that can gradually reset the extraordinary concentrations of wealth and power that are totally aberrant from archery nature. To me, that's not utopian at all. That's the common sense that wants to come home. So how about something personal in your own circles with people who maybe have wronged you? What might help you have empathy for and include it as an us in some ways, people who have wrong you? That can be very challenging.

[00:37:32] 'll say something here that, you know, I'll name it. Then I want to keep bringing it home to personal life. So if you think about it when you're living together with 50 to 150 people your whole life basically and sometimes with smaller units of a few dozen adults living together. In those settings. The objective conditions that supported a life grounded in caring and sharing. There was common truth because you could see what's going on for real when you live together with people for years. Second, common welfare. Your fates are bound together. And third, common justice. Maybe there were status differentials. There were some inequalities of wealth and power, typically in hunter-gatherer bands historically and those still in the present day. But they're fairly constrained, right? They're constrained. And if, you know, like a bully starts taking over or trying to take over, there would be consequences if only exiling them or just walking away, you now? Common truth, common welfare, common justice. That's foundational. That's what supports a society or a group living on the basis of compassion and justice, caring and sharing. But what happens when you blow up? Common truth, common welfare, common justice, you end up with the last several thousand years of growing extraordinary inequalities of wealth and power, a world that works for the few at the cost of the many.

[00:39:05] So one of the challenges for us today is to reestablish common truth common welfare and common justice grounded in common truth. And again, that may sound utopian, but it's really important to realize that's how humans live. For 97% of the time, our species has walked the earth. So how about what helps you expand your circle of us for people who have wronged you? I see people can't help themselves. I don't blame you. You're going to the wider view from what I'm saying very understandably. And I think that's really important. I think what I am saying, see for yourself if it's actually true. I think this analysis is true and it's not unique to me. But I've written an essay about this, you know, restoring healthy human politics, because that I think is the crucial thing to deal with the upstream sources of suffering, to reset the power structure of the world, which is grounded in inequalities of wealth. It's understandable to go there. I'll say one more thing here about expanding the circle of us. It's understandable that we go out to edge cases.

[00:40:14] So I'll tell you a little story. Actually, I better not tell that story. It's like, oh, I can include them in my circle of us, but not them, not that person, not that political leader, not that jerk of a neighbor across the street. Can't do that. All right, and so then people sometimes give up. It's okay, start with people that are easy. Start with people that are kind of outside your circle of US. You don't really tend to have much empathy for them. And see if you can. Look for those similarities. You can broaden the emotional field of moral concern. You can third visualize in various ways a kind of common field that contains both of you and then see what that does for you with that mildly challenging or moderately challenging person. And then gradually you can go all the way out. I can say for myself, and I hope that this example is not inflammatory, that thinking about Saddam Hussein, you know, the dictator of Iraq, who terribly mistreated his own people, it's factual, which does not itself, how can I put it, change all kinds of other facts alongside that in

terms of US foreign policy and so forth. Just Saddam Hussein, a person, a person. Thought he was morally abhorrent. And still, during, you know, the second Gulf War when the U.S. Really invaded Iraq and pursued Saddam Hussein, and in the process of that, I was aware of the fact that his two sons, who themselves, as best I know, were also pretty, by my view, morally abhorrent, you know were killed, I still felt compassion for him as a father. You know, like me, you are male. Like me, you are a father, Like me, you love your sons. I have one son, like me, and you can play around with this and you find a kind of freedom in this for yourself.

[00:42:42] I'll finish just on this one point. There's a story that you may have heard related to the Dalai Lama in which someone who'd been a Buddhist monk, a Tibetan Buddhist monk had been imprisoned and tortured. By the Chinese government, which I distinguish from the Chinese people, for many, many years, terribly, terribly treated, finally released, finally made his way to Northern India, finally able to talk with the Dalai Lama there, who was just full of compassion and sorrow for what this monk had suffered. And he said, wow, you know, were there not points where you feared for your own life? And the monk replied, the only time I really feared for my life was when I felt I was maybe losing compassion for my captors because that's my true life. Now that's a heroic example of a very expansive circle of us. We may not be ready for that. And yet, for me at least, the inspiration of that kind of example. You know, nudges me to widen my circle of us for some of my relatives. And may it have similar benefits for you.