

7_30_25 Talk*

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

Speaker 1 [00:00:00] First of all, can you get a sense of something good flowing through you? Like for example, as we inhale, You know, the air is coming in as we exhale, it's flowing out. It's a, it is a sense of something moving through us. And this may sound kind of airy-fairy, but it's helpful sometimes to get a sense of, of good things, powerful forces, wisdom, uh, ancestral wisdom, love, kindness, strength flowing through you. It's yours and it's not yours. It's kind of both of those together. So that's something to be aware of right off the top. You know, something flowing through you. A second piece here is to be simple. It's so easy to get really complicated about what it is we're trying to grow or develop or moves through us. In this moment, what's simple for you? Simple. Is there good intent in you? Simple. Do you wish well? Simple. Is there kindness in you? Curiosity. Good wishes. Simple.

[00:01:59] So we have the sense of things sort of moving through us. Ours in some way and bigger than ours in other ways and simple. So in that context, I'd like to give a little talk here that's going to take the form, which I believe I've never done in here, never done on this gathering, which is to read to you something I've written. And this is the practice in just one thing of lived by love. So here we go, feeling both the world and myself these days, one phrase keeps calling, lived by love. Explicitly, this means coming from love in a broad sense, from compassion, good intentions, self-control, warmth, finding what's the like in another person, caring, connecting, and kindness. Implicit and more fundamentally, this practice means a relaxed opening into love, into the love in a very broad sense. That is the actual nature of everything. Moment by moment, the world and the mind reliably carry you along.

[00:03:35] This is not airy-fairy, it's real. Our physical selves are woven in the tapestry of reality altogether. The tapestry of materiality whose particles and energies never fail. The supplies, the light and air, the furniture and flowers that are present this instant are here, available. Whatever the future may hold. So too is the caring and goodwill that others have for you. The momentum of your own accomplishments is real as well. And the healthy workings of your body. It's all here, it's all now. It's here and now for you." Meanwhile, your mind goes on being while dependably weaving this thought this sound, this moment of consciousness. It's hard to sustain a felt knowing of the nature of everything. The brain evolved to keep our ancestors alive, to keep or ancestors afraid to keep them alive. But if you look and look again and look, again, you can see directly that right now and in every now that you're alive, you're cradled by the world and the mind like a child carried to bed by her mother. It's really true. This cradling is a kind of love. And when you trust it enough to soften and fall back into it, there's an untangling of the knots of fear and separation.

[00:05:29] Then comes both an undoing of the craving that drives suffering and harm, and a freeing and a fueling love living through you and as you out into the world. Imagine a single day in which you were often, not continuously, not perfectly, it's okay, but often lived by love. When I try this myself, the events of the day don't change much, but my experience of them and their effects improved dramatically. Consider this as a practice for a day, a week, or the year altogether, lived by Love. More widely, imagine a world in which many people, enough people, known and unknown, the low and the mighty, were lived by love. As our world teeters on the edge of a sword and could tip either into realistic prosperity, justice, and peace, or tip into growing resource wars, despotism, or

fundamentalism. It seems to me that it's not just possible for a critical mass of human hearts to be lived by love. It's necessary. So how, how do we do this?

[00:07:08] One of the things that I so appreciate about the Buddha and many others is their pragmatism. Certainly interested in what is true, but especially interested in how to help things be better inside and outside. So how? And I'll continue reading here. The essence of this practice, letting yourself be lived by love, is yielding to all that lives you. That's at the essence of it. This is a paradigm shift from the typical top-down, subtly contracted, moving out from a unified center of view and action way of operating, instead to a relaxed, receptive abiding. Feeling supported by the ocean of causes, creating each momentary wave of awareness. Then on this basis, there is an encouragement of love in all its forms to flow through you. The suggestions that I'll offer here are different ways to do this, and you can also find your own. Right now, if you like, soften and open in your heart. Let me take a breath through the area of your heart. And notice the fact that you are probably basically all right right now. If it's not true in the present, it's true. But if it is true, it is truth. Around that all rightness could be pain and sorrow, outrage, grief.

[00:09:11] Still in the center of it all or deep down holding it all, is there a basic ongoing all rightness that you can be aware of? You can feel the fullness that is already here, the enoughness, all the perceptions and thoughts and feelings pop up, popping in this moment of consciousness. Lifting you, all that is arising moment after moment after moments. You could feel the buoying currents of nature and life. Hoof, waves of gifts from over three billion years of evolution on our blue and green pebble. You can look around and see objects, including your own hands and body, and consider the unfailing generosity of the material realm blossoming for over 13 billion years from a seed of light. You can be aware of the warmth and goodwill from others toward you. You can sense your connecting to others and how you are supported by a net of relationships. Isolated and isolating and separating ways, we can really lose track of this.

[00:11:00] And so it's helpful to open awareness wide to realize, wow, I am being lived in a field of relationships. These relationships don't have to be perfect. Some people do care about you. You have been cared about. As Mr. Rogers put it, and... Uh, a talk a long time ago, we have all been loved into being one way or another. In your life, you have been and potentially are, almost certainly. To the extent that this is true, can you let yourself feel it? It's subtle, but you can feel carried by consciousness, observing that awareness is ongoing without effort. The mind is unfolding altogether. You're not making it happen. Oof, as long as you're alive, it's happening. When stress or worry or pressure or pain appear in the mind, if you can see that the fabric, the nature of this suffering, the underlying operating of the mind is itself fine. Always already fine. The mind as the mind is always already okay, even if what it contains is really challenging. And dropping down from the particular content, the pain, the sorrow, the anger that is challenging to the fabric of your mind altogether. Is immediately reassuring and helpful and true and wise.

[00:13:21] Again and again, making this little but profound shift, this giving over to the carrying, cradling of mind and matter. That shift is what we're exploring here. Giving over to this again and again as you feel it. You do this again and again, you can really afford to let your own love flow freely. Because we are inherently buoyed by life altogether, we can really allow our lovingness to flow through us. See if you can bring this down to earth. You can bring it down to love. In your first encounter or your next encounter with someone else today, how would that be? What would that feel like? I had a little tiff with my wife earlier today. And after. A few minutes of TIFF mode, I just increasingly, you know, wanted just to acknowledge what was there and I had some things I needed to say. And whew, what

matters most, what Matt heard and what does matter most to me personally is being lived by love, which in its way actually helps us be stronger with people and set appropriate boundaries if we need to.

[00:14:57] So, if you lived from love... In your next encounter or any encounter with another person, how would you be? Well, how would speak? How would you act, lived by love? That's a real question. In a difficult relationship or a difficult interaction if along with whatever else you need to do or whatever else here you're aware of if deep down inside you sort of surrendered to the love flowing through you and and expressed by you in appropriate ways depending on the other person right if you surrendered to that and gave over to that kind of unlocked to the valves, opened the channels. What might that difficult interaction be like? How might it go better next time, perhaps? How might that relationship that's challenging feel easier for you, less weighty, less harsh and sharp and edgy if you were lived by love? It's really worth imagining some key relationships and some key interactions. How would it be better for you if you were lived by love in them? And how might it be better for other people if you were more lived by love, including in challenging situations?

[00:16:44] Common for people to say, yes, but at this point, how do I be lived by love with people who are mistreating me or others? How people sometimes go out to edge cases, you know, how can I be loved by love when X person is doing terrible things in the world today? So I get it. You could ask yourself, okay, in an interaction that's kind of real for you. Not you, you know, yelling at some president or prime minister, but some interaction that's real for you, that could be challenging. How might you stand up for yourself? How might you set a boundary? How may you be really firm if still woven through all that was a lovingness, a genuine love moving through you. When I imagine doing that, it's clear to me that it would go better. I would feel more confident. I would feel calmer. I would feel more sure of myself if I were rested in a kind of lovingness. You know, that wasn't particularly necessarily personal to that other individual. Imagine, you know, an argument or a tiff with someone or a difficult relationship in which you come into it kind of being more lived by a current of warmth, decency, fairness flowing through you. Imagine how you would assert yourself for that person. It's really useful to do that.

[00:18:42] So just to finish this piece of writing here, again, what would it be like, you know, concretely to be lived increasingly in this way? You might imagine people... Famous people, perhaps people in history, maybe people today, or people that are not famous at all, but you just happen to know there's a fundamental kindness and caringness moving through them. Even if they're cranky or blunt or stressed or flustered, still, there's goodness flowing through them that you can feel. Imagine being some of these ways yourself. Centered in that inherent goodness, innate goodness in you, moving through you. How would that feel, including right now? Who knows if enough people share in this practice, the world could become a much better place. So let love's currents guide you home.

[00:20:19] Gail Jones writes, I think we have to go love ourselves. I think that's what you meant. And that's really awesome. I didn't have that in my piece. That's really great, Gail. Yeah. Can we bring that, whoo, can we bring that love, whooo, flowing through us to the, like, that character we are? Whoa, that troubled character over there, Ricky, Rick, whatever your name might be. Whoa, over there. Whoa, you know, live by love toward that one, that personality, if you will, or that neurotic collection of qualities. Whoa. Yeah, or even I was reflecting recently about how the truth is, we are, the psyche is made of many parts, many elements, many voices, subpersonalities, pulling and tugging. Complexity

there, and many of them have their own journey. They are learning in their own way. They are evolving in their way. What it would be like to be lived by love toward all of them, all your parts, as Richard Schwartz puts it in his recent book, *No Bad Parts*. Wow, that's really cool. That's really, really cool, let's see here. So Great. Anyway, so thank you very much for that, Gail.

[00:21:41] And then Tina writes, exuding impersonal love in a challenging conflict. And you got the word impersonal, right? Non-personal, we might even say, or non-specific, non-particular, non narrowed. Exuding impersonal love in the challenging conflict, you have just rotated my brain. My pleasure. This is fantastic. Bring love to the challenge that can be felt by others as well as myself. That's great. I know. There's a photograph that I just keep coming back to. I'm seeing it now. It's Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Thich Nhat Hanh. Bless their memories. Black and white picture when Thich Na Hanh came to America I think in the early 1960s to in part support the American civil rights movement which then led to his exile from Vietnam for decades afterward. And there's a photo of the two of them. You see it in their faces. For me at least, a weariness, a seriousness, a gravity and a love present in their faces as they deal with extremely difficult conditions. How about difficulties? Yeah, I mean, this is real. Leslie writes what's real underneath the waves. I mean and again, people have different ways into this. Partly, I don't know why. It helps me to just be gobsmacked with gratitude at how we're being lived by everything. You know, we tend to understandably due to evolution feel very beleaguered. You know, we're desperate and sometimes people are. People are sometimes really desperate. There are people right now around the world, sadly, in the Middle East and in Gaza, certainly, who are really desperate, and there are other people in Israel who are desperate in their own ways.

[00:23:44] I did a recent interview with someone who's a podcaster in Israel, and she told me that at any moment she might have to grab her children and run to a shelter because of missiles flying with Iran. That's all you know. I think it's foolish to try to draw any kind of equivalence between people and also I think it's really important to appreciate the extremes of what people are dealing with in different situations. So all that's true, all that is true. And much of the time, much of time for many of us is kind of okay and yet we still often feel separated and beleaguered and put upon. You know, like we're at war with the world. It's kind of a simmering war with a world. You can kind of feel it in your body, braced. It's so helpful to explore what is it like to completely soften and fall back into reality and to experience being cradled and capped and caught and carried every time you do that. I love doing that. Okay, that one lights me up. But other things might work for you. It might help for you to just tune in to what it felt like to be a really little kid carried off to sleep by a parent or grandparent. No, you're carried. What happens when you feel into the body memory of that? Or maybe you're just snuggled with your dog or your cat, or you're living in the memory of them. Knowing that grieving is loving. Even if we've lost those we love and we feel sad about it, and perhaps even remorseful about certain things, remorse is loving in its way. Grieving is loving, and we can carry our wounds into love. Even the biggest wounds of all.

[00:25:55] So you might be more concrete about this than my more kind of cosmic awareness of how we're lived by the universe. Maybe you had a special moment with a teacher, where the teacher just pulled you aside and looked at you, and you just felt their respect and their true seeing of you. Cradled. And, you know, if it's helpful for you to address the, well, what about? What's it like to be strong with other people when we are still lived by love? Maybe that goes to the topic earlier about equanimity and compassion. There's some way in which, in which you identify with, what's your identity? Do you identify with a separated, beleaguered, braced at war body-mind? Do you identify with vast

currents? Of good things flowing through you. As those good currents flowing through you, you deal with situations. Issues and conflicts. It really feels totally different, doesn't it? It's wild how different it feels.

[00:27:37] Yeah, and what Emmy wrote, if you're too exhausted with no sleep for days to get your brain to love abstract stuff like myself, I just think it's so true, as I said, to keep coming back to what is tangible and comforting, like the feeling of your flannel shirt. It's not flannel, corduroy, there we go. Your corduro shirt, or you're just exhausted and you just need to curl up. That's all you can do. Curl up. And can you find in that curling up a sweetness for yourself? That's great. So I'm so glad you brought this up, Melina. Eight minutes passed. How to extend that sense of love on teams that are used to compete in a business or government space, especially in Latin American countries. So I don't live in those countries. I have a hunch you're talking about fairly hierarchical and stratified countries with a lot of wealth inequality, maybe even more so than in America, which has extreme wealth inequality in its own right. And perhaps with a kind of Culture, machismo, maybe relevant there. Highly competitive. There's a lot of research that shows that compassion is deep in our nature and easily inhibited. And it tends to be inhibited, compassion as a form of love. Let's say by separation or division, I'll say division, and then competition, aggression. Ex-feelings, grievances. Grievances, feeling mistreated, wronged, and vengeance. Major compassion inhibitors.

[00:29:39] So it's especially useful to have your eyes wide open in environments that load heavily on one or more of those factors. Division, separation, division, division, competition, aggression, grievance, and vengeance. So in those environments, I think it's really helpful to appreciate that, yeah, in some ways we do love for other people, but... Beings, but you could say first and foremost, do it for yourself. You know, rest in your own purity of goodness. Your own, the knowing of your own innately good heart, which will protect you in those kind of environments and strengthen you. Your behavior, you know, may be exactly the same, but deep inside yourself, you're not letting yourself be hateful because it's bad for you. That's extremely important. And Melina, you and everyone have that freedom. We have that control to stay with that in our heart. And then I find compassion is really helpful. Even compassion you don't reveal because if people saw the compassion in your face, they might, you know, want to move to a dominator position. How dare you have compassion for me, right? Whoa. So maybe you need to hide it, I don't know.

[00:31:04] But deep down, you just look at them and you go, wow. I'm going to reveal some of my own secret thoughts. You look at someone and with compassion, you just might say to yourself, wow, what a mess your mind is. You know, not in contempt, but more sorrow, like, wow. Watch out for superiority. I'm not talking about superiority or condescension. I'm just talking about recognition of the ways that many people are living in a kind of hell realm inside their own minds. You can have compassion for that, or you can recognize that they too will face losses someday. They too worry about their children. They too will die eventually, separated from everything they like and love. So compassion is very protective. So that's another. And then I think justice is useful. And knowing what your code of integrity is, your own unilateral virtue, No matter what they do... What those teams do and so forth. You know, protect yourself. But inside that frame. Be fair to yourself. A person with integrity yourself. Take refuge in the knowing that you've operated in an upright and dignified and fair and honorable way, no matter what they do. You've done your job.

[00:32:37] And that's the last thing I'll say is to know that you have done your own job. You've made your offering as best you can in a serious and careful and effortful way. You've major offering today. Now it's time to clock out. Home and watch some TV if you can. Anyway. Okay. I'm going to keep moving. Let's see. Can I give an example of the words I would say to someone who disappointed or was negative to you? Many examples. I've written a lot about this in my book, Making Great Relationships, which I highly recommend actually. It's really detailed, etc. For myself, I tend to pause And... Just the pause and the dignity over here is a communication to them over there. People often will start to slow down if you stop talking. Just kind of look at them for a moment or take a few breaths to sort of settle in, gather yourself, sort out what you're gonna say. That can often help.

[00:33:47] I find that the format of... Nonviolent communication can really help. It starts with sharing your experience, you know, referring to an event, sure, in a fairly neutral way, or just starting with your own experience, like, okay, right now I'm feeling, frankly, a little, I guess, concerned or sad. I'm looking to find what would be good for both of us here. And then you keep going, you know, you find your own way. You find your way. I have my way like a California hippie. Therapist man, you find your own way. Okay, so moving along. I'm really glad you said this, Tony, about accepting all of the parts. And just like I said, to underline it again, I had this ah-ha-duh in retrospect, but still for me an ah-hah like, oh wow, they're not my parts. I am the parts altogether. But to realize, oh, the parts, like I think of, we tend to think of our own development as a unitary process, a unified process of a one who is developing, a one who, with your name tag, whatever it is, is developing. And then realizing, wow, wait a second, we are multitudes, as Walt Whitman put it, inside ourselves in each of those parts. It has its own developmental line. Maybe some part is stagnant, or just maybe not stagnant even, just. It's fine as is, or maybe other parts are developing and evolving in their complicated ways. Wow, appreciating that inner diversity and complexity is kind of cool, and it can be relaxing and opening. Makes room for them. Okay, great.

[00:35:47] So I'm reading what people are saying. Patience is really helpful. As Lynn H. Said, patience, including with yourself. Yeah, I'll just share a moment with you. That's like, again, a body. So for you, what brings you into this feeling, which in a certain sense has to do with trust? Interestingly, then I will return to something very embodied in the most recent issue of Psychological Bulletin, which contains these super high-end summaries. They're called meta analyzes of all kinds of research pulled together. Boom. And this was about the relationship between trust and wellbeing. This is really interesting. And they showed that in terms of interpersonal trust. Institutional trust, trust in an institution like a company or an organization, and then more generalized trust including in nations, the more that trust goes up, well-being goes up as well as a correlation.

[00:36:52] And it goes the other way, especially interpersonally, that people who are more rested in a resilient well-being are more able to develop trusting relationships with other people. And then going further... Um, as inequality rises in a country, uh, trust tends to decline understandably. And as trust declines, it's harder and harder for people to be compassionate with each other. So two big takeaways here. One is to really, at a matter of public policy to try to reduce wealth inequality in ways that are, you know, I looked at the Nordic countries, for example is viable examples on the world stage these days of how to have a market economy in which people can strive and, you know, earn the fruits of their labors in many ways while still there's a strong safety net and extremes of inequality like we have in America and worse in other some other countries, you now, are managed. Anyway, point being, trust, well-being goes together and compassion is in the mix, too.

[00:38:02] Anyway, so here trust. Of this real sense of trust and how we're being lived, including lived by love. Do you trust in the love flowing through you? How can you deepen what Eric Erickson talked about as the first of his nine developmental stages, eight? Anyway, a basic trust. So an experience of this for me. I was about Yeah, 11, 10. No, I was 10. Yeah, I as 10 years old, living in North Carolina for the summer, complicated reasons. And the neighbor had a giant propane tank in their backyard. And what the kids would do was stand on the propane tanks. So we were at that point, our feet were maybe four or five feet above the ground and our heads were therefore, you know, another four-ish feet above ground. And what we would do. And it was scary is that the dad, I remember this dad is a very cool guy. Family came from Hungary, so I have a lot of fondness for Hungary. Anyway, we would fall back and the trick is you couldn't look and it would be so tempting to curl up your body, but that would make it harder for him to catch you. The trick was to stay wide open. And trust, boom, that he would catch you. Super scary the first time and then thrilling and wonderful every time thereafter.

[00:39:32] So you might feel into it yourself, your own body memory of allowing yourself to feel really supported. Recognizing that that could help you to give over more and more to the lovingness that is inherent in you, in your own innately good heart, the loving-ness that is naturally flowing through you. And explore this increasingly in situations with your eyes wide open. Fences make for good neighbors. You know, the fact that frankly, in my little tiff earlier today, I could say my piece with a certain gravity and. It helped that my wife really got it. I've got, you know, I'm super fortunate in my wife. But ultimately I could tell whether she got it or not most fundamentally because I had said it, because I'd kind of established like something that was real for me and why I didn't like what she said, took some offense at it. It became less relevant what her reactions were. Because I had established, I was speaking my truth for myself, not willy-nilly. Clueless about impact, but for myself.

[00:41:00] And then on the heels of that, I could just tell my natural lovingness was really coming forward much more. In other words, fences make for good neighbors. Autonomy supports intimacy, the two go together. So as you explore this practice, and as I finish up here, of letting yourself be lived by love and exploring that, and as you bring it into maybe more challenging situations. It's really important to pay attention to protecting yourself and supporting yourself and being strong on your own behalf Which helps to support the conditions? The channels it helps to create the channels through which that love which is innate in you can flow through Okay