

2020-07-30 Wise Speech (4 of 5) Is it Beneficial?

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SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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SPEAKERS

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We come this morning to the fourth question that we can ask ourselves when we have to speak wisely, effectively. And the fourth question is, is it beneficial? Is it for the welfare of self and others? And so a statement might be true. A statement that we're going to say might be timely, it's the right time. A statement we say might be done, kindly, supportively nourishing, the way we say it might be gentle and appropriate. However, the person we're talking to the situation we're in, what we're going to say has no benefit, maybe because people are not going to listen to it, people are closed off from hearing it too distracted. And so it's not beneficial to say it. And because it has no impact, it has no onboard leading purpose. It has no purpose to say it if it's not going to be received.

And so rather than exhausting ourselves by insisting we have to say it, because it's true, because we're struggling because we're trying to solve a problem and make things better. Of course, ideally, we would have a chance to have a conversation if that's the case. But if it's not going to go anywhere, if there's no benefit from saying it, there is no receptivity to what we're saying. Why tire ourselves out why exhaust ourselves maybe we need to wait until it is beneficial. So it comes back to the idea so timely. For you, it might be timely might be the only time. But still, if it's not beneficial to say it has no purpose to say it because it's not received, then maybe it's not that time to say it, maybe it's not the thing to say.

Or if we ask ourselves the question, is it beneficial? Then we can say we're actually saying the truth right now is not beneficial. Saying it even saying the truth kindly is not really beneficial right now. This is not what the person needs to hear this is not leading on word. The word benefit here is a very significant word. How do we know what's beneficial? How do we know what is welfare for people? The one of the meanings for this word in Pali is attha. Is it has a purpose, so to speak for a purpose. So in other words, don't speak pointlessly, don't just speak because it's speak, you want to speak, don't

Speak the truth. Don't speak the truth kindly in some way, if it's time if it's, you know, kindly and timely, but don't if it doesn't really have a purpose. So one of the quote, when you ask the question, is it beneficial? is also a very powerful for version of that question is to ask yourself, for what purpose? Am I saying when I'm going to say, what is the purpose, and there can be multiple layers of purpose in what we say. If someone asks you for directions on the street, you could say the purpose of responding was to give them the directions. But there might be a deeper layer, where we really want to impress people with that we know the direct directions, and we never want to be wrong. And there was one country I visited where it seemed like I was told that no one will ever admit that they don't know the directions. So you have to ask at least two or three people, because the first person might give you a wrong direction is because they think they have to do something. So maybe you know, there's a wanting to impress to be the maybe building load that is a fear of rejection or fear that people will judge us negatively if we don't give a good. And so it's all these layers of purposes. When we speak, there are things going on. And to ask the question, what's the purpose that I have for saying something can really be valuable because sometimes the purpose we for saying something is not really the wisest purpose, and to really understand yourself well enough to understand why we're going to say what we're going to say. Even the truth, even kindly, is very, very important.

But what's interesting is the expression that Buddha uses to talk about what is beneficial is actually a compound word. And the word for beneficial attha, has many meanings and can be welfare, benefit, advantage, it also apparently can also mean like a blessing speak what is a blessing, it can also mean speak was purposeful for a purpose, it can mean speak what is related to the goal. And so in Buddhism sometimes attha refers to the ultimate goal of liberation and freedom. So, that was a compound word, and the second half is samhita. And samhita means, possessed with or connected with, endowed with, speak endowed with benefit, speak endowed with the purpose, speak connected to the goal. And that relates to what I did in the guided meditation is that it is Not only speak what's beneficial for a purpose, is it's beneficial for the person I'm speaking to, is it's beneficial for what's going to happen in situation. But speak, in a way that's beneficial now, speak in a way that's connected or endowed with the purpose of Buddhism, the goal of Buddhism, if the goal is to not cling, speak in a way that that has no clinging in it. If the goal of Buddhism is to be free of greed, hatred and delusion, this is one of the primary ways that Buddha talks about the goal of liberation of enlightenment is the absence of greed, hatred, and confusion or delusion. So, can we can we speak partake of that, can it be be endowed with elements of that and this is so then this fourth criteria really now connecting speech to our practice itself. It's really saying practice speech itself, can be endowed with practice can be as rich as a form of practice, as meditation practice.

Because the core aspect of Buddhism, Buddhist practice is not just to be mindful, the core aspect is to be mindful so that we can be in the world without clinging without greed, hatred and delusion. And nowadays, with all the hatred that's going on in our society, it's even more important to understand the value of non hatred. And it's maybe more important to speak, to speak up for truth for what's right for the ending of brutality and harm and hatred, and economic exploitation all these things that go on in our society and our world as a whole. It's important to speak up for it against it. But it's also important

to do so endowed with liberation endowed with a qualities of the goal of practice itself. The means, in practice the means to law a to freedom should contain elements of the goal. The is not that the means and the goal are the same, but the means should reflect mirror the goal. And so this is where the topic of this issue of what's happening in our relationship to it is so important. In the relationship we have, that we can begin exercising and finding and practicing pieces of that goal pieces of non clinging non greed, non hatred Non confusion and we're not confused. If we're, if we know we can always be mindful, we not confused if we know that the purpose of all we're doing is really to do what we're doing without clinging is one of the purposes and then multiple layers of purposes.

So speaking can be an integral, essential form of Buddhist practice. I hope that we speak, I hope that we learn to speak well and speak up and speak strongly and clearly, for all kinds of issues with our friends or family, when we need to speak up and be clear, in our society when we just stand up for civil rights. We do stand up against brutality, against the harm that people are doing each other in all directions in all political directions. All kinds of ways. Of course we should speak up. But can we speak up? Can we speak, remembering that we're practice practicing? We're practicing for the greatest benefit the greatest welfare of self and others. And the greatest welfare is found through exercising our freedom to relate to what's happening with our dandy greed, without any hatred whatsoever, without any confusion or delusion about what's going on. This is radical. So to ask ourselves, we were speaking the question, is it beneficial is a rich and very important multifaceted question. Is it beneficial for purpose is a purposeful and beneficial purpose is it spoken in a beneficial way. Is it spoken in a way that's endowed with qualities of liberation itself? Is it endowed with non clinging? And as I said in this in this in this guided meditation, we will cling unless we're fully enlightened clinging will happen. The important question, when we see it, how do we relate to that and to then not cling to the clinging when we do have impulses, which are not, you know, shouldn't be acted on that are harmful or difficult aspects of ourselves that arise. Of course, things like that arise. The important thing is not that we have these things Difficult thoughts even hate, you know, that arises? The important thing is, do we see it? And do we relate to it in a way that is non clinging, that picking it up without being involved without saying it? So if we can ask ourselves the question, is it beneficial? in all the ways I'm talking about, and it turns out the answer is no. in significant ways. Then don't say it. Or what might be needed is do the Find the inner strength. to not say it. It's hard sometimes not to speak, the impulse to speak the drive to speak the need to speak is so strong. It's so connected to the deep emotional reservoirs are experiences that we have. But if it's going to cause harm, don't say it in a way that causes harm. Find a different way to speak, find to speak, find a way to speak about what's happening for you what's happening in the world, what's going on, in a way that is beneficial, has a good purpose, and is endowed with connected to the goal of practice itself, connected to freedom, connected to compassion, to love. That would be to speak what is beneficial.

So, thank you. And so we have one more to do tomorrow. See you tomorrow. Thank you.