So welcome to our fourth day of discussing the 10 Pāramīs often called the 10 perfections. Though I don't know if that's quite the meaning of the Pāli pāramī. It might mean more than five things which are ultimate or five things that lead to what is ultimate, what is of ultimate value. And to hold these 10 qualities of high value, even as forms of wealth and see them as the greatest wealth and that they reside within us. They can be invested in and developed and grown within us, and that they can become stable within us. They are portable, we carry this wealth with us wherever we go.

And the fourth of these pāramīs is wisdom, paññā. And paññā. And it's translated into English many different ways. The most common is wisdom, which is a rich word in English and in the sense it, you know, it's, I think it has wonderful connotations and associations. And the other ways that has been translated sometimes is one way is as insight. I sometimes like the word insight as a translation for paññā because the deepest paññā of the tradition, it comes out of a direct perception of present moment experience. It arises in the seeing, in the experience, as opposed to being portable, portable in the sense of knowledge that you've acquired and then just you have the knowledge and you apply it. It's a rediscovery, the ability to rediscover what is true moment by moment, with so I think of it insight. Another translation that's a similar connotation is discernment. And discernment is something that only exists in the process of discerning of seeing and understanding and distinguishing and being wise about what's going on. And so whether it's wisdom or insight or discernment, the dictionary has other things like knowledge and clear understanding and all kinds of words like that. But to understand it as being something which is immediate. It's not like reading a book and then now you have Buddhist wisdom because you've memorized the Four Noble Truths. It's certainly valuable to do that. But to develop ourselves to see for ourselves in direct experience, what is beneficial and what is not.

I like the adjective wise almost more than the noun wisdom and Buddha just defines a wise person, as someone who is concerned with the welfare of self, welfare of others, welfare of self and others, and welfare for the whole world, all about welfare. And also he says a wise person does not consider or
concerned with the harm of self, the harm of others the harm of self or others, so the harm of the whole world. So, this idea of what makes a person wise is not a lot of learning and not a lot of sophisticated and knowledge or understanding of this cosmos, this world that we live in. Something like sophistication. It's something that's pretty basic, that maybe takes a while and to understand is constantly discovered, but what is it that's beneficial, what brings welfare and what is harm, what's harmful? And someone who really understands that is considered a wise person. So that's one of the great Buddhist questions is the question we can ask ourselves for practitioners, is it wise? Is what I'm doing wise? What I'm saying, what I'm going to do with my body, my activity, even what I think about, is it wise to be engaged in this?

So what's the basis of wisdom, that kind of wisdom knowing what's beneficial? This is where it's good to appreciate that wisdom arises fourth on this list of this journey through the pāramīs because at by the first three, provide the information, it begins telling us, showing us where benefit is, where welfare begins to reside. So generosity, the first one is not meant to be obligatory. It's meant to be voluntary coming out of a spirit or an attitude of generosity. And to do it well is to also appreciate the joy, the delight, the satisfaction, the goodness, the how it kind of supports us to be generous. And it's a little bit of a, you know, I don't know if it's ironic or paradox, that if you do generosity, selfishly only so you can benefit from the joy and the delight from it, then it's also not generosity. So there has to be a kind of a certain degree of selflessness, certain degree of non selfishness to be genuinely generous. But in doing that, we also benefit. And to feel how it opens us and delights us and provides satisfaction, begins providing an inner reference point of inner well being. The ethical conduct, the second one, virtuous conduct, the practice of restraint. It takes a lot of work sometimes to restrain ourselves from some of the unethical things or harmful things we want to say or do in certain areas of our life. But to restrain in a healthy way, in a beneficial, what is the wise way of having virtuous conduct? What's the way to do virtuous conduct so that there's a bliss of blamelessness? The joy, the satisfaction of well being? And can we avail ourselves of that? Can we allow ourselves to feel the goodness or the value or the wholeness that comes from virtuous conduct?

Some people will be virtuous, live a good life and not harming others. But there's not any kind of tendencies actually, maybe even a kind of resist. To allow oneself to feel the goodness of that. In Buddhism, the idea is to not just do ethical conduct, virtuous conduct, for its own sake or just restrain ourselves and just be kind of kind of rigid in it. But it's really done to open to allow something to bubble up something marvelous inside of us joy, happiness of freedom and ease. The easeful way of being in the world because we're living without harming anyone. And then renunciation is not meant to be also a burden or something restrictive or something that diminishes ourselves. The idea of renunciation is the movement of letting go of clinging of holding onto things so that something within us can bubble up. That's good. There's space inside for the contemplative life, their space inside for compassion for awareness and mindfulness. There's space inside, for wisdom to operate, space inside to feel begin feeling that we don't just let go of things we let go into some beginning of goodness, or wholeness or inner welfare or lightness or ease fullness or peace, whatever we might want to be. But we start renunciation gives is not just a, you know, letting go of something and being, you know, and just going
on, but it's letting go so that we know that something inside that's good has a chance to arise. So in all these three steps, we're beginning to feel and experience within ourselves. Something that is healthy, something that's a form of welfare, inner welfare and this growing developing of a sensibility, sensitivity to what is inner welfare that becomes stronger and stronger and stronger than some of the beliefs and thoughts we have that might be self critical, that might be other critical blaming others that have philosophies and beliefs that are operating that are actually oppressive or diminishing or harmful even, that not really doesn't really make space and room for the mazing potential we have for and I'm quoting from in English, the three words that Buddha use sometimes together, thriving, maturing and growth. So what allows for inner growth inner thriving, imagine that and inner growth and your maturation or ripening.

And so the first three gives us this reference point for welfare for what is good, what is helpful, beneficial, and that is the material that allows this wisdom to arise. The more we understand what's beneficial, the more we can understand what is harmful. What does diminishes us? What restricts us? What goes in the opposite direction of thriving? Rather than being nourishing, it de-nourishes us. And so we start having an experiential reference point for what's beneficial and what's not.

And so the first three pāramīs set the ground for that. And so when we get to the fourth pāramīs, we can ask ourselves what is wise, we don't have to run to the books to understand what that is. But rather we run to our heart, we find it inside ourselves, and we can see what that reference point is. And then there's of course with these pāramīs often a reciprocal relationship with those that are paired together. So with renunciation and wisdom paired together, the more wise we are about what's beneficial, the more the renunciation can be beneficial. I think that often we don't think of renunciation in terms of what is beneficial. But that's really the spirit, the way in which we're looking for that in Buddhism. And so the more we understand what's the more healthy renunciation we do, the greater reference point we have for ask the question what is beneficial, and then when it's appropriate, we see where greater renunciation can happen and letting go, which, if it's unwell and healthful, healthily gives us a greater even reference point for in our health and nourishment and thriving.

And so wisdom. So we ask ourselves the question what is wise? And you might, if you're interested, you know, I'm, I'm certainly encouraging you, for each of these days, 24 hours after I've introduced a pāramī, to try to live with it, and think about it, reflect on it, talk to friends about it, read about it, listen to Dharma talks about it. So you might do that today with wisdom. Reflect on wisdom, consider what wisdom is, maybe read about it or whatever. And see if you can distinguish between ideas about what is wise, that are a little bit more conceptual and removed, and ideas of wisdom that really point you back, clearly back to what you can experience for yourself. And in these next 24 hours, why don't you really delve deeply into yourself, maybe through your memory, of your past what you've learned, what have you learned within yourself? That's experiential. That's a living lived experience that you can sense and feel. That is a reference point for at answering the question, what is wise? What is wisdom for you?
So, my wise friends, I hope you have fun time and enjoyable time reflecting on this wisdom pāramī. The pāramī of wisdom is meant to support your capacity for compassion and your capacity for liberation. That's what makes each of these pāramīs a pāramī. So you know, how is it wisdom supports these being hugely beneficial, nourishing things, compassion and liberation. Great. Thank you.