So good morning, good day. And I realized I'm beginning to go over time with both the meditation and also the short talk, I plan to get back on track, but maybe it's a little bit the nature of the topic this week, appreciative joy. And so muditā the Pali word, the Indian word for word, often in English is called appreciative joy, or sympathetic joy.

And I like to call it this week rejoicing. It's kind of more energetic and more full, full experience to rejoice than just appreciate it seems like sometimes a little bit of a small word compared to rejoicing. And in my vocabulary, rejoicing is something almost embodied, versus appreciating, or is a more of a cognitive thing to just appreciate. And so it's a meditation practice in Buddhism. And as a meditation practice, it has a lot of benefits.

And one of them is that it helps to dissolve, dissolve, soften, and maybe get rid of the feelings we have of discontent, jealousy, envy, kind of a discontent, that success and well being of others. And of course, it's very, it's very odd to say that we could have discontented the joy of others. But for some people, jealousy and envy, is a very big part of their lives. And maybe for many different reasons, sometimes, maybe there's historical reasons why that's been cultivated or developed in us.

And, or sometimes there's fear, to really acknowledge the well being of others, or there's a comparison to ourselves. And we're discontent because, you know, if I, if I really admit and celebrate the success of someone else, that kind of implies that my lack of success, that I'm kind of, you know, not really, you know, good person somehow or, you know, it's, it's a reflection on me that someone else is doing well, and I'm being left behind by life in the world or something. And, and these kinds of thoughts and ideas that stand in the way of feeling just genuine real appreciation, real delight and gladness and into seeing the gladness, seeing the joy and well being of others isn't a hindrance, it keeps us limited and keeps the heart from really opening up to be present for this life in a full way.

And as I said, I've been saying that part of the function of this ideal of appreciative joy rejoicing is not to oblige us to feel that way. But to help us to use that as a reference point, to notice how we're still closed, to notice what keeps us in the way of opening in the heart and a full and honest way. And so
what we do is that things, we discovered that discontent, that's kind of the word in the Pali text, that for
the primary hindrance to this appreciative joy.

So discontent, you know, can mean many things, but it's classically, it's often associated with envy, and
jealousy, and certain kind of conceit. And the conceit, you know, that, oh, this says something about
me. And maybe it says something bad about me, conceit and Buddhism, not just thinking you're better
than someone else, but also that somehow you're the less than someone else, or don't measure up to
someone else. All this kind of concerned with self measurement and comparative thinking, is a
hindrance to really having the heart just open and relaxed and present.

And this mindfulness practice is really a practice to really recognize what gets in the way of our open
heart or full presence to experience and then the art of it, is to notice what gets in the way. But then
don't pile on more suffering, more judgments, more aversion to that, but learn how to breathe with it
open to it. Learn how to hold it in the soft palms, the cupped hand of awareness. And learn to open up

a little bit to that, to realize we can hold the challenges we have, and they envy, the jealousy of
discontent we have, in something of a wider field a wider sense of embodiment, or I in heartened meant
or in in mind, it meant that, that there's much more here that we can begin sensing and where when we
learn how to be present in a nonreactive way, without being swept up in our thoughts and judgments
about it, just kind of just there allowing it to be there. And then beginning to open up and feeling
whatever goodness is there. And maybe part of that goodness is the part of you that wants to help the
part of you that wants to cares about yourself, and wants to kind of be supportive for who you are.

And then for mindfulness practitioners, to realize that one of the ways that we fulfill that desire to be
helpful to ourselves, is paradoxically not to do too much, except to really hold our challenges in
awareness. So something opens up, something reveals itself that has a lot of goodness and joy and
wellbeing that's kind of beyond the edges of it, in the rest of the body, and somewhere else, and just the
goodness of just be having a practice.

So we want to learn to recognize the hindrances to sympathetic joy. We also want to recognize and
what the tradition says, recognize what's called the near enemy of it. And the near enemy is that which
looks like this rejoicing this muditā. But it's not really it is really another kind of way in which we're not
really open up fully. And the tradition just defines it as the, the gladness, the joy that is, comes from,
have to listen to this carefully, because it's in our English, it's not going to come across, maybe a little
bit off. But that which comes with domestic life. And I think that domestic last word domestic life in the
ancient language, was really implying It was a synonym for the joy that comes with some kind of
attachment sometime clinging to something.

And, and the primary one that's referred to here is something that's associated with sensual pleasure,
attachment, essential pleasure. And so if we can feel this joy in someone's engagement in sensual
pleasure, wow, that was really good to get the my fifth drink alcoholic drink of the day, so happy to have
it, to feel joy and that person's happiness and having five drinks before noon. You know, that's not really
it. It's kind of sad. And so, you know, to have joy and that kind of pleasure, and someone has, it's not
really so helpful or supportive, even for a deeper process, something like that. But I've seen that here.
And here in United States among practitioners of muditā. The focusing on the near muditā is often something will different. And that is getting giddiness. So to feel joy and delight in what's happening, but they get kind of giddy about it. And giddy, I think what it means is to be little bit clinging to something a little bit self conscious, and a little bit of conceit a little bit of, of over invoke involvement with the joy. And, and so, so that kind of feels a bit off. It's like there's energy, there's a little bit hyper energy involved, which is not really a settled and open, free flow of joy, but something that actually separates ourselves a little bit. From the appreciation, the delight we take in a situation.

And this idea, there can be a kind of joy and wellbeing that when we get self gets too self preoccupied or more concerned with itself, that we lose touch with the very thing that we're appreciating. And so at least that's what my understanding is this term giddiness. Then when it's used in English for us. It's a kind of bubbling up of joy that is self-preoccupying, self-concerned or self-oriented. And that gets in the way of this boundless feeling of appreciation, joy, delight in the wellbeing and the good fortune of others.

And so to beginwith, so one of the ways to have an entry point to this world of muditā, is to begin appreciating, understanding maybe to use the word appreciate maybe so too much understanding the, the, you know what gets in the way, and that what's more complicated. And in doing so it makes it much more realistic.

And then we're careful not to override and jump over and do a spiritual bypass and then for how we really are, but to really recognize who we are, and recognize all our, you know, warts and all, they say, you know, all the shortcomings we have all the challenges we have.

And in spite of that, or with that, or because of our capacity to open to that, to be able to have a heart that's more open to experience, the joy of the world, the pleasure of the world, that appreciation of all the helpers, and all the goodness, that's here, their success and good fortune of others. And that ability to open and open is, is really one of the primary pet parts of Buddhist practice. So if we can open really to our own suffering, with this open heart, that very ability to open to that is the very openness, that when we get up from our cushion, per se, and we encounter the beautiful things of the world, then we're just open to that now. And then there's sympathetic joy.

Or if we encounter the suffering of the world, we open to that, that and then we have compassion. And but we're not because the doors are open, nothing sticks. As soon as something stuck, part of the doors are closed. And so this open door policy of the heart, keep your doors open. And, and slowly over time, we can learn the tremendous value of these brahmavihāras.

And one of the great ones really great ones that can be nourishing, can be nurturing can be inspiring can really fuel even the practice of the Dharma is this appreciative joy, to rejoice in the well being of others.

So for this next 24 hours, I'd encourage you to explore this more for yourself. And notice as you go through the day, your reactivity, perhaps, to whatever contact you have to goodness in the world, or people celebrating or having success. And, and seeing if I can, you can experience it with completely open doors of the heart, or whether you somehow resist it or close down or distance yourself from it. And with no judgments about yourself, hopefully, just get curious for one day, become an explorer.
Discover the whole territory of your inner life, having to do with real deep appreciation, joy, and lack of it for the success well being and goodness that you experienced in other people. And in the process, let's all of us become people who can benefit the world by appreciating what can what can be appreciated. Thank you very much.