

All-around Happiness

February 20, 2017

Spread thoughts of goodwill every morning, to get you on the right wavelength for the day, remembering that you want a happiness that's harmless. Because if your happiness harms somebody else, it's going to be a happiness that doesn't last.

So, may all beings be happy. Realize that what you're wishing for is that each person take responsibility for his or her actions. That means you've got to take responsibility for yours. At the very least, you want to be a good example for others and you want to carry through your wish for happiness. In other words, your goodwill for others: They may not feel so much goodwill for themselves but you want to make sure you feel goodwill for yourself. And realize what that means: It doesn't mean that you just do what you like. It means that you're very careful about what you do.

This is why we practice mindfulness, alertness, ardency: to be on top of what we're doing, so that we know what we're doing while we're doing it and we can figure out whether it's skillful or not. If it's not skillful, we can change, so that it's more in line with our basic wish, which is for a happiness that lasts, a happiness that doesn't change into anything else.

This is why the Buddha said when you look after others you're looking after yourself, and when you're looking after yourself you're looking after others. In other words, if you look after your mind, making sure that your mind is very clear about what it's doing while it's doing it, then it's going to have a beneficial effect on other people. Then as you care about the well-being of other people, it's going to help you develop more restraint in your actions.

So this is a kind of happiness that's good all-around. It's not good for just one side or just good for one little group of people and not the rest. It's good for everybody. It's through looking for this kind of happiness that we can find peace in the world. Otherwise, there are going to be constant conflicts, and whatever happiness you do attain is going to be eaten away, eaten away from all the struggle and all the conflict.

So this is a safe place to find happiness: by being mindful, by being alert, by taking responsibility for what you do. That's how you show goodwill.