



MIND & LIFE
I N S T I T U T E

Inspiring Minds Transcript
Mindfulness, Resilience, and Compassion for the New Year
Live online conversation: January 13, 2021
Retrieved from [video recording](#)

Susan Bauer-Wu (00:04:24):

Welcome, everyone, and Happy New Year. I'm Susan Bauer-Wu, president of The Mind & Life Institute. I'm joining you from Charlottesville, Virginia today. Thank you so much for joining us for this fourth "Inspiring Minds" program. It's so wonderful to see the names of so many old friends and new ones joining us from all over the world.

Mind & Life's work elevates leading edge insights at the intersection of science, contemplative wisdom and action. We believe that such insights are critical to cultivating personal wellbeing, building more compassionate communities, and strengthening the relationship between humans, other sentient beings, and the earth. Our theme today is mindfulness, resilience, and compassion in the new year. I'm delighted to welcome two amazing contemplative teachers, Rhonda Magee and Jack Kornfield. They're our featured speakers, and they're joined by two extraordinary performers, artists, DJ Drez and Marti Nikko.

My sincere thanks to all of Mind & Life supporters for making our work possible. And to those of you who contributed during the registration process. Your generosity is deeply appreciated. I'm pleased now to introduce Shankari Goldstein, our host extraordinaire, for the "Inspiring Minds" program. Besides Shankari's role as a program manager for Mind & Life, she's an avid social justice activist, a farmer, and a yoga teacher. We're really looking forward to this rich conversation on how inner development can help us in easing and developing capacity, to lean into and to cope with the challenges that we face, the anxiety, the fears, and how contemplative practices can play a role in cultivating a peaceful, just, and sustainable future. Thank you all so much. And over to you, Shankari.

Shankari Goldstein (00:06:56):

Thank you, Susan. Hello and welcome. My name is Shankari Goldstein. I just want to take a moment to ground and share that it's been a polarizing year. And it's been a painful... Something happened to my video. It's been a painful week here in the United States. More and more of our actions are calling for us to be better stewards of the land that we inhabit. I want to acknowledge and honor the traditional land that I sit upon here in Charlottesville, Virginia, which reaches beyond our colonization. Expressing gratitude, deep gratitude for the Monacan people and the First Nations, first inhabitants of this soil. And also the Black community of Vinegar Hill,

which was the community that was displaced from where our Mind & Life office currently resides here in Charlottesville, Virginia.

Shankari Goldstein (00:07:49):

We honor their traditions, the elders and their tears, which were placed into the soil to make our country what it is today. I want to take a moment to allow our participants to please feel free to honor and lift up the names of the people that have inhabited your own land in the chat box. Now, I want to take a moment to introduce quickly our four presenters. First up, I want to introduce Rhonda Magee. Rhonda is a professor of law at the University of San Francisco, and has spent more than 20 years exploring the intersections of anti-racist education, social justice, and contemplative practices.

Shankari Goldstein (00:08:32):

She is an internationally recognized innovator, a storyteller, and practice leader on integrating mindfulness into society. She is a fellow of the Mind & Life Institute, and she recently published her first book, "The Inner Work of Racial Justice: Healing Ourselves and Transforming our Communities Through Mindfulness." Thank you, Rhonda. Next, we have Jack Kornfield. Jack Kornfield is trained as a Buddhist Monk in the monasteries of Thailand, India, and Burma. He has taught meditation internationally since 1974, and is one of the key teachers to introduce Buddhist mindfulness practices to the West. Jack co-founded the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts with his colleagues, Sharon Salzberg and Joseph Goldstein. And then Spirit Rock Center in Woodacre, California.

Shankari Goldstein (00:09:23):

Jack has taught in leading universities, convened international Buddhist teachers meetings, and has trained hundreds of teachers. He holds a PhD in clinical psychology. And is a father, a husband, a grandfather, and most importantly, an activist. Thank you so much, Jack.

Jack Kornfield (00:09:38):

Sure.

Shankari Goldstein (00:09:40):

We're going to open our episode today with a contemplative arts offering from Marti Nikko and DJ Drez. DJ Drez's music has been moving bodies for more than two decades. And if you're a fan of Drez, you've undoubtedly noticed the mysterious seductive voice of Marti Nikko, which has graced dozens of albums, tracks, and remixes. The result is a beautiful eclectic collection of music, which is made for all sacred movement and moods. In addition to making music, Marti and Drez teach yoga in the Bay Area, where she and Drez live and love, with their 16-year-old son and three-year-old baby girl. Dear friends of mine. I want to please welcome Marti and Drez. Thank you.

Marti Nikko (00:10:23):

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. And thank you for having us today, all of you sitting with us. We'd like to start, it has been a difficult week as Shankari said. Part of what I like to remind people to do is to drop back into the inner world and help shore up the container. Seal all the

places we leak energy. Reminding ourselves of our own inner strength and stability, as well as being able to expand that container to hold more, with soft hands. As we know, holding on so tightly, sometimes things just disappear, and vanish in thin air, or can change at any moment. So whatever that we're holding, we learn to hold it with soft hands. And so we'll begin with a mantra and I'd love to invite you to use your voice in your space. It's the only voice we get. The one we're born with, and we'll start with Saraswati. The chant is, "Om aim Saraswatyai namaha." And really giving thanks, Saraswati represents creativity and wisdom. We're giving thanks to that creativity and wisdom.

Marti Nikko (00:11:37):

And by chanting, we're drawing on those aspects that we hold within ourselves. Letting go of the grip, dropping into the inner world, meeting ourselves right where we are, and creating a space to inspire faith, creativity, and to be in the flow. I'll start. You join in.

Marti Nikko (00:13:15):

(singing)

Marti Nikko (00:13:22):

Keep chanting wherever you are.

Marti Nikko (00:14:27):

With deep feeling. It keeps going. And just becomes a whisper. So as we send the prayers out, and the sound waves move out, that's the beauty of Bhakti. Everywhere in the world, wherever you are, all the places you typed in the chat, and then somewhere else in the world, thousands of people chanting "Om aim Saraswatyai namaha." Right? And those sound waves meet up into the universe. It's a powerful, powerful gift. It also comes back to you as that whisper, as that internal sound, and drops back into one of the many rivers of the body. Yeah.

Marti Nikko (00:15:25):

And this next song, also yoga, also to help calm the fluctuations of the mind, and to feel what it feels to be human.

Marti Nikko (00:15:35):

(singing)

Marti Nikko (00:18:52):

Go ahead and take your hands on top of your heart. Just take a deep breath into the palms. Just sourcing that place, like we're blowing just a tiny bit of air on the embers, helping to light the fire so we can continue on to live.

Marti Nikko (00:19:06):

(singing)

Marti Nikko (00:19:14):

It's my wish for you.

Marti Nikko (00:19:22):
(singing)

Marti Nikko (00:19:22):
Inspiring faith. Here's to life. Here's to love. Here's to you. Thank you so much. Thank you so much for this time and space.

Shankari Goldstein (00:20:00):
Thank you, Marti. Thank you, Drez, for that incredible and soulful performance. I'm choked up a little. Here's to life, and I look forward to both of you returning for our Q&A towards the end of the show. So don't go far, people, because they will be coming back to chat with us and take questions from you all. As we move into conversation now with Rhonda and Jack, I encourage you to add questions to the Zoom chat box, and our team will capture those questions for those who wish to have me ask their questions directly when we move into our public Q&A. We also want to highly encourage you to raise your virtual hand and we can bring you up live to interact with one of our four presenters towards the end of our conversation. We definitely love live interaction.

Shankari Goldstein (00:20:53):
To start, today's theme is titled "Mindfulness, Resilience and Compassion For The New Year." I've spoken of resilience in other episodes quite a bit. I'd love to begin with you, Rhonda. Rhonda, in your book, you share that resilience is needed to stay in the conversations and to deepen community when the going gets tough. I think we would be really remiss if we didn't talk about the current state of our political system in the United States. I couldn't imagine that a week ago, when we checked-in, that today we would be witnessing the potential impeachment of a sitting president. A second impeachment of a sitting president.

Shankari Goldstein (00:21:37):
And last week we witnessed collectively behavior from our fellow Americans that most see as grossly incompatible with self-governance and the rule of law. More than that, we witnessed political outburst that goes against our very system of democracy. We witnessed symbols of white supremacy, and neo-Nazis-ism, and flags, and idols surrounding our nation's Capitol. There's no doubt that racial categories are woven into the very concept of our constitution. And in your book, you talk about that we see race everywhere. Why is it important for our White community to remain resilient, to stay in this conversation, and not disassociate themselves from the benefits of Whiteness that they may have received, and try to create and foster new ways of racial relations amongst themselves and amongst us as Black, Indigenous, People of Color?

Rhonda Magee (00:22:41):
Shankari, thank you so very much really for holding us, and inviting us into this conversation, and for providing that context. You're right. We are meeting in a moment that we really couldn't have predicted a week ago or more. It's a painful moment in many, many ways, because of the violence that we witnessed, because we know that the events of January 6th not only

demonstrated strong emotions on different sides of political issues, but crossed the line into violence and took people's lives and psychological well-being. It was a traumatizing event directly for those involved, many of those involved, and sort of indirectly for those of us who in any way have imbibed those images. So yes, it's hard for all of us. I want to say that again. It's hard for all of us.

Rhonda Magee (00:23:54):

And so, while there are particular ways that our individualized racialized identities kind of situate us, and position us to be more or less comfortable turning toward issues of race and racism in particular. I'm just going to say that what happened on January 6th involved many different things, but I think we would obviously be remiss if we weren't able to recognize and sit with the extent to which what we saw and what we are seeing is a re-arising, kind of a reification again in our time of strong identities. And the invitation in particular for Whiteness to be a base for strong identity against, if you will, or solidified in contradistinction to those who have been treated as enemies of Whiteness. Those who are perceived the...

Rhonda Magee (00:25:03):

... those who have been treated as enemies of whiteness, those who are perceived as somehow taking something away from the so-called white nationals.

Rhonda Magee (00:25:10):

So for those reasons, I do think there's a particular challenge of turning toward white identity and opening to the many different ways in which these experiences of our time are challenging all of us around the temptation to engage in our own very subtle acts of reifying notions of identity and linking them to these narratives around whiteness on the one hand and various other racialized identities on the other, which operate, again, often as a counterpoint to or in some sort of dynamic relationship with whiteness. It's hard for us to talk about these things. We weren't really I don't think raised or educated often in our homes, in our communities, in our schools to be really deeply engaged with not just the personal identity dimensions of these things but the ethical call to find common humanity across these identities. We haven't been deeply trained in disrupting the subtle cultural narratives that we've inherited around othering. Narratives that were deeply embedded, instructed into our communities through segregation and through enslavement and colonialism before that. The exclusionary acts that impact Asian heritage peoples in the internment period and so on. Obviously Indigenous experience as well.

Rhonda Magee (00:27:03):

So all of this is all around us all the time as our reflections on Indigenous heritages in our sharing about our land acknowledgements reminds us. We're embedded in all of this. So it's a challenge for all of us, not only white racialized people really, to stay engaged in reflection on how all of this that's all around us all the time is really landing in our soul, our spirit, our mind, our body, triggering our difficult emotions and making it hard for us to feel the ground of love that is always here and always readily available to any of us if we can find our way back to it.

Shankari Goldstein (00:27:50):

It leads me to switch over to what it means to be in the body in this moment. You said we weren't raised and trained to have these conversations. For me, it was really compelling because it's like human beings are doing this to each other. It makes me question our very human nature as a species.

Shankari Goldstein (00:28:13):

So, Jack, this question is for you because right now in our social media feeds and just on the internet, we're seeing this message of, "That's not me. I'm not connected to that form of human nature." But throughout history, we have witnessed contemporary oppression and exclusionist behavior, and I think it's one thing to say we need to go deep within our hearts and find the inner peace and balance and practice that pragmatic spirituality that we talked about. But on the other side of the coin, we feel this compelling need to challenge an entire system of castes and oppressive patriarchy. There's these two polarizing sides of the coin.

Shankari Goldstein (00:28:56):

So in your opinion, how do we begin to trust this intuition that we may feel we have as individuals and how can we put it into embodied practices to heal? How do we really cultivate happiness and compassion in this moment?

Jack Kornfield (00:29:17):

Small questions.

Shankari Goldstein (00:29:21):

Yeah.

Jack Kornfield (00:29:21):

As if they're simple answers. First, I just want myself and everybody to take a breath, to listen to you, Shankari, to listen to you, Rhonda, and to say we're entering together yet again a difficult conversation. And part of what makes the conversation difficult is the emotions it touches, the fear, the shame, the guilt, the longing, the hope, the pain that we've carried. And when we take a breath and feel our self grounded on the Earth and bring the quality of a mindful, loving attention, we start to make a place where it's possible to hold all this. Because it's so easy to have it pass by, and we're used to the media. And what happened in the Capitol was not different than most of the other exciting TV shows and movies really, and it's very easy to distance ourselves from it and in some way not feel the impact in our own hearts or the impact, more importantly, on the human beings all around us. So that's a start.

Jack Kornfield (00:30:39):

And then you posed a kind of dichotomy if you will, Shankari, about making your own heart a zone of peace but then what about the structural conditioning that we swim in that causes so much suffering. The word mindfulness in its traditional Sanskrit and Pali languages is a compound word "Sati Sampajañña," and it has two sides to it. One means mindful presence, and the other is mindful response. And they come together as much as breathing in and out. In Zen they say there are only two things: you sit and you sweep the garden, and it doesn't matter

how big the garden is. So this is really the work of Mind & Life that all of us have been engaged in, is wedding these two capacities together.

Jack Kornfield (00:31:44):

Now Mahatma Gandhi would take a day every week in silence, and in the middle of what he was doing, trying to take down the structures of the entire British Empire and the oppression of that colonial era, people would come to him and say, "Gandhiji, there's hundreds of thousands of people in the streets marching." Think Washington even more so. "People are being killed. You must come." And he would say, "I'm sorry. It's Thursday. It's my quiet day," because he wanted to get still enough to listen, to say, "How can I respond? What is the deepest or most meaningful way that I can express really the love that I have and the trust that I have in humanity?" And he said, "When I despair"—so here is Gandhi speaking. He despaired too like so many—"I remember all through history the way of truth and love is always one. Yes, there have been murderers and tyrants and for a time they can seem invincible. But in the end, they always fall. Think of it, always."

Jack Kornfield (00:33:02):

So when he's sad, he also aligned himself with the place of trust that we might talk more about, of the universe and the capacity for new things to be born. But it's also a painful thing to do, to sit and quiet yourself because then you have to feel your confusion. You have to feel the pain that you have, the struggle, the not knowing. So many ways that you have as a white person put it out of vision because you didn't have to deal with it or as a BIPOC person, you had to do to survive.

Jack Kornfield (00:33:51):

James Baldwin explains it, "I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hate and ignorance so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with their own pain." And we haven't done this as a nation. We have individually and collectively this task, and the great power of mindful, loving awareness, of the trainings that we offer, is actually to be able to hold the measure of pain and suffering, as well as the possibility and the beauty. What's also true is that we're still fighting the Civil War. It was embedded in the Constitution to begin with. You, Rhonda, are three fifths of me as a white person. I think I'm a tiny bit taller, but not like two fifths taller, right? I mean, I make a joke, but if you feel the implication of it, it's extraordinary. It's like cutting out parts of people's bodies, and we did it from the very beginning, from the very start.

Jack Kornfield (00:35:05):

There are two kinds of tears that you encounter when you sit and you're willing to do what Baldwin speaks of, of being willing to be with the pain of it all. There are the personal pain of how you've been mistreated and the trauma that you care, which needs to be held with compassion, and then there's another, which is called the tears of the way and that's just because your heart starts to open and you realize we're in this together. That we have to somehow be able to respond from our hearts with one another as a family. And I believe that this is truly possible.

Jack Kornfield (00:35:50):

Just as people were carrying the flag of the Confederacy, I want to stand up and live my life and carry the flag of humanity as a different flag and not a flag against anything but as something... Maybe the flag will have birds and rain forest trees and children of different hues. It's the flag of dignity and love.

Jack Kornfield (00:36:22):

We have, as a nation, as Baldwin points to, we've always blamed somebody else. The Mexicans, the immigrants, the Black people, the Brown people, the Red people, the Yellow people, the Communists. They were the ones, they were the enemy du jour in my childhood. They're coming back around because we can't bear our own insecurity, the economic insecurity of our time, the political insecurity, the fears that we're going to lose things.

Jack Kornfield (00:36:56):

My teacher called on something called the wisdom of insecurity. That actually we are in this human incarnation and we're vulnerable. And when we can accept this and see that we're all vulnerable together, then we can say, "Yes, we've done this for thousands of generations. We've survived things." And to call on our ancestors, our Black and Brown and Red and Yellow and white ancestors who've done the right thing, who've stood up for what matters. And say, "Yes, we are with you. You are with us."

Jack Kornfield (00:37:33):

So I rambled a little bit to answer your question.

Shankari Goldstein (00:37:37):

No, that's beautiful. And I love that you talked about truth and love as always one, but you also brought in the word trust. So much of what you shared was really about just connecting to self and to self-care and love as an emergent practice and really embodying it and honoring the ancestors. I think collective intentions are contributing to the forces of justice and healing that we are really seeking, but what if the intentions that we're seeking are misinformed because right now we're living in this golden age of misinformation and our human behavior around best practices is not just from those political-social divides around racism. But even the best practices to combat COVID-19 are just keeping us in these political spectrums that are spinning, and it makes me think of different psychology studies, like the misinformation effect.

Shankari Goldstein (00:38:32):

The misinformation effect refers to the impairment in memory for the past that arises after exposure to misleading information or cognitive reflection tests, which measure basic reasoning processes often with the questions that are slipperier than they seem. Trying to take people in these different directions. It's as simple as words and phrases that are used to describe situations that can ultimately help define how listeners or viewers on social media or in that perfect TV show, like you described, can decide that outcome.

Shankari Goldstein (00:39:07):

So I think about our contemplative communities. There's also these messages of love and light that can also be judged as a form of gaslighting or misinformed. They can be taken adversely.

Shankari Goldstein (00:39:19):

So I guess just to ask you, Rhonda, knowing all of that, this age of misinformation that we're in, what is in your opinion something that can help... What's the spark to unite us? How do we get past these divisions and get to that place where Jack was describing of carrying the flag of humanity, waving the flag of humanity?

Rhonda Magee (00:39:44):

Wow. Again, such a profound question. I think as Jack was inviting us to experience, grounding ourselves in a deeper sense of who we are and a deeper sense of the love that we feel is I think an important point of the invitation. If we can ground ourselves in these practices, that's certainly a beginning. But I do think engaging with these dynamics, the injustices that we see, responding, as Jack said, not only becoming aware but actually responding in some way is critical. So how to respond from that place of common humanity...

Rhonda Magee (00:40:49):

Shankari, you're reminding us that Jack invited us to really lean into and bring that flag of all of us together as we move through the world. That's an ongoing challenge. Personally, it's not about landing, delivering myself over to some kind of spa-like bubble of loving engagement that doesn't change. Everything changes. So there's a dynamic quality to how it is that we engage and respond to what we see from a place of love but also from a place of a sense of, as best we can, discernment of what kind of response might minimize suffering.

Rhonda Magee (00:41:40):

So taking action is a part of the way, and our goal of course, my personal goal is to, as best as I can, use the moments that I have and the energy that I have, the power that I have to act in ways that minimize as much as possible overall suffering. Recognizing I'm not perfect and we make mistakes, and we take action, and we pause and reflect, and we see the result, and we begin again. If we can ground ourselves in these commitments and practices and ways of accessing the love in our hearts, then the actions that we take... We're always just doing the best we can. We're never going to be perfect. But as best we can, we might be taking those actions that we think might be overall necessary to minimize suffering and hurt. I think that's really with humility, the best we can ever do.

Rhonda Magee (00:42:45):

Like Jack, I was looking at inspirations for this work for me. The great Dr. Martin Luther King is always an inspiration for me. I grew up in the South. Born in the last year of Martin Luther King Jr.'s life on this Earth. I was born in 1967. By the time I turned one, he had been assassinated for his own efforts to dismantle these systems of oppression in our country. His letter from a Birmingham jail we've all read, but I never tire of going back to it, especially in moments like this. The part I'm going to quote, "I cannot sit idly by," he says, "in Atlanta and not be concerned about what's happening in Birmingham."

Rhonda Magee (00:43:34):

So to Jack's point about we can watch these things and the video from last Wednesday or January 6th can run over us like a waterfall and remind us of video games and movies. Waking up to the reality that these were not movies and video games. These were actual human beings charging a sacred ground in our cultural history, the Capitol Building. And more than that, literally putting people's lives at risk and taking some along the way. That happened. Can we sit idly by?

Rhonda Magee (00:44:13):

So as we meditate and as we ground ourselves in love, it really isn't an invitation to pacification I don't think. It's really an invitation to really come to a sense of our responsibility. Mindfulness as awareness and response. What is our ability to respond? As best we can, again, knowing we're not perfect, but recognizing that in these efforts to enact a world together, politics is about power. So we have to talk about right uses of power, and we have to talk about how mindfulness, compassionate awareness can support us and using our power rightly, together. Power with as opposed to power over.

Rhonda Magee (00:44:59):

So when I think of Jack's flag, I'm thinking of that as a symbol of not just a momentary way of moving through the world but of a way of making manifest this objective of exercising power rightly together from a place of love and care. And that sometimes will feel like tension and will feel like resolving conflict in ways that tempt us to feel like someone wins and someone loses. But I think if we're moving each moment, moment- by-moment with humility and from that place of love, that's really the best we can do. But we certainly can highlight that as an ethical imperative to help guide action going forward.

Shankari Goldstein (00:45:41):

Thank you. I want to maybe shift just a little bit and close the discussion between the two of you zooming out to an even larger issue beyond just what's happening in the states, and that's the climate crisis. This weekend we learned about feedback loops with Greta Thunberg and His Holiness the Dalai Lama along with renowned scientists. In climate change, a feedback loop is something that speeds up or slows down a warming trend. And a positive feedback accelerates a temperature rising. Whereas a negative feedback slows it down. We know that in nature if one thing is off balance, it affects the entire system. And I love both of your work, and I especially love, Rhonda, how you in your book, you talk about the flow of nature's elements. And you talk about your integrating of the different Earth elements in your practice.

Shankari Goldstein (00:46:42):

But to you Jack, beginning with you maybe, and I want to get both your thoughts on this before we open it up for public questions. How do communities like Spirit Rock create these really broad range visions of liberation and sustainability, and furthermore, how can visions like what you're creating at Spirit Rock show up to begin to address climate change?

Jack Kornfield (00:47:12):

30 minutes, and you want to tackle the biggest questions in the world. I see. And then you want answers. Come on.

Shankari Goldstein (00:47:19):

I just think the beautiful 400 acres, what you're doing-

Jack Kornfield (00:47:22):

Yeah, yeah. So let's get real here.

Shankari Goldstein (00:47:25):

Yeah.

Jack Kornfield (00:47:26):

First of all, all this stuff is tough. I was teaching recently, and I invited all the questions on what people are dealing with. And a lot of them actually were very personal. "I had people in my family who believe in QAnon. My daughter is transitioning as a teenager to her gender. No one in my extended family will accept her." And I said, "Buddha and Jesus both had a hard time when they went back to their families and their communities. So this isn't a new story." In fact, the First Noble Truth of the Buddhist teaching is that there is suffering, and that's really what we're talking about now. Whether it's the collective suffering and oppression of racial injustice and economic injustice and so forth or whether it's the greed-fueled climate crisis and the fear-fueled climate crisis. So we have to take the First Noble Truth and say, "Yes, this is so." You can't make any difference unless we really see it.

Jack Kornfield (00:48:40):

"The enemies," said my teacher Ajahn Chah, "is delusion, is the fact that we don't let ourselves see."

Jack Kornfield (00:48:47):

and then there's a Second Noble Truth: the causes. Well, it's greed, it's hatred. It's the kind of ignorance, things that are being promoted online. Everybody now has watched the social network movie "Social Dilemma," the echo chambers that we get in so that people don't even believe what's happening anymore. They believe the chatter and things like that. But underneath all of that, for us, when I talk about carrying a banner—I was out for months with a Black Lives Matter sign on the street corner with a mask and not with other people because of the pandemic. A lot of people would drive by and honk and cheer, and some would drive by and shout, "Asshole! You fucking... What are you doing?" And all kinds of things like that. It's kind of just how humanity is. It was our minds, but it was public as we saw.

Jack Kornfield (00:49:49):

The same with climate. There are all these different feelings we have: overwhelmed, we can't do anything about it. We have to change the system, but how do you do that?

Jack Kornfield (00:50:03):

We have to change the system, but how do you do that? The answer is to be a Bodhisattva, right? The Dalai Lama wakes up in the morning, three in the morning, and he chants from Shantideva, "May I be a bridge, a boat, a raft for people to cross the flood. May I be medicine for the sick and food for the hungry. May I be a resting place for those who are weary. May I be a lamp in the darkness and may I do it as long as earth and sky exists, as long as galaxies exist."

Jack Kornfield (00:50:38):

And if you look at Wangari Maathai who won the Nobel Prize, planted a few trees in East Africa, and got other women mostly to do that, and of course was thrown in prison. I think that's part of the requirement for a Nobel Peace Prize pretty much these days, but eventually Green Belted 51 million trees, or you look at this changing East African climate, or you look at Ellen Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee who won the Nobel Prize in Liberia, and they said, "Liberia used to be known for its child soldiers and now it's known for its women leaders."

Jack Kornfield (00:51:18):

We have the capacity to change even at this point. And so, what we're talking about is quieting the mind and tending the heart and holding the suffering as a Bodhisattva who turns toward it with a great heart and says, "Yes, this is our humanity and we're foolish, and we hurt one another and we get greedy, but we also have within us the great heart of compassion." And then to say, "How can I, as the Bodhisattva, and turning toward it, reach my hand out to mend what I can to lend my voice, to come together with others and do so?"

Jack Kornfield (00:51:54):

And that becomes a very specific practice for each person to look in their community, their family, the place that they are. We will turn this around in some way, but there will be a tremendous amount of suffering just as there is with the pandemic being badly handled. The Bodhisattva weeps in some ways as they do it, but then also, there's something joyful in it to say, "We can do this. We actually know how to do this and we can do it as artfully and as lovingly as we can." So, it's a simple call to action.

Shankari Goldstein (00:52:33):

Rhonda, do you want to add something briefly, because there's obviously environmental racism, too?

Rhonda Magee (00:52:41):

Right. I actually think that, while each of these issues bear concentration, focus, and analysis, they're linked in so many different ways that it's very, very important not to see them as totally separate. Yes, there is underlying the interlocking pandemics of COVID, of racism, of the climate crisis. Just again, deep existential fear of all of these changes that are happening at a pace that's so much faster than our very modest, magnificent, but also, challenged minds and brains and spirits can really fully integrate easefully. So, we're scared to death. Many people, really, really frightened by all of these different changes from technology to climate to demographics to identity and how we talk about these things. These changes are anxiety producing for many, many people.

Rhonda Magee (00:53:53):

And so, if we can't find ways to calm ourselves, like right here and right now. For me, this past period has been really, really challenging. It's not been easy for me to sit and meditate during the height of some of these highly anxiety-producing moments. Wednesday, January 6th was similar for me to some of the days of the fires rampaging through California, which now we have fire season, so it seems regularly every October we can predict that we will have these heightened moments of anxiety around the way the climate change issue is impacting all of us every day. And yet for me, finding some way, gently with love, to stay engaged in practice is really, really important to managing those strong emotions of fear and anxiety. When I couldn't meditate, I went to my partner and said, "I need 15 minutes of you listening to me for a minute," speaking in a mindful contemplative way with my loving partner as a practice.

Rhonda Magee (00:55:02):

And that helped me to be able then, to do some embodied movements, some Qigong and yoga, and then to sit and then to find again, that sense of that well of support. This is not a Pollyanna... I'm not sugarcoating how hard things are for a lot of us right now, for all of us in different ways, and I'm also not going to sugar coat and say that it's easy to sit in the midst of this. For me, it isn't some days, but I do think mindful practice is not only sitting. Some days, it is listening to music, dancing, mindful communication with our loved ones and folks with whom we feel safe. It's going out in nature if that grounds us, and it does for me. It's feeling love in my heart, even when I am fearful of not getting that in response from other people. There are many different ways we can practice together, and for me, this has really been a lifeline, a golden thread of some support, even on the darkest and hardest days of this time.

Jack Kornfield (00:56:09):

And Rhonda, what you are saying, you're really speaking to the Third and Fourth Noble Truths. Not only is there suffering and there's a cause, there's a greed, and so forth, but actually there's a path to the end of it, and it requires quieting our minds. Maybe taking a walk in nature, remember that we belong to nature, and then tuning in. The line from Pablo Neruda, the great poet, he says, "You can pick all the flowers, but you can't stop the spring." And when you see the plants coming through the cracks in the sidewalk, and when you feel that the world has the capacity to renew itself, you begin to also have the ability to align yourself with that as a Bodhisattva, and say, "This is what my gift is and how I add to it."

Shankari Goldstein (00:57:01):

Thank you both so much. There's so many ways that we can liberate ourselves in this journey called life. And I know for me, I'm certainly waiting for May when the flowers peak through the cracks in the sidewalk here in Virginia. I want to give time for people to ask you questions. There's so much more that we could discuss in this moment and you've left us with so much to think about, but I want to open up space for our general audience to engage with you as well, and I think Ray has a question about being in practice. So I'm going to have Ray come up and it'll take a few minutes to...

Listener (00:57:36):

Yes, yes. Here I am. Can you hear me?

Jack Kornfield (00:57:38):

Yes.

Rhonda Magee (00:57:39):

We can hear you.

Listener (00:57:39):

Yes. Thanks so much Rhonda and Jack, and Shankari. It's very insightful. I loved what you said, Rhonda, when you said that you, let me put it in my own word, that you became a little bit overwhelmed by some situation, and then you went out and you took 15 minutes and that's great. I'm a Buddhist practitioner since years. One of my first book was, "After the Ecstasy, the Laundry," so Jack, I owe you. A lot of great insight, I loved it so much.

Jack Kornfield (00:58:07):

Thank you.

Listener (00:58:08):

I still give it to so many friends after retreat because I think they have to read it. And yes, I've come across this pandemic and as the Canadian, which is not very far from the border in the Eastern township of Quebec, I've seen what was happening in the United States with so much sadness. So much, so much sadness, but also the pandemic throughout the planet, and some days I saw friends slipping into these false discourse and getting trapped into this [inaudible 00:58:42] whatsoever, and it made me very, very sad and sitting on the cushion every day, practicing what my practice is, I'm actually taking a Dzogchen course, which is bringing a lot of great insight. But still, as I wrote a little sooner, as a question within a question is that, I know that I cannot... Let's put it in the words of my mom. I know that I cannot save the planet by myself.

Listener (00:59:10):

I do my best. I sit, I practice, and I do this Bodhisattva vow every day that I can. Sometime I fail. I'm not perfect. I realize it. It's wonderful because I realize I am not, but still I'm doing as much as I can. I am a caretaker of a disabled person since two to three years. I do all my best to have a perfect life, but someday, and I address it to you, Jack, because I know that you're a long time Buddhist Practitioner, also you've been a monk, my question that always tickled my mind is, is after I have done all this, what did I didn't understand that I still have this little doubt that there is something I could do, something more than this very little I have done, to help this world around me?

Listener (01:00:02):

But at some moment, I also sit on the cushion and I just realize that all this that happens, is part of my consciousness and it's okay. It comes and goes like the song says, but someday, I feel it's not enough and there's some kind of sadness. My ex-master, Albert Low, was a Zen Master, he used to tell me, "Son, it's the sadness that's a perfect sadness." It still resonate in my mind, but

still I have the feeling that there's something else, little thing that I could do to make it better. What is your answer, please?

Jack Kornfield (01:00:41):

Well, first I just love listening to all that you said, because there is so much wisdom and heart and intelligence in it, and the care that you give and what you're devoted to, and I just would say, doubt is natural. It's part of being a human being, and it was one of the central questions for the Buddha on his own path, that we actually need doubt, because another framing of it is a mind that's still open to say, "Is there more? Is there something to learn in how I might give myself or tend this world, and there isn't a fixed answer. It's a kind of a process that we're in, a step-by-step.

Jack Kornfield (01:01:25):

There is a man who wrote to the IRS saying, "I've not been able to sleep." This was his doubt. "I can't sleep because I cheated on my taxes last year, so I've enclosed a check for \$3,000. If I still can't sleep, I'll send the rest." Right? And there's some way in telling that joke to you that I want you to feel that our humanity is a step at a time, and that the love as your teacher said, it's perfect sadness. It's also perfect doubt. I respect your question and you live your way into life through that question.

Shankari Goldstein (01:02:13):

Well, I want to ask a question to Rhonda. This came from Jesse. What is the response for people who are anti all the things that Jack mentioned earlier in his answer? Is it patience, understanding? Jesse says, "I know we need to practice loving kindness, but it's so hard for people who inhabit those values. I think of the events at the Capitol, and I don't know how to have compassion for the mob that was chasing the black police officer. That image particularly has stayed with me. What is your advice?"

Rhonda Magee (01:02:48):

Yeah, thank you. Again, I'm resonating with that question. I, again, honor and respect it, too. All of these questions, right? They are so important. Difficulty feeling compassion for those who we see as doing harm and that image that you mentioned really pained me, brought tears, not just to my eyes, but really, really broke my heart. And so, this question of how to feel compassion, how to respond to all of our deepest longings for justice and fairness and dignified treatment for everybody, and that temptation to then, when we see folks not doing those things, not offering the dignity we know, the love that we know is really our true just deserves.

Rhonda Magee (01:03:59):

The temptation then is to move into the opposite really and demonize or wish for the ill of those who appear to be doing harm, and it's a hard challenge, but for me, this is why I practice on a regular basis with this hard challenge rooting me and pulling me back to the cushion and back to this effort, these commitments. This particular challenge, actually. Not just to give myself a sense of a regular pick me up or support me and focus, I really practiced for this, for what I consider to be one of the deepest ethical and moral challenges of my own heart, to keep finding ways to see the humanity in folks who are doing things that really are obviously harmful.

Rhonda Magee (01:04:59):

And all I can say is for me, I'm constantly wanting us all to reflect on the multitude of causes and conditions that lead anyone to take any single action that we may see. As Bryan Stevenson reminds us in his beautiful work, the sum total of no single one of us is represented by one act. We're all much more than the worst thing we've ever done, even if we've done a number of different worse things. And so, most people were acting from violence, have in some ways been traumatized and cut off from love and their own life and experience, whatever their background or parent color. So, it's not easy to remember all those things and Martin Luther King died while preaching for peace. So, it's not a protection against the violence coming back against us. It is not. And still we get up every day.

Rhonda Magee (01:06:07):

The path of Bodhisattva speaks to me as well, and I sometimes compare it or think of it as, when I think of folks who get up every day and try to do the best they can, knowing that they can't solve it all. I think of people like, a pediatric oncologist, a doctor committed to healing and managing cancer in the smallest, most vulnerable little patients, little infants, babies, let's say. Cancer will continue to take children. You get up every day, you take care of those children that you can.

Rhonda Magee (01:06:39):

And so, there are so many beautiful teaching stories along those lines that remind us to be in some measure in joyful engagement, humbly doing the thing before us, that seems the next best step we can take to minimize suffering, and if that's just easing our own troubled heart by taking a day and self-care, that's what we do. But if from that place, we can lift up one other person with a smile, with a gesture of support, that's what we do. And if we can organize folks, that's what we do. But it's all of that, to me is how to, in that titrate, what kind of thing can we do to respond to the hate that we see, the pain that we see, the violence that we see, starting with noticing it arising in our own heart and just working with that with love.

Shankari Goldstein (01:07:35):

Mm. Thank you, Rhonda, and I think that Rhonda's answer really applies to your question, Andrew McKenzie, which I'm not quite sure if we'll have time to get to, but she definitely answered what you were asking about what to do when you're confronted with these individuals. I want to bring back Marti and Drez, if we can, because I would love to hear their perspective on some of these topics that we've been talking about.

Shankari Goldstein (01:08:03):

So I want to welcome them back into the space and also encouraging our participants to raise your hand if you have a question directly for them, but I'll start with a question that I've been thinking about a lot in terms of my relationship with you, Marti and Drez, and we've talked about this offline. Sometimes we push each other too far and we really misread in collective call out culture. We've talked a lot about the call out culture movement and what are best practices that both of you live by to hold those who create community or individual harm accountable without

that extreme cancel culture that we're seeing, and how well do you think or not, that cancel culture serves us? What are some alternative methods-

Marti Nikko (01:08:54):

Oh, man. You went big again. I have mixed feelings about cancel culture as a term. It is a fairly new term for me. It's not something I've really thought about up until this moment, to be quite honest. So I will not act as if I am well studied on the topic, but I can share that there are experiences one can have that require distance, boundary, and non-communication, and I think that's absolutely okay. And there are times and circumstances... I'm trying to collect my words. I wasn't prepared for this question, but I think there are also times where we, even, if someone has wronged us or something terrible has happened or things haven't gone the right way, that we need to be open and remain open to show up to the conversation. So, I have two different instances on that, examples.

Marti Nikko (01:10:09):

For example, I can bring up Lululemon. I've been teaching yoga and Pilates for many, many years, and I have had a long relationship with Lululemon, just meaning, wearing their clothes and going into the store relationship. They started to ask me to teach free classes in their store way back in the day in my early years, but I was never offered ambassadorship. So they just wanted me to come in, free classes and would toss me a shirt, and I would look up on the wall of that first flagship store, which was in Santa Monica, and there were literally no people of color on that wall, and I realized at some point, I'm not going to be up on that wall, so I'm going to have to stop saying yes to those free classes, and I'm going to have to move on with life.

Marti Nikko (01:10:54):

Well, years and years later, and of course, they have many, many people of color now in their ambassadorship program, they came to me. They came to me most recently during this past year and we had to have a lot of difficult conversation. We had to have challenging and uncomfortable conversation in order for me to now in this day, say yes, and allow my story to become part of their story, and I really needed to show up to the table because they're saying, "Hey, we want to make all of these changes. We're here making these changes. These are the things we're doing. These are the programs we've established. These are the people running these programs and we also want you to be a part of this, too." And so, I had to have these conversations and I had to express how the many years made me feel to this point.

Marti Nikko (01:11:46):

But my point is, is with being with myself, I was able to show up to the conversation. Now, I will say the year prior in 2019... So that's one example of, yes, we need to show up to the conversation. We don't just cancel Lulu. They're powerful. They have a lot of resources, and if I can work within there and partner up with them, and help direct some of that resource to the right place, you know what? I'm going to use my power and my platform to do so, so I went ahead and said yes to that. Now, there was what I consider a personal attack on my family the year prior. Wasn't necessarily physical, somewhat physical, and not physical. Won't get into the details. We'll reserve names because we don't need to cancel her out. She did happen to be a white woman. I felt personally threatened. I felt my family was threatened. I felt my livelihood

was threatened. It affected all areas of my life, and in that case, there was no conversation needed from me with her directly.

Marti Nikko (01:12:57):

It needed to be a hard boundary, out of my life, we don't speak anymore, and I'm okay with that. The forgiveness comes with my own personal practices and my own... whether it's chanting, through prayer, through remaining close to my own heart, and it is not up to me to make her feel better about the actions she took against me and my family, and that will be her own healing process because I'm sure it affected her deeply as well. She did try to attempt to have a conversation with me. I wasn't ready for that conversation. I don't think I ever will be ready for that conversation, and I'm okay with that. I am still working through the healing, through my own process, for my own peace of mind. I hope that helps.

Marti Nikko (01:13:45):

So in other words, I could have put her out there on social media and be like, "This white woman did this to me. Everybody hate her," but I know that those actions she took, regardless intentionally, unintentionally, whatever the reasons were, and however harmful they were, that was for her and for her to deal with outside of my own community and realm. So, I don't know if that answered the question exactly, but there are appropriate times like the man who kneeled on George Floyd's neck, I don't need to have a conversation with that person. He might need to work with professionals or be in prison and work with professionals or whatever it is that they do, the professionals do, but that's not invited into my community, my immediate community. Even though we're all human, I hope for the healing for him and even more, especially for George Floyd's family. Just as an example.

Rhonda Magee (01:14:50):

Thanks for letting your voice be heard, Marti, and I think it's important to allow people to share their personal experiences and stories, and we really honor people's personal experiences and stories. Drez, is there anything you want to add to that conversation?

Shankari Goldstein (01:15:03):

Drez, is there anything you want to add to that conversation?

Drez (01:15:05):

Yeah. I mean, I think systems definitely need to be called out. Yeah, I mean, and maybe not canceled, but called out and yeah. Sometimes canceled obviously dismantled and things like that, for sure. And sometimes the people who hold it up, especially the ones in power, who call out power plays, whatever. So in some situations, yes. But when it comes to someone's just personal ways of thinking, whether it's a yoga teacher who did something wrong alive or dead. And then some, all the terrible... There are so many things that I could say that I'm just like. Here's the thing.

Shankari Goldstein (01:16:09):

Yeah.

DJ Drez (01:16:10):

We know all the reasons why people get called out, especially in the so-called conscious community. The thing is this is there are some people who are doing those things and they're not in the light. They don't have a million followers or whatever. They're the same type of person doing the same thing. And if they think, "Damn, this loved person just got called out." And now they hate them. They might just think, "Well, there's no hope. I'm going to accept being a bad person or whatever." Instead of trying to move towards to being, I'm going to say, fixing what's broken.

DJ Drez (01:17:10):

There's other words I could use, but like a lot of people, including the big ones in the light, you don't want them to give up. You want them to try. We want all these crazy white-raged people around the globe, not just in the US and at the Capitol, but we want them to see wait, there's hope that we could actually be at peace and find brotherhood, sisterhood within everyone, because we're all dealing with the same climate challenge, that the earth is going to spit us all out.

DJ Drez (01:17:53):

You know what I'm saying? My point is this, this cancel culture is... It can be useful in the big picture for the systems and the people who hold those systems up. But personally, we need to show people that, "Hey, yeah, what you're doing is fucked up, but we know that you could come back." You know what I mean? And there's a place like, "We'll accept you back. But there's things you got to do. There's work you got to do." That has to exist for them.

Shankari Goldstein (01:18:26):

Yeah. Thank you for honoring that and creating that space for boundaries and systems of accountability to be put in place, because I think ultimately that's what a lot of people are asking for, particularly in the conscientious community, it's coming up more and more, this conversation. It's really coming to light. So I just wanted to touch on that with you both today. This has been so great and I'm going to close with kind of our signature "Inspiring Minds" question that I always ask at the end of every conversation with the four of you. And that is, what is one action step or insight that each of you feel that you can take from this direct conversation that you had today and start to carry it into your life? And maybe I can start with you, Jack.

Jack Kornfield (01:19:15):

More music and dancing. I love the way we started with the music. It really touched me. And I think of this passage from the great playwright, Moliere, where he says, "All the ills of humankind, all the tragic misfortunes have filled the history books, all the political blunders, all the failures of the great leaders have arisen merely from a lack of skill at dancing." And he's, I mean, it's playful, but there's some way in which I was touched by the music, by the beauty of it, and that we need that. And the teachings are to live in joy and connect with beauty, and then use that not so much to call out, but to call in and say, "Yes, we can live in this way." So thank you.

Shankari Goldstein (01:20:03):

Thank you. Love that. Using music to get to those deeper parts of the true essence of our nature. Rhonda, something you're taking from this discussion today?

Rhonda Magee (01:20:16):

I'm not sure what I will take ultimately because I'm still alive to it. And I'm still that way, it'll be a moment before I know really. But like Jack, I was very moved by the music, but also I think the liveliness of the questions and the engagement of this community, with these really profound and really pointedly difficult topics. I think one thing I will take away is the fact that these questions about how to live together well and how to survive are challenging, but they also bring us together in meaning, and purpose, and in love, and in our hope for the world.

Rhonda Magee (01:21:06):

So I think, I mean, this actually is why I kind of do what I do. I'm not a sadness junkie. I'm kind of, if anything, a joy junkie. And so there's something joyful about creating space to hear each other, to be each other, to dance, to hum, to sing together. I think the combination of all of these things will continue to inspire me as it always does when I come together with folks turning toward the difficult, but with love and with open-heartedness to hear and to be together in ways that can affirm and uplift us all.

Shankari Goldstein (01:21:41):

Thank you so much.

Rhonda Magee (01:21:42):

Thank you.

Shankari Goldstein (01:21:43):

Marti, and Nikko, as we move past calling out and we invite calling in and also calling forward, what is something that each of you will take from this conversation?

Marti Nikko (01:21:57):

I can't say the exact thing, but I do have a feeling of deep gratitude for even being a part of this conversation. And as Jack said that instead of calling out, call in, I knew that that's where I want to be. That's what I want to feel. And I'm okay with not feeling it at this moment, but I know I'm inspired to draw in that feeling more. And it also reminds me that every day on this path, on this journey, every day on this path, I feel like it's my first day. And I'm becoming more comfortable with that each day, even after so many days of my life. So I just wanted to say that... I'm not even sure what I'm saying, but you get the feeling of what it is. I hope. I hope. Thank you.

Shankari Goldstein (01:22:54):

Drez, closing thoughts?

Drez (01:22:56):

Yeah, I think for me, it's just something that I've been telling myself every day when my teeth are clenching or my breath is short or I'm making a fist. Sometimes we watch everything that's going

on or feel things that are going on. And it's just full of anger and frustration and those fools on the TV and all that. But just to remember that, not to let this cold civil war, whatever you want to call it, not to let those thoughts and seeing everything, ruin myself within, with all these, the gripping and the anger. And just like Jack said, like Rhonda said, just to dance and to breathe, you're doing it for yourself. You're doing it for yourself and your people, so you can keep moving forward. Because unfortunately, we have the power to ruin ourselves from this. And so just remembering and remembering to smile, and to be light as much as possible and laugh and to make music. So here we go.

Shankari Goldstein (01:24:17):

Thank you. Yeah, indeed. We are going to breathe and create space for you to dance again. But before we close with a beautiful contemplative meditation offering from Jack and another musical offering from Marti and Drez, I'm going to close our episode and say that today was so beautiful and poignant given the state of our world right now, the globe. And Rhonda and Jack really reminded us that our conversation during these times are historically entrenched. They're difficult conversations, and we need to slow down. We need to acknowledge the difficulty of our challenge and ground ourselves in practices that help us access love and humility. And I'm just encouraging all of our audience, all of our participants today to just become aware of our responsibility, compassionate awareness can support us in using our power, rightly. From a place of love and care, let's stay aware, let's stay engaged.

Shankari Goldstein (01:25:18):

Let's respond to the injustices that we see. Let's keep finding ways to see the humanity in people who are causing us harm and consider what kind of response might minimize suffering. Taking action is part of the way. So encouraging you all to continue to carry that flag of humanity, dignity, and love, and be a lamp in the darkness. So I will share that the next gathering that we're going to have is going to be on Wednesday, March 10th. It's our fifth installment of "Inspiring Minds." And I'm so grateful to be joined by Doris Chang, Reggie Hubbard, and a live performance from Mind & Life community member, Grant Jones.

Shankari Goldstein (01:25:58):

The theme will be transformative change where research and action in the world meet and intersect. And registration will be open for that event through the Mind & Life website. Thank you all again so much for joining us today. Gratitude to all of the Mind & Life team that works behind the scenes. And please continue to stay connected to Mind & Life as we move forward in these challenging times. So with that, I'd like to hand it over to Jack to lead us in a contemplative practice and then over to Marti and Drez.

Jack Kornfield (01:26:31):

Thank you Shankari. So this will just take three or four minutes. You'll get enlightened, and then you can go on with your day. Let yourself settle wherever you're seated. If you can, for these few minutes, let your eyes close gently. Take a couple of deep breaths just to allow yourself to become more fully present. And sense all that's been touched in this conversation. Now as you sit quietly, let yourself feel the pull of gravity, the weight of your body.

Jack Kornfield (01:27:41):

And sense or feel or imagine that you have roots that go deep down into the earth. That you're like a great tree, a great oak tree or redwood tree or mahogany tree. This enormous tree with roots into the earth. The steadiness for your body is made of earth. And feel it grounded, steady, strong presence. Even as the winds blow through your branches of praise and blame and joy and sorrow and birth and death, the winds of storms and beautiful clouds of rainbows and rain, all that, and you are the great tree in the midst rooted in the earth.

Jack Kornfield (01:28:50):

And feel how you're breathing, that you interbreathe with all the rest of life. You as the tree, as a human. Breathe, relax. And as an ancient tree, you will have seen so many things come and go, joys and sorrows, wars and times of peace, gain and loss. And you rest in the midst of it as a benefactor place for the nests of birds and turning sunlight into sugar. Now let yourself feel the upwelling of love for all that you are a part of, love and compassion. And sense that now the tree that you are, and the trees around, are speaking and whispering to you and saying, "You have legs. You can move."

Jack Kornfield (01:30:12):

You can bless the world in other ways. And imagine getting up from your seat now, empowered, full of love, steady on the earth. And let the heart's deepest intention arise for you now. If you could put it in a sentence or two, I vow to touch all with kindness. I vow to whatever it would be. For you come from the earth, for you with it and now you get to give your gifts. And sense this intention. And let this be a guide for you, as you move from this conversation and the music and the connection. And move back out into the world carrying your love and your blessings.

Marti Nikko (01:34:53):

(singing) Giving thanks to all of our teachers. Our past teachers, our present teachers, our future teachers and our most important teachers, self. And if you know this too, you can chant it with me. (singing) For creation (singing) To sustain (singing) For transformation (singing) The teacher nearby (singing) The one beyond the beyond (singing) Giving thanks (singing)