

~ *Basic Goodness and Compassion: View* ~

Mingyur Rinpoche

Basic goodness, this wonderful nature, is with us all the time. It is not a separate thing, as if there is basic goodness, then love, then compassion, then awareness, then wisdom. They are all together. Just as awareness is with you 24/7, love is with you 24/7. So love and awareness are part of basic goodness. They are different qualities.

And not only that. We have compassion. Compassion is also there with us. Sometimes we say that the difference between love and compassion is like that of two sides of a coin. Your wish to be happy is love, and your wish to be free from suffering is compassion. So they are all related, as qualities of our fundamental nature.

Suffering is called “dukkha” in Sanskrit. The real meaning of dukkha is “dissatisfaction.” We are not satisfied. We always want more and more and, not only that, no matter how much we achieve or gain, still there is a feeling on a deeper level of being incomplete, a little bit insecure, or lonely. This is dukkha. Of course, that includes pain, discomfort, unease, panic (what I experienced), depression, stress, hatred, desire, and ignorance. All of these are what we call “obscurations.” What these things obscure is our basic goodness. They obscure the inner light.

The traditional example for this is a diamond. Our innate quality is like a diamond, but the diamond is covered by mud. Although the diamond is covered by mud, the diamond itself, the nature of the diamond, is always free from the mud, because the diamond is not the mud. So our innate qualities — awareness, love, compassion, and wisdom — are always pure like a diamond. They are precious, calm, profound, and peaceful.

Today, the main focus of how to recognize our fundamental nature is compassion. What is compassion? Actually, you all know that, right?

The feeling of wanting to be free from dukkha. Dissatisfaction *is* compassion, actually, because your heart knows that you are not incomplete in the sense of the recognition level. On a deeper level, our true nature is complete, but we have the “mud.” We are lost in the mud. The mud is not our true nature. So, we are not happy about the mud, on the basic level. We want to get rid of that. We do not want to suffer. So basically, this is also wisdom, this is also compassion, and if you connect with that, then you connect with compassion.

For this practice, you will also practice step by step. There are five steps: yourself, someone you like, someone neutral, someone you hate, and all beings.