

Lecture 2: How Wisdom, Kindness, and Calm Interrelate

- We might think of wisdom, kindness, and calm as three separate virtues to pursue separately. Be kind. Calm yourself. Be wise.
- But in early Buddhist practice the three interrelate, and co-arise causally.
- Being kind is part of wisdom: part of being wise is seeing that there are better and worse ways of acting in the world, and that it is to our long-term benefit to be kind to others.
- It's also true that being kind helps us to become wise. Being kind to others prepares the path towards finding other people who are wise and can teach us. Traditionally, it provides the good karma that can lead us to find wise teachers. Or to put it another way, being nasty closes doors. Being kind opens them.
- Being calm allows us to be kinder to people. If we are calm we are no longer assuaged by stress and worry, which conditions anger and resentment.
- Being kind to people also helps us calm down, since we become less preoccupied with regret. Regret is one key hindrance to meditative calm.
- Being calm allows us the clarity of mind to see things as they are, without preconceptions. This allows wisdom to arise within us naturally. It takes time!
- Finally wisdom makes clear the importance of calm in our lives: that while energy is critical to getting things done, energy is best when it is focused. A scattered mind is less effective.

Reading, listening, and understanding are important, but even more important is putting these words and concepts into practice!

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