Meditation

Angela 2 — Week 6, Day 6, Session 1 — 30 minutes

Summary: Russell bows with the group and recalls Thich Nhat Hanh's teaching that a sheet of paper holds rain, soil, sun, and all who made it. Seeing a bicycle tire opens the same web of rubber, labor, and history. Sitting in Indra's net, separation cannot hold.

Introduction

Let's bow together.

So, Thich Nhat Hanh has this beautiful teaching where he takes a piece of paper. He says if you have the inclination of a poet — I would say if you see the reality of our interconnection — then when you see the paper, you see the rain and the soil that grew the tree that created the paper.

You see the sun and the sky nourishing the tree that grew the paper. You see the person who invented paper for humanity. You see the person who cut down the tree and their parents and their parents' parents and all the beings that fed those people so that this paper could exist.

I had the experience yesterday walking by Mesa's beautiful little red bicycle, which has all sorts of associations. And I just saw, somehow out of the blue, out of the cosmos — I don't know — I saw the tire.

And having been to Africa recently and read a lot, I saw the rubber of the tire — likely came from Congo. And I could sense the rubber plant and the sky and the rain and the earth and the tending of the plant.

And with that comes the cruelty to the Congolese by the Europeans, the misogyny, the humanity opens in that tire. And the tire was probably made in India. I'm sorry, probably made in China.

And the people in the factory who made the tire had parents, and they had to eat, and they ate rice cultivated by farmers, and those farmers had to bring it to a store. And you could take anything and grow out. Maybe that rice fed people who had children who had a daughter who then eventually married an American, and they ended up in Chicago.

And now, every bit of this life, if you keep pulling on it, will connect to the entire life.

And that's one of the reasons we can take anything living in our inner life. And it will lead us to essence. It will unwind back to whatever you're ready to unwind back into, because there's nothing in the whole universe that is disconnected from you, let alone in your own history.

Sitting

So we sit here in this, what's often called Indra's net, this net with diamonds that connect each strand, and you pull on one bit of that net and it vibrates throughout the whole universe.

And that's not just an abstract picture. We can sense it as our living reality when we get out of our stories and feel into this very moment — includes these birds, and where have those birds been, and where are they going, and includes everyone in this room and their parents and their children.

If we step away from our illusion of separation, this feeling of disconnection is impossible to maintain.

[Silence 3 minutes]

Peace.

[Silence 23 minutes]