

## *Where Real Happiness Lies*

*July 8, 2016*

When we do acts of merit, the Buddha says it's a form of happiness. It's the direct answer to that question, "What, when I do it, will lead to my long-term welfare and happiness?" Be generous, observe the precepts to be virtuous, and develop good qualities of the mind through meditating.

When you do these things regularly, you begin to realize that this is where real happiness lies. We're all too often swept away by the pleasures of other things, especially now that we have distractions all around: We carry distractions in our pocket, we carry distractions in our knapsack—in other words, all the screens that we have. The pleasure that comes from being with the screen makes us forget that the real pleasures in life come from the good that we do.

So we have to remember that goodness is something that comes from within, that happiness is something that comes from within, so that we're not constantly outside looking outside for our pleasures. The world gives pleasure sometimes but sometimes it doesn't give pleasure. A lot of painful things happen in the world. We want to be able to live in the world and not be pained by them. That's why we develop goodness inside, because that becomes our refuge, that becomes our source of strength, our nourishment.

So always keep this point in mind: that the goodness of the world, the happiness of the world, is something we've got to look for within. When you're developed inside, then you can share with others. This is the best kind of sharing there is. You can share information on screens but the goodness of life comes from the qualities that you develop in your mind, and that's shared in a different way. It's shared through direct contact but sometimes just through the currents of the mind. Sometimes, as you're sitting here meditating, you spread thoughts of goodwill to someone else, and if they're receptive, they'll know. It'll make them feel good to know: Someone's thinking of them. If they're not receptive, you're still broadcasting goodness outside, which is how the world is made into a better place, by taking the resources you have inside and developing them as fully as possible. And then when they're developed, you have more than enough to share.

This way your attitude toward the world isn't that you're always taking and taking and taking. As long as we're feeding there's going to have to be some taking, so you want to make sure that you pay back in terms of the goodness that you spread around through the qualities of the mind.