

## *Practice with Goodwill*

*January 12, 2018*

Close your eyes and think thoughts of goodwill. Goodwill should be the frame for the day. They say that when Ajaan Mun got up, the first thing he did in the morning was to spread goodwill in all directions. When he got up from his afternoon nap, he spread goodwill in all directions. Before he went to bed, he spread goodwill in all directions. This is a reminder of what we're doing here in the practice: We're trying to show goodwill for ourselves and everyone else by finding a happiness that doesn't harm anyone and that actually can benefit others. We're doing this not just for ourselves, but for others, too.

It's good to remember, when we're here at the monastery, that we're dependent on the goodness of other people, their generosity. Our way of showing gratitude is by practicing. That's what this place is for, that's what it was given for, for people to practice. So you share the merit with them. But at the same time, we think about the effects of our practice out in the world at large. It may seem minimal, but the fact that there are people trying to train their minds is a good influence. It's a good example.

So many people out there are trying to find happiness in ways that cause themselves harm, cause harm to other people. All too many of us don't even care. Or there are people who feel that there's no way that you can find happiness without taking something away from somebody else. We're showing by example that that's not the case.

There's a harmless happiness that's satisfying, and the dimensions of this happiness are larger even than the world. It can be found within. As we find that, we put ourselves in a position where we can give advice to other people—and if they don't ask for advice, we can show an example.

So as you go through the day and you're feeling kind of lazy about the practice, remind yourself, "Okay, I'm not doing this just for myself. Whether I feel like it or not, it is a kind of duty." But it's a duty that we should take on with a sense of enjoying it. It's so rare to have this opportunity where we can find a happiness in a harmless way. So make the most of it.