

Readings from Erika Wild's Dharma Talk
Thursday, January 18, 2024

We can reject everything else: Religion, ideology, all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion.

This, then, is my true religion, my simple faith. In this sense, there is no need for temple, or church, for mosque or synagogue, no need of complicated philosophy, doctrine or dogma.

Our own heart, our own mind, is the temple. The doctrine is compassion. Love for others and respect for their rights and dignity, no matter who or what they are: ultimately these are all we need.

—H.H. Dalai Lama

Monks, when speech possesses these five factors, it is well spoken, not badly spoken, and it is blameless and irreproachable among the wise. What five? It is spoken at the proper time; what is said is true; it is spoken gently; what is said is beneficial; it is spoken with a mind of loving kindness. When speech possesses these five factors, it is well spoken, not badly spoken, and it is blameless and irreproachable among the wise.

—IV. Proper Speech, from 'the Buddha's Teaching on Social and Communal Harmony.'

Aware of the suffering caused by unmindful speech and the inability to listen to others, I am committed to cultivating loving speech and deep listening in order to bring joy and happiness to others and relieve others of their suffering. Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, I am determined to speak truthfully, with words that inspire self-confidence, joy and hope. I will not spread news that I do not know to be certain, or condemn things of which I am not sure. I will refrain from uttering words that can cause division or discord, or that can cause the family or community to break. I am determined to make efforts to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.

—Mindfulness Training on Right Speech from *The Heart of the Buddha's Teaching*, by Thich Nhat Hanh