

# Immeasurable!



Metta – Lovingkindness

Karuna – Compassion

Mudita – Joy

Upekkha – Equanimity

# Course Syllabus

- Oct. 5: Overview of the four "Immeasurable" qualities
- Oct. 12: Metta – Lovingkindness
- Oct. 26: Karuna – Compassion
- Nov. 2: Mudita – Joy
- Nov. 9: Upekkha – Equanimity

Each class includes discussion, followed by a half hour meditation.

The meditation includes live music and some guided suggestions.

# Why Am I Here?

First thought, best thought -

What is my intention for this class?

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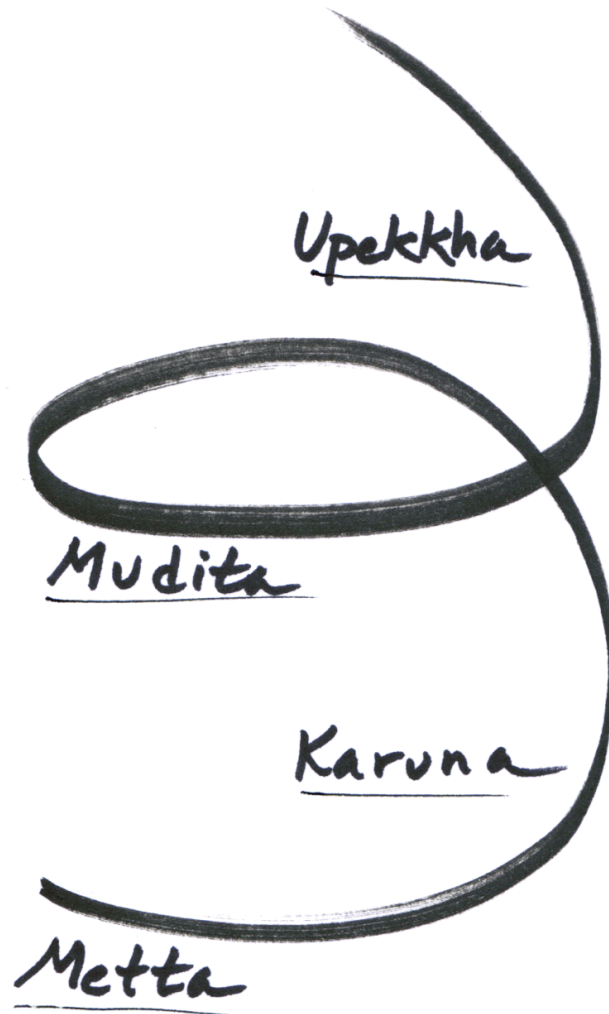
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# Immeasurable Spiral

Sukkha

Upekkha

Dukkha



Mudita / Metta & Upekkha / Karuna  
are resonances of one another.

# Immeasurable Development

Each immeasurable state is the necessary precursor for the following one.

Metta – a basic sense of kindness – must be firmly embedded, before one can share kindness as compassion.

Karuna – kindness for the unhappy – encourages that sense of connection to all beings, underlying altruistic joy.

Mudita – joy in interwoven connection – lays the groundwork for equanimity when things go awry.

# Upekkha

What lies behind equanimity? What makes the experience possible?

Human beings need to identify with something.

What is that thing - or nothing - that gives us the security and the spaciousness to experience Upekkha?

# Moving Toward Non-Self

Climbing the immeasurable spiral from Metta to Upekkha creates an increasingly diffuse experience of self.

Metta - I treat you with kindness.

Karuna - I meet your unhappiness with compassion.

Mudita - I share your joy, as it reflects what's right in the world.

Upekkha - Being aligned with cosmic rightness, I respond with equanimity regardless of circumstance.

# Near and Far Enemies

Equanimity arises from connectedness.

It is not buffeted about by external circumstance or internal judgments.

Upekkha's near enemies are apathy, indifference, and foolhardiness. These, too, are not buffeted about – but they do not arise from the core of connectedness. They just don't care.

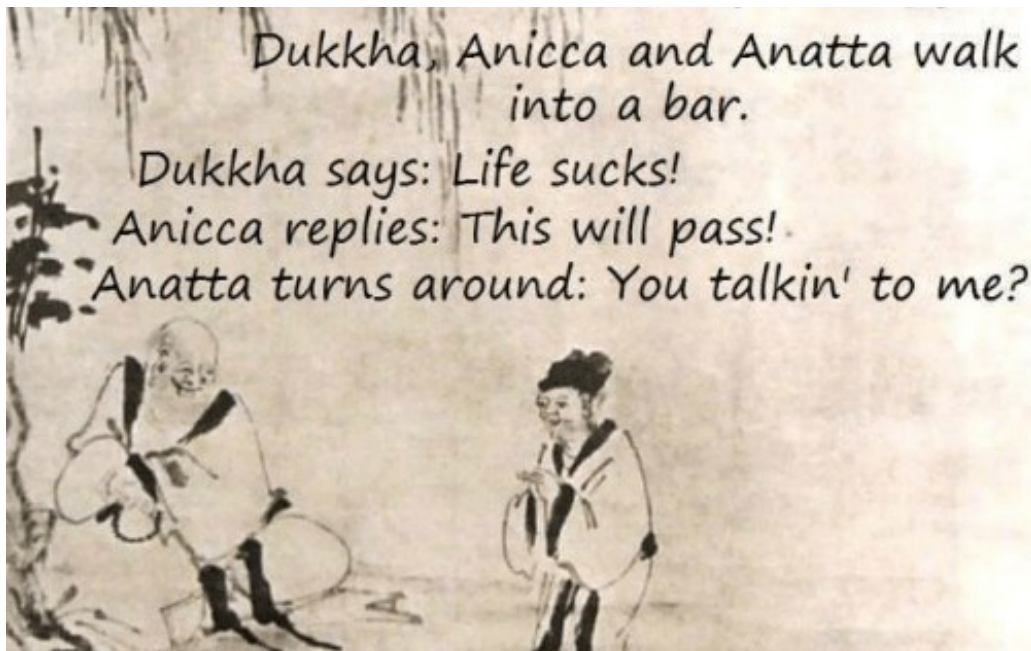
Upekkha's far enemies are attraction, aversion, clinging, repelling, the manipulations that arise from desire.



# The 3 Marks of Existence

In Buddhism, existence can be located in the intersection of three qualities:

- Impermanence – *Anicca*.
- Unhappiness – *Dukkha*.
- Non-self – *Anatta*.



# A Conversation

Anicca: Everything is always changing.

Dukkha: Can't I hold on to anything?

Annata: No.

Dukkha: But then I won't be me!

Annata: Who are you?

Dukkha: My stuff.

Anicca: What you call "my stuff" is changing every moment.

Dukkha: I'm holding on to it anyway!

Annata: Suit your self.

# Journaling

Have you ever had an experience of holding on to something you couldn't imagine releasing?

A loved one – a grudge – a cherished idea – a home – a prized possession?

Is there something like that in your life right now?

Experience it.

Imagine letting it go.

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# The Buddha's Failure

"The Buddha was on his way to Varanasi when he met an ascetic who was impressed by his radiant appearance. The ascetic said, 'What is it that you have discovered?' and the Buddha responded: 'I am the perfectly enlightened one, the Arahant, the Buddha.'



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"I like to consider this his first sermon. It was a failure."

- Ajahn Sumedho, *The Four Noble Truths*

# The Problem with Self

After hearing the Buddha's words, the ascetic just walked away. Ajahn Sumedho speculates that he considered the Buddha to be delusional, consumed with his own ego.

Whether or not the Buddha's statement was true (and Ajahn Sumedho goes on to say that it was), the insight was not communicated.

The moment we identify as "I," we get into trouble. It is too hard to separate the person from the truth.

# Non-Self Works Better

The Buddha's next sermon was more successful.

“There is suffering (*dukkha*). There is the origin of suffering. There is the cessation of suffering. There is the path out of suffering.”

There was no “I” in this communication. The listeners heard, experienced its radiance, and became disciples.

These are the Four Noble Truths, which became the basis of Buddhism.

# How Far Does It Go?

Buddhism teaches self-observation through the lens of non-self.

Some scholars take *annata* literally – that there is no spiritual identity in Buddhism whatsoever.

But most teachers do not take *annata* to that extreme.

The idea of Non-self is used as an antidote to identifying with phenomena.

It is an investigative tool, a place from which to observe things truly.

# Upekkha Practice

How do we practice *annata*?

It is possible to move up the spiral from Metta to Upekkha.

Some practices, like Zen, begin at the top of the spiral.

"Zazen is a form that allows us to practice the no form of boundless emptiness." – Roshi Enkyo O'Hara

Through emptiness practice, we connects with the dharma and what Zen Master Dogen calls "Our original self."



# Inter-Being

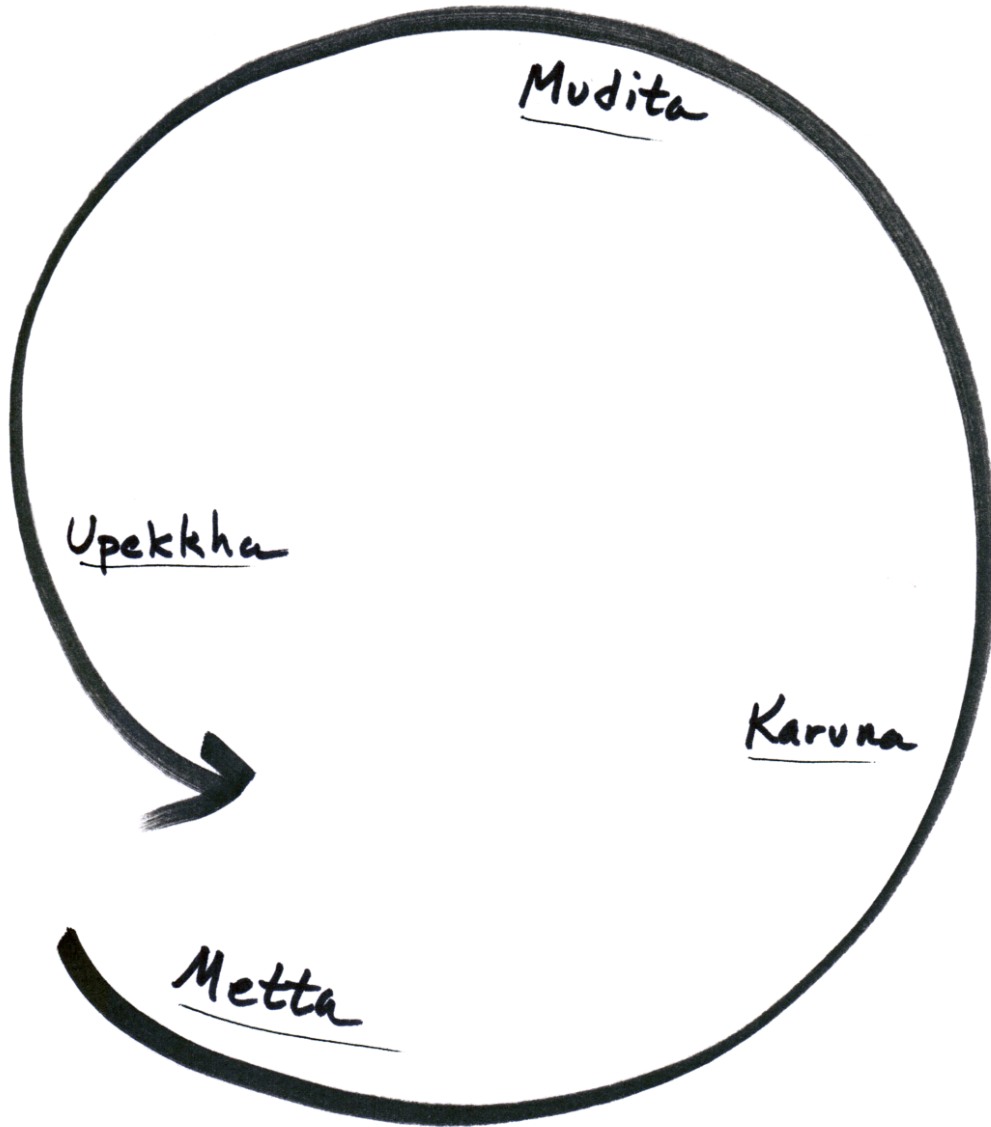
The Immeasurables – like everything else in the universe – co-create one another.

They operate on the principle Thich Nhat Hanh calls “inter-being.”

Ajahn Sumedho says that Upekkha eventually rolls back into Metta.

We can see the immeasurable spiral as a vortex, circling back on itself in a constant cycle of renewal.

# Immeasurable Cycle



# The 3 Dharma Seals

Thich Nhat Hanh has a slightly different take on the 3 Marks of Existence. He removes Dukkha from the trio altogether, and adds Nirvana.

This does not mean that he denies the reality of suffering. He simply demotes it to a level of causation.

These are the 3 Dharma Seals:

1. Impermanence
2. No Self
3. Nirvana

# Time, Space, and Nirvana

"Impermanence is no self seen from the angle of time, and no self is impermanence seen from the angle of space."

"You have to see nirvana in impermanence and you have to see nirvana in non-self. . . Nirvana means going beyond all concepts, even the concepts of non-self and impermanence."

"Nirvana is the extinction of desire."

--Thich Nhat Hanh, *No Fear, No Death: Comforting Wisdom for Life*

# Continuing the Spiral

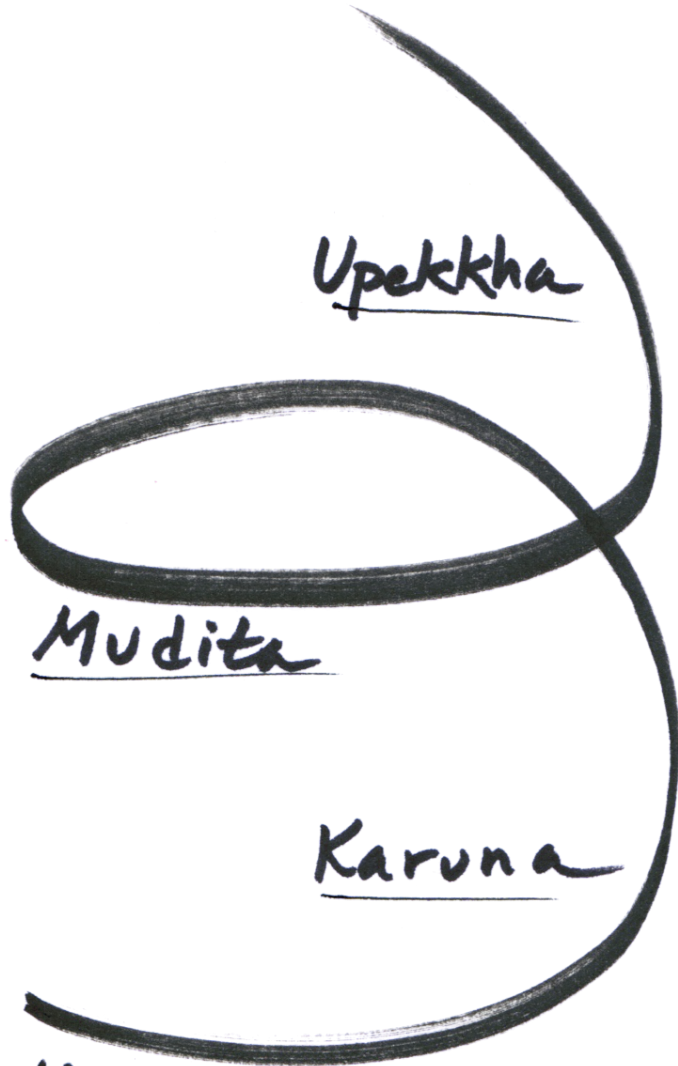
Nirvana

Upekkha

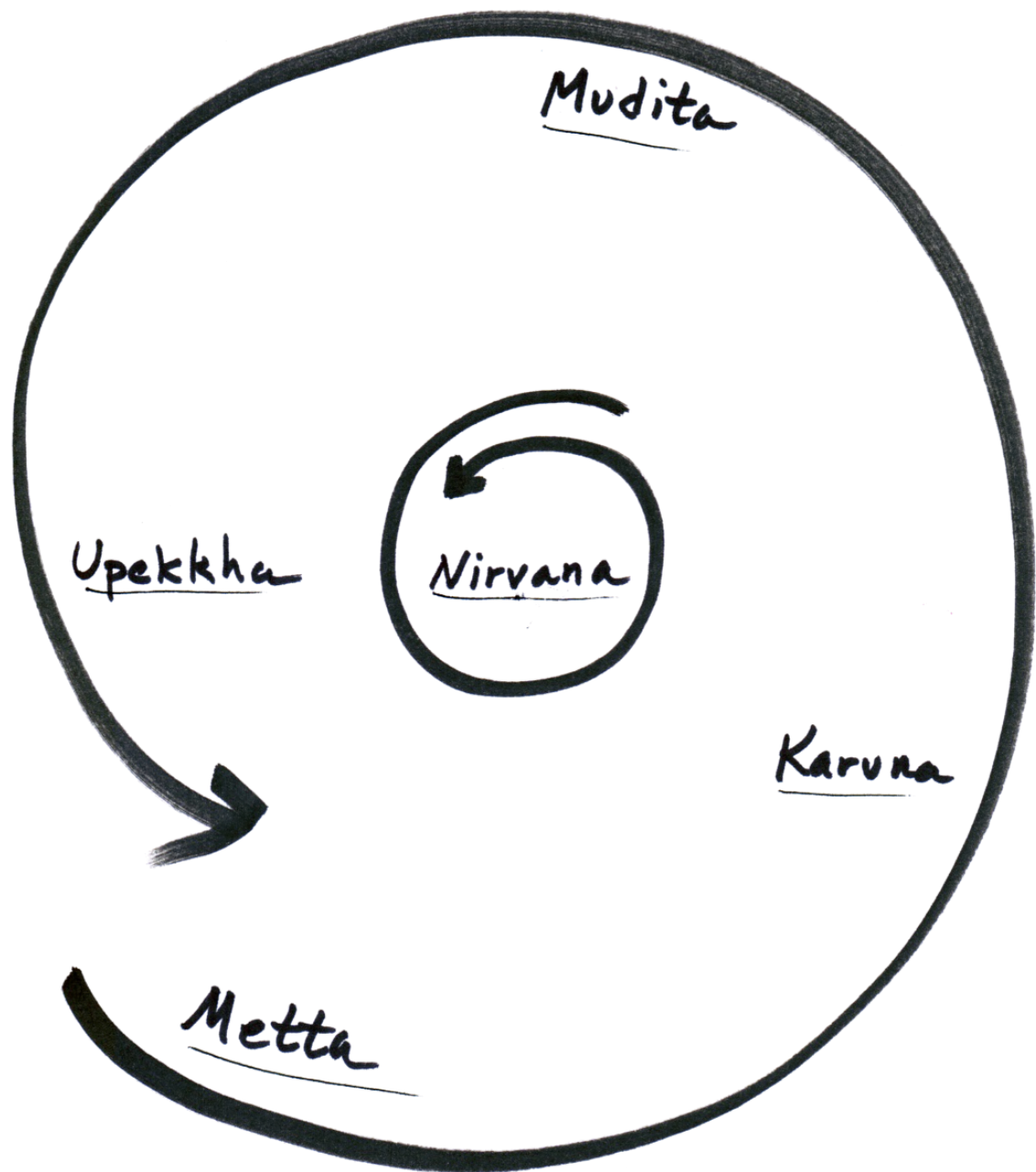
Mudita

Karuna

Metta



# Continuing the Cycle



# One Pure Clear Thing

There seems to be, in most of the teachings, an awareness that a larger truth exists -

that this truth is non-dual -

and that this truth is the context for all that is.

It is sometimes called Atman - or Original Self - or Nirvana - but the moment it is called anything at all, it is not what it is any longer.

# Pointers



"My teachings are a finger pointing to the moon. Do not get caught in thinking that the finger is the moon. It is because of the finger that you can see the moon."

---The Buddha