

## Hope

Listening to the news each morning can fill us with despair. In the face of so much negativity how do we maintain a sense of hope?

The Buddhist tradition teaches that as human beings we have an essential goodness inside of us. This is something we are born with. It is our birthright regardless of who we are or what difficulties we encounter.

This inner goodness does not increase or decrease; it is always available and offers us the ability of being positive and resilient in the face of our feelings of fear and hopelessness.

To re-connect with this innate goodness we only need to look inside, yet so often we base our happiness on what we do or what happens to us so when difficulty occurs we blame ourselves as lacking. We then engage in endless defensive strategies to avoid feeling loss of control, anxiety or insecurity and so lose touch with this wonderful goodness. There are many examples in our life of this feeling of positive goodness. We encounter a sudden beautiful sunrise or the smile of a new born baby and suddenly we feel happy, more whole. The world is bright.

So we can re-connect to our innate goodness by choosing not to live on auto-pilot, but to be aware and to let the beauty all around touch us without judgment, cynicism or blame.

We can also view difficulties as opportunities for growth, remembering that life is not supposed to go according to our plan but rather that we should use the ingredients that are happening in our life to make the best meal we can with what we have. In this way whatever occurs in our life becomes a tool for our maturity as human beings. That is hopeful.

- Ray Cicetti