

This is not the article that I originally wrote for this month's column. I wrote something completely different and planned to submit it via e-mail on June 12<sup>th</sup>, happy to be doing so three days before my June 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. However, when I went to my computer early Sunday morning, I was shocked to read about the tragedy in Orlando Florida, the worse mass shooting in our history. It had taken place less than 12 hours earlier. Driven by emotions of sadness and anger, I began posting on Social Media. What I wrote included the following:

“Consider that as a butterfly flaps its wings in Kyoto, a blade of grass quivers in Kansas. Anyone who as ever uttered a word of hatred against LGBT people has contributed to this horror because we are all interconnected and our actions are interwoven into the fabric of the universe. Words of hatred resonate and an off-hand comment can gain momentum as it passes from person to person.”

As time goes on, we are learning more about the Causes and Conditions that may have contributed to this event. While there are many, it remains clear that the person who carried out this awful deed was poisoned by hatred.

I was so very grateful that during that morning's Sunday service, Elaine Donlin Sensei shared these words from the Buddha: “Hatred is never ended by Hatred, but by Love” These words were also posted on the BCSF Facebook page. When I returned home from service, I shared this post with the following comment, “In our service this morning, we shared these words of the Buddha, spoken 2,600 years ago, in memory of those who died in this morning's massacre....the Buddha said that this (statement) is the law, ‘ancient and inexhaustible’. The Love the Buddha speaks of is pervasive throughout the universe, inexhaustible, and it is more powerful than hell.”

And so in light of this, the earlier post above can be re-written as follows: “We can all contribute to healing because we are all interconnected and our actions are interwoven into the fabric of the universe. Words of love resonate and a heart-felt comment can gain momentum as it passes from person to person.”

Let's shine the light of Mindfulness onto our thoughts, our actions, and our speech. Let's be Mindful and remember that our words can heal, both ourselves and others. Let's remember the words of the Buddha, that “Hatred is never ended by Hatred, but by Love”. A fundamental Mindfulness practice is setting our intention, an important act of the present moment. Let's set the compass of our hearts to move toward Love so that we can work toward healing and the ending of hatred. Namo Amida Butsu.

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