

# 2001-07-01: Spiritual Practice

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## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

There are a number of things that are coming together in my head and my heart these days. So I'm not sure how they're all going to come together in terms of a talk. But let me start I'd like to start this way by telling a story that was told often enough about when I was 14, I lived for a short period for a few months in boarding school in Switzerland. And I was very much involved in choosing the boarding school, I knew I had to go and we had all these brochures. And so I looked around all the brochures and, and so a lot of them were unisex, so I chose the one before the few ones that was co Ed. The one I once I got there, you wouldn't have known that because we were kept apart like with guard dogs.

And then also it was partly because partly because of this particularly beautiful place. The photographs were, you know, place in the heat and the mountain side of the Alps overlooking beautiful valley mountains snow top mountains into the side and right below ski resort and very pastoral and just seemed really idyllic. And it was and so, I was there for about three months. And I found out once I got there that this school was also the, the place that if if you had been in delinquent or rejected by other boarding school in Switzerland, that's where you went. So it's kind of unusual place. But anyway, I was I was 14 and I was walking down the road on the country roads one day and beautiful spring day. with wild flowers in the blue sky in the mountains, and with an older friend from school who was 17. And just kind of spontaneously, I just thought it was an all of location I was in, and kind of the magnitude of nature in the sky and, and I blurted out a set to my friend in this or this was, you know, something like, why are we here? What's the meaning of life? Or what's the meaning of all this that we're here? And his reply to me was, I remember very well was, don't be silly. And since he was the older kid, I thought, Oh, I was being silly. That was a stupid thing to ask. And so that part of me just closed right up. Okay, forget that. I'm not gonna not only should not show that anymore, but I'm not even gonna let it be there for myself. And so then for a number Yours, then that part of me was in closed up, because that's one little statement that that a friend had said. I believe for many people this is the motivation for spiritual practice spiritual quest is very tenuous, it's for many people, it's kind of a very, can be very powerful for them it because it can arise out of a very deep place within us. But the

depth of it sometimes doesn't isn't doesn't correspond with a real strength of purpose behind it. And there can be a lot of other purposes in life which aren't cross purposes with it. There can be you know, the tremendous kind of demands and needs of society and work and kind of the popular messages of society often go against that so that we're embarrassed to show that side of us or it seems awkward or wrong to show it or there's no time for it or we feel like we don't deserve it and so it easily gets squashed.

I believe that for different people the idea of a spiritual longing takes different words or different description that we're longing doesn't work for some people, some people, it's a quest. I like the word quest a lot, because my belief is that human beings are camo questions that it's built into being human being and still ought to be questing in the sense that as soon as we know something, as soon as we have some understanding about life reality or something, there's always going to be an interest, curiosity or something propelling us to want to know what's on the other side of that understanding. You know, and if we can get some because you know, every generation who comes along, kind of goes beyond the boundaries of understanding The previous generation has had to some degree. You know, you finally figure it out for yourself. And then your children comes along and say, well, what's the other side of that? Let's go poke and take a look. But I think it's kind of part of who we are is just kind of questing beyond what's what's beyond what we understand, into, in a sense into the unknown, what's the unknown. So for some people that have quests to works, and unless you're afraid, afraid to go on may take a step beyond what you understand some people to longing. Some people, it's a sense of suffering, that there's and some people they only get onto a spiritual path when they're suffering a strong enough, or the sense of longing or desire or wish for a spiritual practice might be there for years and years. I've known people for who was there for 30 years, but they hadn't, you know, they didn't really take it up until they suffered enough. And when they suffered enough, they had no other choice. You know, I just thought, you know, I gotta do this. You And nothing else makes any sense anymore. And so sometimes suffering is what propels a person to take the step into really pursuing some deeper positive quest or search for peace or love or answers to big questions of life for, for the possibility of freedom from a heart which is maybe covered, motivated by fear, or ambition or many of the things that kind of get in the way of the depths of our luminosity or clarity or our deeds ttps. The but then I think the need for spiritual quest or the need for the individual person to be engaged very powerfully in their own process of liberation, their own process of freedom, they don't process the process of taking responsibility for themselves. is probably stronger in modern society in modern American society than it has been in most societies ever. In the old days, when most of your community belong to one religion, or you're very closely tied to a community of faith that you had, there was no questioning of any alternatives taken for granted that there was one God and one church and one hierarchy and one book and one thing that provided you know, the answers for you and your particular understanding of life. And you didn't have to do a lot of reflection or thinking or, or deep analysis or deep kind of inner soul searching to kind of find what the truth is because it was handed to you so obvious, this is what it was and everyone around you believe this. It's very hard not to, you know, it's very hard to step outside of how we've been conditioned and trained. If that's the whole view of the whole society. You're in your particular subsection of society. And what's happened in America is

that we have a strong legacy of democracy. And we have a strong legacy, a legacy of diversity. And we have all these different peoples who've come into our, into this society here. And with different religious backgrounds. I mean, it was a big deal 100 years ago or 150 years ago, when, you know, to have Irish Catholics and Italian Catholics, you know, next to each other in the same neighborhood. I mean, you know, you know, who are they? if people didn't encounter each other, let alone Protestant and Catholics are all kinds there's a lot of conflict and tension within Christians in America. And now we have you know, wider circle of people who are appearing here and, and bumping shoulders and you have so many different options for spirituality, such tremendous amount of diversity.

And how do we negotiate that diversity? How do we decide what is true? I mean, we could follow Back on, you know, a particular religion or family or particular, you know, whatever reasons in some particular faith out of out of faith out of blind obedience or something. But how do we responsibly go through go through a situation, religious kind of environment that's democratic and diverse, where we're up to ourselves to somehow vote to ourselves to decide, and then have to decide among this huge collection of different very different desperate teachings and practices and possibilities for what life is about. And it what it does do, I think, is it for those who kind of see it this way, at least? It really puts the responsibility to sorting through the stuff for the individual. And the individual then becomes very important, you know, how do I individually is you? How do you find your own way? If you're not going to kiss listen blindly to a teacher or a book or tradition? How do you find your way Have a spiritual longing or desire for some kind of something. And how do you find your way? How do you take responsibility and take authority for this yourself? Ultimately, in a sensitive world, completely diverse, you're accountable to yourself, in a sense more than you are almost anything else. And this works very well of course, with a whole legacy of American individualism, which has its dark side, it also has this beautiful side. There's this beautiful story from I think it's beautiful, nice story from the 1830s. Around that time, when it seems that the Congress was deciding, trying to decide on emotion, a law to allow the post office to be closed on Sundays. Because it seems to be early years of this country post office is open seven days a week. Most people work, I guess a lot. And, and so they wanted to give the post office a day off Sunday, you know, they have God's rest. And so a Baptist minister, who was also the Senator from Tennessee, got up on the Senate floor and gave an impassioned speech saying that this was wrong. The reason it was wrong was that what was sacred, most sacred was individual conscience. And that you had to allow respect for the individual conscience for people to decide for themselves, what faith to pursue. And if you took a Christian notion of what is a sacred day of rest, and impose it on other people of other faiths, on the Jews in America, well, then you're imposing your faith over their own conscience. And this was You know, a violation of kind of the sacredness of the religious worldview of this Baptist. That makes sense to the individual conscience was considered to be so sacred by some of the early religious people of our of America. That it that they didn't want to violate that by imposing even, you know, he was a Baptist, you know, his religion on other people by having a holiday on Sunday. So I don't know, eventually he lost out across the vote, I guess. But and you wouldn't expect this from a Southern Baptist today. That kind of point is, Southern Baptists have changed radically in their teachings over the 150 years or so. But there's been a legacy also in the West, from Quakers and Baptists many people have pointing to that

there's kind of a divine spark inside of us, each of us. And so again, the finger points back at us, we have to find that in ourselves. We have to Somehow addressed this in ourselves and not in a sense look outside. The Buddha taught when the last teachings of the Buddha was that he said was be a lamp unto yourself. You know, and he, you know, the Buddha did not want to ruin his last days of his life, the Buddha did not want to impose or assign someone else to be the leader, the authority when he died, you know, my disciple, shy, quickdraw Magliano whenever he's the one who's really going to have what he's really good, knows what it's all about, you know, rely on him.

He said, Be your own light, have the Dharma have had the teachings in a sense as your guide, but you have to be a light to yourself. So again, that is pointing back to yourself, I think is a very important aspect of Buddhist practice, and it's also a very important legacy of our American culture. But what do we do we turn it back towards ourselves. At the time of the Buddha, there were also a tremendous diversity of spiritual teachings around. And people back then had to sort through them all. And what's interesting is how the Buddha related to the diversity. The Buddha refrained from getting involved in some of the key spiritual questions that people were trying to address and deal with in his era. And these are some of the key things and many of us maybe think are really important for spiritual life. So for example, is is the world one, is there a unity is all all all the same as all one was a question he didn't want to address. Is it all diverse? Is it all diversity, or are we all separate in some radical way? He didn't want to address that question. What happens to is a soul in the body, the same so in the body different is what happens to enlightened person enlightened person dies? Does a person continued as a person not continue? Is the world eternal? Is the world finite? There's a lot of kind of questions that these kind of questions which maybe many people will think these are, you know, this is what I want to know. And the Buddha refused to answer them. And the reason he refused to answer them was he said, these are not conducive to the spiritual quest are these not conducive to your to your welfare and well being. These are sidetracks get you away from this very important way you need to focus back onto yourself to focus here. So then, in the Kama Sutra, which is also a very famous discourse of the Buddha, he was asked by some people who are not Buddhists, what how should we how do we make sense how do we find our way through all these different spiritual teachings of our time And the Buddha said, do not rely on what you've heard on what is traditional on what's in the books. Do not rely on your own reasoning, your own logic, do not rely because it's your own preference. You know what kind of left? Don't rely on many of the traditional forms you have for taking this as what's authoritative. Don't do it out of respect for the teacher. Rather the Buddha said, you should use he said to kind of paraphrase him, he said is that you have to become the arbitrator of what is true or what what is what is worthy of being followed. And the way we the way you do it, you don't do that alone. You can use the wise people around you as at help they can kind of you can listen to them and if the wise kind of suggest something listen more carefully kind of. It's kind of like you go to Stanford University or university. And there's a lot of different textbooks you could, you know, buy on any one subject. And you have some trust that the professor has chosen the right one that's current and most appropriate. So, you listen to wise people to kind of give you some direction of where you might look but you don't turn the authority over to that wise person. But then, more importantly, a Buddha said, You study, you pay attention to what is skillful, what is beneficial, and is conducive to

your happiness. And what is it that is harmful and not conducive, which is unskillful for your own benefits, and, and, and happiness? So you become your own arbitrator by knowing the difference between what are the actions that you do, what are the beliefs that you hold that create further suffering and you are helped create further happiness. The assumption being that each of us can know the difference between suffering and suffering. Each of us it's very hard to know whether the soul is eternal, not eternal universe in itself or one or different or something. How do you decide these kinds of questions? upon what evidence but are you suffer? And are you not suffering is something that you can really feel and for the Buddha, this capacity we have to see that difference is really a touchstone for finding our way in towards liberation and freedom.

Do we find how do we become freer over suffering, we can feel our way into that which requires mindfulness that we become present very present for our own experience. So we know when we're suffering, know when we're not suffering. And there's been so many times where, you know, myself or other people were The evidence of suffering occurring. That is such a powerful clue what's really going on powerful clue that something needs you to stop here and look and reevaluate what you're doing is overlooked because somehow the suffering propels us to outside of ourselves, you know, to assign blame to attack propels us to run away and be defensive, to get distracted. Suffering is a very, very significant and powerful tool for Buddhist practice, to stop and look at it, and let it be a mirror to look more deeply. Because suffering is optional, the sources of suffering and that there's an origin beginning of suffering inside of us that we can do something about. So there's a lot of spiritual questions that Buddha didn't want to answer at his time. But the one of the very powerful and important currents of debate in spiritual circles the time of the Buddha Was had to do with the nature of causality, or will or choice? Does human agency or choice is their human choice and doesn't make a difference? And there were a lot of different theories of time and Buddha, yes. Some people said, No, there is no choice. You're kind of stuck. And it's, you know, you're, everything's predetermined, and you can't really do anything about your life and your suffering, just have to go and we'll go along with it, and maybe it'll kind of exhaust itself and then you'll be happy. or other people said that there wasn't much choice, but there was a little bit if you appease the gods, it's really the gods who you know, chose your own happiness for you, but you could kind of least make offerings to them and help them out. The Buddha said, there is no spiritual life without choice without causality. And that can point the finger back to us what are the choices we make? And part of the function of mindfulness is to reveal where The choices are that we make. The choices are very difficult to see. And the people who don't have don't see their choices don't have choices. And we tend to run an automatic pilot. To paraphrase the young, who said something like something like, very, very ugly. If you don't see where your choice lies, then you're doomed to live a life on fate. Fate takes over something other, you start to acting unconsciously. So we stopped for the suffering. So eventually in try to be mindful of it. So we can see where the choices behind it and sometimes it's as simple as seeing a choice to run away from it or avoid it or strike out or all the kind of dysfunctional ways that we relate to suffering. But it stopped to really be mindful foreign hang out there, allows us to see where the choices so we can choose to go into rection of being happier, we're not suffering as much. We're the only ones who can do that. The assumption I believe, around this is that who we are, in our essence is freedom, in our essence is this,



you know, a lamp a light, a luminosity of clarity, a piece that's at our inner core. And the suffering is the surface of that. That that obscures the possibility of deep love or peace or freedom, that is, in a sense, could certainly be our birthright to see possibility for all of us.

So the mindfulness practice is a practice of really learning to stop and pay attention to what we're doing. And in doing that, we're finding the place where we can take responsibility for our own life. And of course, it's a lot easier to want to assign the responsibility elsewhere. And many people who are, in many respects look like adults, you know, are doing that in some ways. And one of the ways that people do it in the spiritual circles in meditation circles, is they think that meditation is going to do it for them. As if somehow there's a magic kind of thinking about meditation. If I just put my time in on the cushion, if I just get a little calm or something or then something will happen, they'll be transformed. I don't know what that is. But if I just kind of do this stuff, then something will happen. Amazing things happen in meditation, amazing things happen seemingly kind of outside of your choice and your involvement and the Buddhist spirituality, the nexus of it, look, the locus of it is the place of choice, whereas if we choose, we're how we think we split. Where do we take responsibility for the simple thing as you're sitting in meditation, and the mind is agitated? Where's responsibility there? Maybe the responsibility is there when it's agitated, you see that you make all kinds of conclusions based on that agitation. This means that I'm a lousy meditator. This means I can't do it. This means that, you know, that this is wrong shouldn't be this way. And that was a choice to have that view that assumptions assumption. And there's freedom, certain kind of suffering. When we don't have all these reactive ideas about what it means to be agitated. Someone I talked to a week or two ago, it was a big moment of release for her. When she had it has a very agitated mind or Busy mind realized that she didn't have to fight that. She could just accept that. And the fact was, I actually was even though she was very thoughtful in her meditation, there was a kind of mindfulness of that. And she had assumed that there had to be a silent mind in order to be mindful. But once you realize you didn't have to do that, then the suffering that in that kind of encased the agitated mind was freed from her to the point of choice there was, am I going to stay kind of locked in these assumptions and reactions and distill it towards my own agitated mind? Or do I release that and just kind of be mindful of that itself? Very simple, but very freeing. Um, sometimes, agitation is a way of avoiding responsibility is avoiding feeling or suffering sometimes, agitate is a convenient way of not getting settled to go deeper into what's really going on. We follow it default, we have to somehow be responsible for ourselves. We are the arbitrator, we're the ones who are accountable to ourselves in a kind of New Age spirituality, it lends itself to the kind of teaching which actually exists in some circles, which is a kind of a misquote of Joseph Campbell. out of context, the teaching of Joseph Campbell and many people kind of will refer to is that he thought, follow your bliss. And the Buddha said, kind of similar, you kind of, kind of you have to be able to be able to discern the difference between what was conducive to happiness and what's conducive to suffering and knowing that go in the direction of, of three different suffering towards happiness. However, that's a quote by Joseph Campbell is in A section of one of his books, that's titled, bliss and sacrifice. And if you read on further beyond the chapter after he says, you know, follow your bliss, he puts it in the context of the necessity of sacrificing renunciation, which the Buddha also did for his path his discussion of his path. And sacrificing renunciation is a big topic in itself and it's a phenomenally

unpopular topic. follow your bliss is, you know, much more popular. And what's beautiful is Joseph Campbell put both of them together, they both are needed together. So, sometimes sacrifice means we actually have to sacrifice some simplistic idea of well being, to be able to go down into the darkness of you know, of our psyche.

Sometimes we need to suffer more in order to suffer less. Sometimes you have to be able to face drop the surface agitation Really face the deepest fears and tears tears and, and depressions and, and you know that's within us the darkness the demons. And that's kind of that sacrifice then is the sacrifice of, of a certain level of well being to go into the deeper stuff to see through it and go to the other side, to be very honest with what it is so that we can find again that place that choice fine again, the path that's in that to really find what's really deep inside. There's a beautiful story. I was talking about the story. I don't know how much of this is true, but maybe it doesn't matter. It's almost like a myth. But I think it's true. And some of its true some of it I knew from the papers back in 1970s, late 60s at during World War Two there was The Japanese were retreating from the Philippines. They left or they left soldiers behind, or soldiers are left behind in some of the jungles on the islands, and apparently they were told stay here and fight the war and to come and get you. And no one ever came and got them. And they were kind of in isolated situations and like me without radios or anything and Japanese being very dutiful kind of people often the soldier state fighting the war for decades. And whatever I'm reading in the paper, I think is early as late as early 70s was they'd found this you know, Japanese soldier still fighting the war and I think 72 or whatever. And there was there's a series of these people found maybe I was the last one early 70s. And what see what seems to have happened was that when it was discovered there was still Japanese soldiers last night. Jungle hiding in the jungle, the Japanese would take out of retirement, the most senior military officer from World War Two and send that person to Vietnam to to Philippines. And the person who'll go walking through the jungle with his best uniform and a samurai sword and calling out in Japanese, you know, come out come out. And so the soldier would come out of hiding. And, and then the first reaction of the general was to think, you know, whereas Japanese can they're experts at thank yous, and really deep bow and thank you and gratitude towards all the service a soldier had done to the mother country. And just expressing gratitude and thanks and and, and then they would take the soldier on a boat and to bring the soldier back to Japan and be treated as a hero with lots of gratitude. Before coming back to Japan, the soldier would be And by the way, the war has been over. It's been over for a while. And, oh, and we want to thank you so much, you know, you've done such a great, wonderful service to the country and you're such a wonderful thing you've done. What they didn't do is in laugh at him for fighting a war that's been over 25 years. They, you know, they just constantly showed us gratitude. And then he came at Japan, he was treated kind of like a little hero. So, I guess a very powerful story, whether it's true or not, because many of us are fighting wars, which are long over wars that we were fighting his children, wars that sometimes we're not are making our rendus things that happen to us as children. And it was we try to cope the best we can and impossible confusing situations or, and some people will have their children have all kinds of coping mechanisms to get them through. Very, very difficult childhoods And some of them have, you know, based on fear and running away and being silent, some have to do with you, there's all kinds of ways in which children kind of managed to survive, and sometimes really

impossible situations of abuse all kinds. And then what happens often enough is that the Wars of childhood, the wars earlier in life, are internalized as being the operating mode, which we carry with us long beyond the time of that particular fight, that ticular survival times, and many of us that are fighting wars, which are long over, and those wars then because we're still fighting it, it plays itself out in new situations that we find ourselves, you know, 2530 4050 years later. And some of the conflict we sometimes have with people have nothing to do with the actual details of the conflict today,

but rather that really core power that the conflict for us to anger or whatever has to do with you know, the continuous One of the deep fears or deep anxieties or deep hostilities, that, you know, sometimes are remnants of these long, long, long over wars that we're fighting.

So mindfulness is to stop and sit with all that is a really important aspect of mindfulness is to stop is to stop and be still and not run away, not go away, not avoid, but to the opposite of avoiding, but really feel and be present for what's really going on. What's really going on here in a way they've never been before. And it's difficult to do sometimes because often, it's it is a process which is somewhat unknown. We don't know how to even go through that. If you don't know how to go through that. The tremendous pain that we have, how is you know, you know, then it doesn't seem like we should go forward. into something which is unknown, because we don't know how it's going to resolve itself. We can't know how things will resolve themselves. But we need to be able to put the step by step into that unknown. And sometimes the reluctance to go into deeper suffering is because we don't know the path through it, there's no map. But there's nothing that we have to kind of be willing to stop and stop and really stop and go in and feel it and before it, and slowly, slowly we'll see the places of choice. And a lot of the places we'll see is places of resistance, where we brace ourselves against life. And just let go that resistance let go of that resistance, the fear the clinging, the attachments, so that we can find that land find that that luminosity that freedom, which is the birthright of all of us, which is tender and doesn't seem to offer much because it doesn't offer us a bank account or house or doesn't itself doesn't offer safety. Security your relationship so we tend to kind of deflect from and very quickly I think there's a tremendous gravitational force within us towards freedom towards this deep heart towards peace, this luminosity to towards non clinging, the momentum the gravitational force of other things sometimes carries today. But once that gravitational force of desires ambition, fear begins to lessen, then we get caught we get involved in the gravitational force that brings us it wants to go takes us towards increasing freedom. The power that can protect gravitational force plays itself out in all kinds of ways, unusual ways in our life. mysterious ways in our life. The when I say we lived on the farm in Tennessee in the 70s, which was a very large spiritual commune With the high priests or priestesses, I guess, of the community, where the midwives and they were considered like the most sacred people there and literally like the priests, the high priestesses. And so there were a lot of midwife stories and birthing stories that kind of went around. And there were a number of stories that went around a lot of stories. It was kind of popular tell the stories of these home burst. And there was like a home burst with tents. bursts are really intense. US Army issued green tents and the woods of Tennessee, and the stories of these home births, and somehow the baby wasn't coming, baby wasn't coming. And then the midwives would somehow into it, or see if there was some unresolved tension



between the couple. The husband, wife and They'd say, you know, you guys have to work this out. And so they're, you know, labor pains going, whatever, you know, just, you know, they would work out there's intense conflict and, you know, anger and hostility or fear or whatever the issue was that had to be worked out had, you know, unresolved and they would resolve it somehow, you know, they would deal with in that kind of very charged situation, and then the baby was born. So the story that was told was that sometimes these very powerful the need for resolution of certain things is so strong that it put on hold something as powerful as giving birth because something had to be done something real workout to happen.

So the last round of things I wanted to say today, which I don't know I'm not sure how it fits into all this, but it seems like anticlimactic notice it talks about this but the

one of the ways I'm relate to my son, my three and a half year old son is he loves right now playing with Legos. And we have these little Legos which are very hard to kind of for him to kind of do and you build these things in the collapse all the time. And it's a great thing for frustration, you know, teach, you know, you teaching it to things, you know, it's very, you know, and patience, I think it's a really good skill for him to learn, but he often asks, you know, you know, you know, for me to help or gets frustrated or to this morning, we were doing it then. And I was playing with him, you know, nicely, you know, back and forth for a while and, and then I started building something, but he wanted the piece that I had and I just somehow it didn't seem right to kind of give him my Lego piece, you have to draw a limit somewhere, right? And it just, you know, it seems didn't see the mistake, but somehow for his sake, it didn't seem right to always be getting into him, you know. And I feel like there was a chance for less than here somehow. And so I said, so I said, There seems to be a problem here. You want this piece? I want this space. What's the solution? Is there a solution? And this is the way I often ask him is, there's a problem here? Is there a solution? I want to kind of instill in this aim and the idea that there's a problem there's a solution that we can figure out. And you know, we can he can help. What is the solution? Can you think of a solution? But in the last week or so, I've changed the wording of it, rather than saying there's, you know, can you think of a solution or the solution what I'm trying to say instead is to him is In the plural, what are some of the possible solutions? I don't want him to get the idea. There's only one answer. But rather, there's a range of possible solutions to any problem. And then I was talking about about this was someone on Friday, who was interested in creativity. And she said, one of the most common characteristics of creative people is a comfort with ambiguity. And then I remember reading a study where they had given two groups of kids tests. And one group of kids they said, there's one answer. You've been tested on quite getting the right one right answer the multiple choice. And the other group of kids who said there are several right answers to this question, you have to find the right answers. So they gave these two kids the two groups here, the kids a test, and then they had they took a kid somewhere else and said, Okay, now you got to choose from these photographs. Which these kids would be really, you'd like to have on your baseball team or basketball team or sports team or whatever. And the kids were just taking a test, there was one right answer, had a very narrow definition of who would be the right people to serve in our team. And the people who had were a number of different you know, understood it could be there are a number of different

different right answers. So that there were, you know, we had a much wider range of kids, they would choose for their sports team, including handicapped kids and all that. So they do there's, there's a number of different solutions. I think it's very important the fact that you can find a solution. become comfortable with ambiguity, comfortable with the unknown. So that maybe we can be more brave in going into ourselves and being honest with ourselves and sitting with that, which is our You know, which is us, really discovering ourselves. Sometimes we follow our bliss, and sometimes we follow our suffering. And hopefully you know that you know, which one is the right one to follow at any given time. But the purpose of it is to find, certainly defined response take responsibility for ourselves, but ultimately is to find the possibility of freedom. And with freedom, our freedom is a, it's a really a gift that we give to everyone else. If we do our own work, the benefits to the people around us will continue for generations. So, those are my thoughts for today. And I'm sorry, I've talked so long and I wish you all the wonderful next few weeks And if you're interested in seeing the church you can come up here and look at the pictures Yes.

What did we come up with? I don't think he was particularly motivated to come up with solution I think he kind of his solution was to kind of after a while ignore me ignore that ignore the problem. I think Oh, it was his solution was for me I came up with a wonderful solution I said, I mean after a while I said you know, we played for a while he kind of ignored me. Then I said, Okay, I I can give it this piece to you now um, it required taking apart everything I built to take a while, right. So you can you can you can, you can take this apart and get your piece now, but while you do that, I need to go and talk to your mom for a while. So that was a wonderful thing for me to kind of Keep him occupied for a while so that I could get a few minutes with my wife. I don't know if this was skillful, but anyway, great. Thank you.