

# 2002-11-10: Wisdom

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

wisdom, discerning, people, life, discernment, wise, word, helpful, meditation, practice, cultivate, deeply, purpose, confidence, ability, support, warrior, stability, faith, find

## SPEAKERS

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The topic of wisdom has been on my mind for about a week or so. And Monday evening, we had kind of a discussion period on the topic of wisdom. And mostly I ask questions and people give their different points of view about what they thought wisdom was, how it operates. And I thought, today I would try to give a little talk on the topic of wisdom. And as I've been reflecting on it, this last week, it seems to be a topic that just keeps growing. And the more I think about it, the less I think I know about it. And the more it seems to be so all encompassing, especially when you look at the Buddhist teachings and the role that wisdom plays. It's quite common for people to know or say that Buddhism is a wisdom, wisdom tradition, and that the two primary way That keeps the Buddhist path and practice afloat is the wings of wisdom and compassion. And so maybe it's important think of both of them as being paired together and supporting each other. That compassion is as important as wisdom. And in fact, I hope that people's experience of Buddhist practice is one where they, they get compassion, as much as they get enlightened. The so wisdom is what you know, one of the two wings of Buddhism. And what is it? What is it to be wise? What is wisdom? The word for wisdom is *prajñā* in Sanskrit, *paññā* in Pali, and it's one of those beautiful words. I think it's beautiful. I like kind of indo European connections between words and to know that the word the words *progeria*, the root of it is *Nia j na*, and *pri* is a prefix which is any kind of intensifier. So it's intense or special or, or, you know deep. Yeah. And, and yeah means to know that it's the sun size the root for the word to know *Yana* is one of the meanings of the word. And, and the word *na* is directly connected to the English word *gnostic* would have *gn*, the *Jays* become a *G*, and you get *G* and *prognostic* instead of *Giana*. It also connected through word same reason to the word *no* in English. It's the *Jays* become silent as a *K* for us. And so it's not you know, so it's, you know, it's a word that we're somewhat familiar with already. So especially knowing or deep knowing or knowing With his passion Yeah. You find in translated translators of Buddhist texts into English will translate the word *prajñā* our *paññā* in different ways. The most common way is as wisdom. But you find other ways some of them which may be not so helpful and some which are very intriguing because they're so different. I mean, you have things like knowledge, it also dictionary definition of project can be include knowledge, you know, something

really well. Some people translated as reason, be able to reason things out or good reason. You find for a while that the common translation was discriminating wisdom. So a certain kind of wisdom that involves discrimination, being able to discriminate between things make distinctions. A very famous Tibetan scholar, Tibetan Buddhism, whose I've never understood his writings. It's you know, he has this All these hoes all his own vocabulary for these things are everything. So, Gunther he translates passion as analytic appreciative, analytic appreciative. Forget the last word, analytic appreciative discrimination. And the word appreciative is very important for him. Because wisdom is value based. This is not just simply seeing things and kind of as they are in and of themselves, but involves assigning some value and extending some value in the discriminations we make and the analysis of what's going on with distinctions we're making. Lately, the

translation that I'm in most fond of because partly because it's new for me and therefore evocative and helps my reflections on this topic, is the word discernment to translate Prioritize discernment to be discerning. And as we go along, I'll describe more about why I think this is so interesting, interesting and useful translation, and perhaps an accurate one, or at least one of the accurate ones. But as I thought about it this week and looked at the texts and stuff, I see that the word wisdom is very broad, and encompasses many different aspects. And so a single definition or single single word, wouldn't do justice to all the different ways in which the word is used in Buddhism.

However, again, to come back to this idea that Buddhism is a wisdom tradition, you find a lot of emphasis on insight, understanding, wisdom, discernment, discrimination, knowledge, as these kinds of words are very important in in the Buddhist path. They come with a Buddhist path and then you find a kind The opposite you find words like ignorance, which is kind of the big problem that Buddhists are often trying to address, ignorance and desire and greed, ignorance and attachment are clinging. And the two are closely connected. But ignorance then is a problem that's being addressed in wisdom is a solution for that, in the Dhammapada, very famous text. The contrast there between the Why is between a wise person and a foolish person. And none of us want to be foolish, of course. And so the idea is we will practice helps it become wise people, as opposed to someone who's foolish, and there's like some of them like five or six different synonyms for wise and wise person, given the Dhammapada It's such a centrally important thing, that someone who's deeply practice becomes someone who's wise.

So, wisdom, paññā, pleasure.

Oh, before I kind of go in some of the meanings of the word. There's also a famous, famous list of three kinds of wisdom, which is not it doesn't really define wisdom but defines how wisdom is acquired. And tradition gives three, there's chinta, my punya, which is the wisdom that comes from our own thinking, or an ability to reason think and work things out. And some people have greater abilities for that because either apply their mind more than others, or because they have a natural ability to think and, and reflect and that ability to reflect and reflective wisdom is a very important part of wise

living. And some people simply don't give themselves time to reflect deeply about things. And I find you know, going into the going for a hike for example, alone or sitting sipping a cup of tea. There's many ways you know, or journaling or something. There's many ways in which we can develop our reflective abilities and use our powers of reflection to to cultivate wisdom and understanding. And it's all these are very important. One of the themes yesterday's one day sitting kind of that we had, we tried to emphasize the importance of having undirected time that many of us what's happening seems seems to many people have commented, one of the things that's happened in modern culture especially is that people no longer have idle time, very little of it. And there's a lot of people feel constantly they're going, going, going through enough time to do all the things that we could do. All the projects, all the things, all the recreation opportunities, all the things that is if doing things become all important. And, and it's nice to do things as opposed to things people do, I suppose are nice things to do. But what's been lost is something very inefficient. Which isn't, doesn't involve doing things but rather it's the idle time, which idle time or the sacred leisure or the empty time is often a time when the inner life, the psyche, or whatever, can replenish itself or kind of process itself and work itself out, in a way very vaguely, perhaps in a way that dreams dreaming, you know, perhaps is a way in which the psyche kind of organizes itself or processes things a little bit. And, and you know, what an inefficient you know, it's, if you really want to be efficient, we wouldn't sleep. You know, we just get the more things done. And the we're forced to sleep and luckily we are and so this idle time, sleeping is a time when this inner life can do something. And a wise life is also one that I think allows a certain amount of sacred leisure idle time. And those words may very inadequate because sacred time, you know, like Sabbath is a sacred time where we don't do work. Don't do things so that the inner life can unfold. unravel and reveal itself, and perhaps some deeper wellsprings of compassion and love and intimacy and peace. Wisdom can show itself because I believe that just there's tremendous wellsprings within us of wisdom and peace, feelings of fulfillment, they can bubble up inside of us if we get out of the way. But if we're always doing doing doing having directed mind, we can that that, that we don't have access to that. So having reflective time I associated with kind of sacred times idle time we go for a long walk or something or spend quiet time sipping tea, and you bring something up in a very easygoing way to reflect on it think about to think deeply about very, very important part of a wise life. The second source of wisdom is suit, my chinta which means, literally means the wisdoms comes from hearing things. Because in the old days, they didn't have books. So you learn by listening to someone. But now we have books. So maybe we say, the wisdom that comes from learning, whatever source of learning we might have. And this involves, you know, getting a book, listening to Dharma talk or listening to people that you respect, and then taking in what's being said, and reflecting on it more on your own, but really, going outside of your own innate abilities to reflect and getting help getting support are the people who have thought deeply about things will, you know, have certain perspectives that are helpful, it might take you you know, four or five years of research, to be able to understand some things it's you can just pick up a book from and, and, you know, someone has already studied this and thought deeply about it. And there's lots of wise books. Since I was going to talk about wisdom today.

I just had happen happen to have near near me next to my bed manuscript of Sylvia Borstein book latest book just sent me the manuscript some a year ago or something and it was all these sheets of paper and it's called for goodness sake pay attention to what's called for goodness sake pay attention he's just a wonderful kind of you know grandmotherly type woman you know just for goodness sake pay attendees feel her love you know not a strict kind of authoritarian approach but this love for goodness sake pay attention and, and she has a whole chapter on wisdom there. So I looked at it since I was going to talk about it. And some of us so much of what she how our teaching occurs is through stories and beautiful stories of people she encounters and the exchanges they have and she she thinks of herself storyteller, collecting these stories that somehow Express wisdom. And so I think he should come be able to tell a story to I don't have any stories. Likewise, Sylvia has stories and she's a magnet for them. But I have a story. My I don't know if it's a good one appropriate. But this is my wife told me the story yesterday, she was reading a book. And I was actually very moved by the story. I kind of teared up a little bit. And I think it was a letter, account, personal account of a woman. From the story, I have an impression that probably she lives in the inner city in Philadelphia, and some parts of the inner city in Philadelphia are among the most violent in the country, gangs and all that. And somehow, she found out that her son was in a gang. And there were three big gangs in the neighborhood and they were fighting each other and killing each other off and she also had had somehow that her son somehow was on the list of people next to be killed. So that was of concern for her. And so she'd also had somehow picked up from somewhere that many of these young men in gangs came out of dysfunctional families. And so she's, well, you know, if they had more functional family, then maybe they wouldn't feel need to be in a gang, which is kind of a surrogate family, perhaps. So she invited her son's gang to come and live with her to her in her house. And so all 15 of them showed up and they took took her up on it. And she started feeding them and doing nice things for them. And apparently, there was a surplus of food that she gathered around. And so these gang members then were instructed to do something with surplus of food. And so they're given something to do, they went off in the neighborhood to people into their family or whatever, people who needed food and started giving food away and start feeling really good about themselves. And they had this nice, you know, feeling this woman, just the mothers taking care of them, and they got so good that one of the rival gang, one of their leaders, something was in trouble and he came in asked if he could go live there too. And then it was so it was apparently so successful this thing that she actually got money from the city, because it was cheaper to pay her some money then was to whatever else way and eventually she started but apparently they she was able to buy this big building and had kind of a halfway house. And the title of the little chapter was called some like something like, you know, home with 3000 suns. And so here's someone who, you know, the best of her abilities are very motivated, and the best of her ability, use the knowledge understanding she had, and try to kind of have to do something. So she used whatever knowledge she had and tried to address the problem. And to me, it's a beautiful story of, you know, wise woman and compassionate woman who acted in the world. And so that's my attempt to tell a story. Did you know to, to convey some wisdom and so the wisdom that can come from listening from learning and learning from other people's stories, listening from other people in their life stories, from reading texts, many ways in which we can learn from others. Then the third form of wisdom is called bhavana-maya paññā. And bhavana means cultivation or

practice. And this is the wisdom and come from our own practice, from practicing. And this is the wisdom that can only come if we practice. There's a lot of wisdom and come from life experience and from acting in the world. And it's, I don't know if it's, you know, good or bad but certainly humbling to realize that there are a lot of people who who say it carefully

There are a lot of wise people in the world who are become a really wise without having done any practice, Buddhist practice. And a lot of people who are practicing Buddhism for a long time, they don't have a lot of wisdom that there's a lot of wisdom that comes from just life experience and reflecting deeply and, and taking the risk and a chance to engage in life. So that life then helps us to learn more and to discover more. I think of wisdom coming apart from taking risks, like this woman took risks. And, but then there's also the wisdom that comes from practice. And for Buddhists, this is a very important part, but it comes from practicing it comes from engaging in practice in some way, and then the practice in return brings wisdom. So what is wisdom mean? What is when it arises out of practice? What is practice mean?

So that reminds me of another list. Wisdom appears. And that's the list of the three trainings. There's sila, Samadhi, and Ponyo. There's ethics, meditation or concentration, and wisdom. And it's usually understood that the, the training and wisdom is supported on a foundation of a training and ethics and a training in concentration, and meditation. So that wisdom is something that we you know, you need to have some respect for the cultivation of wisdom in the way you're respected as I understand what it takes. As a human being the kind of foundation you need to create for yourself, the kind of preparation you need to do in order to approach the sacred area of wisdom is very important part of life. And so ethics is living an ethical life, becoming some to some degree virtuous or acting virtuous. Least. So that settles the mind makes it much more sensitive the heart and mind and also develop concentration of steadiness, stability of mind, stability of psyche, stability of the inner life. If the inner life is not stable in some way, it's very hard for wisdom to arise. One of the things that this woman provided the gang members perhaps, was a sense of stability of a home a place like maybe her stability that they could relate to. The psyche also needs to have some stability, in order for it to kind of all this agitation and worries and fears and aggressions, to somehow be able to settle down and be able to look at that honestly. So had to find some way to bring some stability. And that's another reason for some sacred leisure time for always living directed, live doing doing doing running around and then it doesn't not conducive to cultivating inner stability. Meditation is one of those ways of developing stability. So on the foundation of ethics and meditation, Concentration, then we can look into cultivation of wisdom. So what is wisdom? What is the cultivation of wisdom? One of the first, more than one very common definitions of wisdom, which was given last Monday when I asked people was, is the ability to see clearly how things actually are. And the assumption in Buddhism is that most of us as we live our lives, don't actually see things as they actually are. But we see things through the lens of our preferences, our likes and dislikes. We see it through our lens of our desires and our attachments. And we see it through the lens of certain filter of ignorance, so not understanding how things actually are. So how you know, so to cultivate the ability to see clearly to be able to separate out our interpretations of events, from events, how they actually are in and of themselves, to be able to discern the difference

between you know, All kinds of things. So, I mean, I just comes to mind now, I don't know if it's a good story, but it's very brief is, you know, we have this newborn baby at home. And he's just over two months, two weeks old. And so far we've been blessed with very good nights. And I tell people who've been parents, how much sleep we're getting, they say, that's great. I was told a few people who've never been parents before, and they hear how, how much sleep we're getting, they can manage with that. And, man, anyway, we're getting, he's sleeping three to four hours at a time. So we feel, you know, quite blessed. And, and so I'm telling you a story is that I see my mind going in the direction of saying, Oh, we got it made. Because you know, and then the wisdom part says, Well, we don't know yet. That's an interpretation. You know, just like the first two weeks, who knows how the skin develops? So there is this, you know, the sense of I don't I don't really know yet, you know, I'm not going to settle on that as a conclusion. So to be careful about the conclusions and the assumptions we make, is part of living wisely. And to notice what is an assumption, what is the conclusion? And upon what evidence do we have that this to be true? In a little story, I've told a lot, I apologize. But when my first son was about two years old, there was a period of time where my wife and I had developed this practice that when he was being outrageous, in some way that I was ready to tear my hair out or something. My wife would look at each other and one of us would say to the other, we're having one of those kinds of days. And that was enough, then I just feel settled very quickly.

Oh, it's one of those days because the psyche was operating with it. This is forever. This is it. We have this juvenile delinquent. You know, and I just saw, he saw, I saw the writing on the wall and you know, I was visiting him in San Quentin and you know, and, but it was just one of those days and, you know, he goes through these days, you know, periods of balance and imbalance and, and just to kind of have a little perspective was very wise. The famous story of this man who went to the Sufi Master, and I gave him a ring and said, I want you to write in scribe when this ring, some wise words, when I'm reminded of it, it helps me live wisely. And so the Sufi master took the ring, and he wrote the words, this too will change. So, you know, the implication of that is that, be careful with the assumptions you have the conclusions you make. This is the way it's always going to be. Suzuki Roshi define Buddhism In three words, the core teachings of Buddhism at one time, other times probably other word definitions. As you'll see, whatever the definitions, by the definition they gave, and the definition he gave in three words for Buddhism is not always so it's not always so. So. So to be careful with our conclusions. So the first aspect of wisdom is training, learn to see things as they are. And that's what the passionate practices essentially about is to develop the stability and calmness within ourselves and the clarity of seeing and the ability to question what's there. So we don't take the obvious for granted. But we're questioning what is this deeply looking deeply what's deeply going on here? What's behind the surface, it's actually here. So that's one aspect of wisdom is the wisdom of seeing things as they are. Another very important aspect of words of wisdom is in seeing how things are, is also to see how they could be, how they could be different. And this is important for practice, that practice points to a new possibility of how to live live in your life. Do you notice see how you think things are you might see how attached you are to certain things. And you see that there's a possibility potential to not be attached, but a potential for finding the peace, of non attachment. To see that possibility. And a wise life. Wisdom involves also seeing having a vision of what's possible. without some vision of what's



possible, I believe there is no spiritual practice. Now, as soon as the vision however, you have to be wise but how you hold it because some people then hold on to the vision And never practice. They use it as their safeguard their security. Some people just get keep getting inspired by the vision of a possibility. They go to endless talks. But they never actually it's like reading a menu. You know, you never ordered the food. Some people are always looking into the future to what's going to happen, that they really miss the present moment. Some people have a vision and then then judge themselves, oh, I'm not living up to what's possible. Therefore, I'm X, Y, and Z. So it'd be careful how we hold the vision. But part of a wise life is I believe, to have some vision of what's possible. Having a vision of what's possible, then gives a person a sense, a person a sense of purpose in their life. And I believe a part of a wise life is to have a sense of purpose, a direction that we're going and so part of that involves haven't doing the kind of reflective work for one Self exploration to find what is a suitable purpose for your life? What is the purpose that you want to organize your life around. And you can certainly have many purposes. It's also possible to have a central purpose around which you can organize the rest of your life. And if you don't do that for yourself, then I think for many people in our culture, our culture, our society, our advertising industry, will provide you with a central organizing principle. I had this fantasy a week or two ago, of somehow we'd raise a lot of money for the next maybe for the next Super Bowl. And I don't know you need like, a few hundred thousand dollars for 30 seconds for advertisements. How much it's a lot of money, right? So we have two big fundraising. And we

would we would pay for a 32nd slot. And we have this beautiful, you know, very captivating, very inspiring kind of, you know, commercial that we put on and really get people to think Attention and the commercial that message of the commercial would be, don't buy anything.

Instead, spend some time with your family, go spend some do some reflective time, you know sacred leisure and be of service in your community. So a sense of purpose, the part of a wise life is to have a sense of purpose. So see things how they are as part of to see what is possible, explore what's possible, and then to have some sense of purpose towards that possibility. Once you have a sense of purpose, then you could talk about what is helpful and what is unhelpful for the purposes of attaining that purpose. And following through on that there's classic expression is what a skill And what is unskillful and that is an element of discernment, being able to discern clearly, not to simply see how things are, but to discern distinctions and differences. discern value between what is valuable, what is helpful and what is not helpful. The ability to discern connections between things, the connection and consequences, the cause and effect relationships between things, to see if I do X, that will that has that supportive that's helpful for the purposes that I'm wanting follow through on to see the living an ethical life has conflict or not living ethical life has consequences to discern those consequences, and how they support a meditation like meditation practice, for example, or deeper inquiry, deeper looking into our life. To see that to discern that to see the cause and effect relationships to see if I do x that tends to To produce y that supports the possibility of why something you know, Y and Z happening. So the ability to be discerning, then becomes a very important part of Buddhist training. Actually, it's partly Buddhist training is a training in cultivating our discernment. Becoming a more discerning person. The

bad news about that is that it involves work effort, and some people would rather have their spiritual life spoon fed to them. And I actually just criticism that I've received and the positive teachers have received from my Zen friends, is we teach too much. We say too much we explain too much. And present point of view shouldn't say so much. Because usually, you want to spoon feed people. One Zen teacher says like, recipe, a spoon feed, like if you're giving baby food to people. What you want to do is let them discover on their own create the conditions that help them support and discover on their own. But you want to be very careful, you don't teach so much anybody. And if you end up teaching too much, then your eyebrows go really long. I think it's like, Pinocchio's nose. So,

so they're the effort to become discerning and more discerning kind of person. To look at our experience, look at the conclusions in our mind, look at our assumptions, look at our ideals, look at our relationships to the people around us and be discerning about them. make distinctions make look more deeply what's really going on here. What are the consequences? What are the results where, what's what's really going on here? To do that work to do it effort. And I think again, you you if you don't order from the menu, the menu is not going to do you any good. If you don't actually put the practice to work, the practice is not going to do any good. And that requires some kind of effort applying oneself in some way or other. So it'd be discerning. And so that's why one of my most my favorite translations now of wisdom is discernment, cultivating ability to be discerning. And I think that most is very common. This is a generalization. But as a you know, a generalization is that spiritual people tend to generalize. And, and live in the world of generalizations. And practice is supposed to help us become more discerning. So we don't just generalize too easily, but actually look more carefully what's actually going on here in the specifics. So it's part of the function of mindfulness to become more discerning. I like the word word, discernment as one of the translations have pride in your Ponyo because it's one of the five faculties. And the five faculties faculty is the mental faculty or inner faculty that we have, that we have to apply and develop and cultivate its capacity we have. So in this sense, wisdom as a faculty is nothing, not the understanding you've acquired. But rather there's a capacity we have to act in the world in some certain way. The mind to be engaged in certain way. And so I think it works better to translate it as the sermon to speak discerning that it does in having knowledge or having understanding, because it's an ongoing process. Wisdom is not there's not an end, result in wisdom. Now you have it, but rather it's a constant inquiry, constant discernment of our life as we go through it to be discerning. So as a faculty, we have the fact that that capacity to be discerning part of Buddhist practice is to cultivate that Faculty until becomes actually a power abala in Pali, a power that we have that really supports us. So and we discovered we cultivate a sermon by being discerning. So in meditation practice, how does how do we, how we do, how are we discerning in our meditation practice? I know there's some people I talked to, who aren't really that discerning about their meditation practice. I've known people spent years and years, kind of having faith based practice, there's kind of a lot of faith, this is a good thing to do. But they never really look deeply at what's really going on for them when they meditate and what are the results of their meditation and sooner or later, you want to look a little bit what are the results so how is this benefiting me? Is it serving the purpose that I have? Do I have a real sense of purpose now some people are looking at the you know the measuring their meditation practice to to quickly just like you know, you plant the



corn seed in the ground. And they will sprout sprouts through the ground, you have one little leaf kind of sticking to the ground, and you pull out the leaf to see how well the plants growing, or you tug on it, and you destroy it. You have to leave things alone also, which you know, after a couple of years or a few months or something to you know, to have some had some discernment what's happening here is it's useful for me, so useful for me to meditate first thing in the morning, maybe it is, or maybe it's not, maybe for you, it's better to better meditate in the afternoon or in the evening, to be discerning about what's useful, how to meditate. be discerning How long should your sittings be your meditation speed. And part of that then is to is a process of trial and error, to try for a while to meditate for 20 minutes or 30 minutes or 45 minutes and see what the difference is in the complex psychology of your life. What is different lengths of meditation time do for you in terms of supporting you the purpose that you you're approaching your spiritual life and today take some risks to experiment a little bit, okay? Well, we will be like to try 45 minutes for a while, for two, three months, and then to see what the benefits are. And you might find that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages that you'll make it a regular part of your life to sit everyday in a regular basis. So this is a process of discerning

what's really going on here. What's a useful way of meditating? Some people don't really haven't really learned, well, the techniques or the instructions for meditation. And so they're kind of kind of namby pamby when they sit down, and some people you know, but then you can also be very particular, okay, I'm going to try cultivating concentration for a while and do it on my breath. What's that like? To have the ability to cultivate concentration? What supports cultivation of concentration? what's helpful for me in doing mindfulness, and be discerning what's helpful? what's helpful, what's not helpful, what skillful is not skillful? To be discerning what's going on and have the wisdom to know To be discerning, without the mind being analytical or agitated or constantly preoccupied by the discerning process. That's part of the art. Part of it one of the guidelines is does it is it helpful to helping the inner life become more peaceful, more still more quiet, more loving. So is the very process of being discerning. being done in a way that's conducive to becoming quieter, still learn more. And there are different ways of being discerning and being engaged in that kind of process. It can be agitating tense, to pressure, it can be very soft and in a way that actually lends itself to becoming softer and more gentle in the inner life. As one of the five faculties, its discernment is meant to be balanced with what in Pali is called Suddha. shraddha in Sanskrit, which is often translated into English is faith. And maybe it's interesting to look at why faith and wisdom wisdom is to be balanced discernment and faith. However, when we use the word faith as a translation of sada all too often I've noticed that it, it raises a lot of red flags for people. And no way I'm gonna get close to faith, or that's a problem for me or, you know, and I think it's, the reason is that, here in the West, a lot of people come out of it out of their own religious back Western religious backgrounds, and assume that Buddhism is a religion, like their religion, of birth. And therefore, since it's kind of since both of them are religions, they must be similar. And so we have similar categories and therefore if Buddhists use the word faith, that must be the same thing, what it means faith in my religion. And, you know, I didn't want that anymore. I was burned by that kind of faith or whatever the attitude has been or That's supposed to mean you're supposed to kind of believe something without evidence, just kind of believe it out of faith. But faith is a faculty that we all have saada as a faculty, it's a capacity we have. And so the question is, do we want to exercise that

capacity? Is there a way of exercising it's so supportive for spiritual life, for meditative life, for following through in this purpose that we've set for our life. And, and perhaps, I'll experiment with you with an analogy metaphor for this. That maybe is helpful, and maybe it's it will be disaster. The Buddha belong to the warrior class. In ancient India, he was a warrior. And sometimes it might be helpful to look at how a warrior or soldier a fighter in the maybe in the best qualities of being a warrior would approach being in battle or being used training, training oneself to be a warrior. And the five faculties, of faith, of energy, of wisdom of mindfulness, concentration and wisdom can be seen as the five faculties that need to be developed for someone to be a successful warrior. So, and here I don't think faith then means you know, faith in some supreme deity that's gonna protect you, or some supernatural thing. For a warrior or maybe modern words we would say you know, someone involved in a sport or some kind of any kind of activity. One of the primary qualities needs to be strong is a sense of conviction, or sense of confidence. I personally would not be a warrior good warrior unless the person had some degree of confidence.

And that confidence needs to be matched with discernment. If a If a worrier just has confidence and goes into battle with a confidence, he or she had no discernment, he or she would probably not survive for very long. You want to you want you want a warrior, who's very discerning. Maybe, you know, we don't like warrior kind of battle kind of imagery for spirituality here in the West, though, and classically, that was often the case it was used that way. That's right, those kinds of images. Maybe for us, maybe they have a guide, if we wanted a guide to take us into the wild Uncharted wilderness someplace in the Amazon or something. And I've been in the Amazon once and I was really went to the jungle away from everything, like hundred feet. And What amazed me was how incredibly monotonous or homogenous imaginisce The Jungle got immediately everything looked exactly the same. So you got 100 feet in, you know, and I didn't know which direction to go anymore because all the markers I had, you know, it was all the same. It was, I don't even know 100 feet or something, you know, you know? Anyway, so you go if you want to go into the into the wilderness with a guide, you want a guide who has confidence and you want someone who's discerning. So the five faculties is is that confidence and discernment need to work together. The image that's given his confidence is a blind giant. And discernment is a lame person with good eyesight. So the only person can't walk. And so the job delaine person has to be carried in the shoulders of the giant who can't see and then the giant head With the lame person helps the giant to walk. So our ability to be discerning needs to be matched or supported by confidence that this is useful conviction for confidence in the purpose for which we're doing it. And that has a very important element, confidence in the purpose for which we're doing it confidence in our ability to attain the purpose, confidence in our ability, that is a useful purpose to follow. Some people have the wisdom and the insight to see their attachments, what they're clinging to their life, but they don't have the wisdom to see that it's valuable to let go of that attachment, or they don't have enough confidence in the alternative to clinging. If we had a lot of confidence in the alternative to clinging, probably be easy to like over clinging. So it's one One thing to see are clinging, it's another thing to have great confidence in the alternative to clinging, on clinging. So to have confidence and conviction in that it's very helpful. So imagine, you know, like a guide going into the Amazon jungle, you have to maybe have to have enough confidence and conviction. That being tense.

In trying to find your way in the jungle is not helpful. It's better to be relaxed and alert. The alternative is better. So wisdom, wisdom and faith recently confidence conviction, the exercise of discernment, reflecting deeply about the purpose we have for our lives, getting support from other people and texts from our learning, but what might be the purpose for our life and what might be the ways of supporting that purpose, what it means to human human being and to spend time with Acting deeply on our own, to actually give ourselves the reflective time, the idle time, the sacred time, not only to reflect, but to allow the innate native natural healing process opening process, the natural wellsprings of wisdom and compassion and love, to have a chance to bubble up and surface, I think are all part of a wise life. So may all of you be discerning and wise, and they all love you find a way to have mindfulness and meditation and concentration in love and compassion, faith and conviction, support you so your life feels more fulfilled, and happier and more at peace. At the minimum, may you discover the capacity, not to live to live a life without conflict. Thank you very much