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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Good evening, everyone. And what I thought this evening we could do is I could talk for a little while about something that interests me or that I think might be interesting for you or useful. And then we can have some discussion about that or open up for questions or discussion. If you have other questions about meditation or practice that you'd like to talk about, be great to bring it up. And we can see where the discussion goes. And then some maybe 15 minutes before nine o'clock, we could stop again and have another short sitting.

You know, the mindfulness practice that we practice here at the center focuses a lot on the value of attention. On our attention, bringing your attention being attentive to what's happening. And the background for this practice is that attention or being attentive to what's happening is really one of the first principles of Buddhist practice. And there's a lot of input implications behind that being kind of a first principle that each person's practice begins with that person paying attention. Paying attention means noticing what's happening with yourself. Part of the beauty about attention, being attentive. It's a process that happens in the present moment is something to be attentive means generally means you being attentive to something that's here, and now something that's present right now. So the part of being attentive is to be attentive to what's here. And so the first principle of Buddhism I like to suggest One of the first principles is that the practice begins with yourself begins here. And so it's not so much a matter of learning principles from the books, or learning ideas or learning from a teacher, for example, some wonderfully inspiring idea of what practice is all about and go home and feel comforted. No, that's great. Maybe someday I'll do that or, you know, but rather, it's really, the first principle is really up to you to pay attention to what's happening right now here and now with your life. So Buddhism puts a tremendous responsibility on each person is interested in the practice. It's up to you to start paying attention. And if you start being attentive, then what do you discover? What do you discover when you start being attentive implication behind this is that there's kind of a trust inherent trust in your in each individual person's capacity. To pay attention, and to discover, be attentive and discover what needs to be attended to on their own. So rather than some teacher saying, This is what

your experience should be like, the first principle is stopping and just noticing what is happening here being attentive to this experience here. And everybody's gonna have a different experience when you sit down. Some years ago, there was a woman who was a member, somehow was a member of maybe on the mailing list of the Spirit rock, meditation center marine that I'm connected to. And at some point, you sent a letter to spirit rock saying, Please take me off your mailing list. I don't, please take me off your membership rolls. I no longer want to be part of any connection with you. Because when I come in here, the teachers and practice and the retreats there. People are always telling me what am I supposed to experience and I'm not going there to be told Experience I'm there to discover what, you know what my experience is. And I felt fairly sad by the letter because I felt the person had misunderstood. I don't know. I didn't recognize the name. I don't know if she ever came on retreats with me, but I felt, you know, I've heard a lot of teachers speak and I hadn't gotten the impression that we're supposed to kind of have certain experiences. But maybe that comes across sometimes. Some people assume that when you practice you're supposed to become calm. That's a common one. If you're agitated, then you're not doing it right. Or you're supposed to be kind if you're angry, then you something wrong, you know, and see if the hide the fact you're angry, or you're supposed to have great insights, but to see, you know, penetrate deeply into the experience and see something at the core of the nature of what reality is made up of what it's all about, or your psyche, some deep kind of penetrating insight into what makes your psyche work. And as possible, get calm it's possibly become Pinder it's possible to have insight but the set those up as, as goals can lead to person to not pay attention carefully to what who they are right now what their own experiences right now what's happening right now. And, you know, I'm suggesting them in the first principles of Buddhism is being attentive, being attentive to what the experience is right now. So the responsibility to responsibility for doing that is really up to you. I can't do that for you. Sometimes, you know, someone might say, Oh, you look kind of, you know, impatient or angry. annoyed? Oh, yeah, I didn't know that. I guess I am. So someone sometimes you can get help, you can get help. And,

but really, to take on the practice is to take on the practice of learning to do that yourself. being attentive to what your experiences I've known people who have had magic think in relationship to meditation practice, we thought, oh, I'll just put in my time on the cushion and something will happen. by magic, some wonderful experience, something will happen. Sometimes nice things do happen. We we don't do anything but sit there, partly because we unwind. And some of us are so bound up that it seems, you know, wonderful to unwind. But that's not really the point of Buddhism is simply simply to unwind that one of the real trusts is to begin taking that responsibility to noticing what your experiences what is what's happening to you, what's going on. And part of that process is to notice how you then relate to what the experience is right now. And then it gets really interesting, because what you might find, for example, is that you relate to it with some attitude. It shouldn't be this way, or it should be this way, or this is wrong. This is right. I'm wrong. They're wrong, whatever. Or you might have certain Kind of interpretations, that of the experience. And it's very hard to see sometimes that the experience is mediated through an interpretation of the experience. And sometimes it takes years and years of paying attention to notice that, oh, it's not really that way. I'm doing it was interpreting it that way. So it's not necessarily easy to start noticing the relationship we have with experience. But

that's actually, we come to that by beginning to tease apart. But by being attentive and teasing apart, what's there noticing what's there carefully, what's here. And my mantra kind of, that I had, for my teacher in Burma was very simple a mantra was, what's this? What's this? Like, monetary say over and over again? Right? So like, what's this now? What's this now? And you know what this meant now meant, you know, not what happened 10 seconds ago. still remaining. But all you know, the great, wonderful thing that happened was that all about part of the part of the focus and the mindfulness practice is to maintain the continuity of attentiveness to what's actually unfolding in the present moment. And not to kind of be caught up then in what's happened just now, and stay behind. The example would be, you know, you go to a river and you get a bucket of water, you're studying the river, you're seeing the river flows and the current and the speed, you put a bucket of water out of the river and you go around with a bucket and say, here's the river. You know, once you've had the water in the river, and the water in the bucket is not really the river anymore. So in the same thing, you know, when we when we are doing kind of retroactive thinking about the past, retrospective thinking, you know, we're not really attentive anymore to what's happening now. It's useful to have to think back at things at times, but it's not what meditation is. So there's an experience of what's happening now. And then it's the relationship we have to it, the attitudes we have to what we do with that experience. What are you doing with what you notice happening right now. So it's really easy. For example, if you, for example, say that we have this creaky floor. And so you notice that you notice that you notice the creaky floor. That's what happens. You're attentive to the fact that you're aware of that creaky floor. And what's your attitude towards it? Some people maybe are comforted by it. Some people great and I've been coming here for a year and I always had the creaky floor. It means I'm here sitting on people. It's great Association. Some people Jesus, you know, what's going on here, some expose, be quiet center. I came to refuge of quiet and there's creaky floor. It's creepy. You know, and just kind of, you know, just just getting into my meditation and something kurtik you know, don't they know any better, they suppose, you know, they're supposed to protect my concentration here. And so as always attitude. And then the mind getting caught up in this attitude. And you can spend 510 minutes you know, designing a better floor before you remember you're supposed to be meditating. So the notice what the relationship is it's not you're simply a creaking floor. But we get caught in it, we have an attitude, we get ideas about it. And what's fascinating to get to go a little bit to Buddhist theory for a moment, and to take you away from your experience, but just maybe to highlight a little bit is that all Action. Action in the word for action in Buddhism is karma.

And karma action that you do has consequences beyond the physical mechanical consequences. So if I hit the bell, the consequences or make a sound, but the karmic consequences are different than the mechanical causes. sequences of enact the karmic consequences of those consequences, those that that chain of cause and effect that I set into motion, that are set in the motion by the intention behind the action. So, if my intention is to ring the bell is to be educational. That's a good intention. So, basically it's good karma for me. But if my intention is to, you know, irritate you, whatever, that you know, creates a certain kind of different kind of momentum in the psychic mind in the mind the intention, it creates a certain momentum in the mind which then agitates the mind or irritates the mind creates bad karma we say in Buddhism. What's interesting, that was, the point I'm trying to make want

to make here is that, in this Buddhist theory, there are three kinds of karma returning after the actions that create this kind of ripple effect in the psyche, in the mind, there is physical. There's verbal, talking. And then there's mental. The fact that you're thinking about something, it's only a thought doesn't free you from the karmic consequences. The thinking is a kind of action in Buddhism. So the way when you think about something, also then has consequences and how you're going to feel. So, there's the experience what's happening now. There's the attitude or thoughts you have about it. And then there's the actions that you have in relationship to it, that then shape what the next experience is going to be like. The next moment so if we have this noisy floor, You hear the noisy floor that's immediate experience. The attitude is one of irritation. Just simple attitude of irritation. And then there's thoughts around that air that irritation, thoughts of anger of ill will. And because anger and ill will is set in motion in the mind, you kind of like have this filter, we have this filter over our eyes then over awareness. So the next moment of experience is gonna be colored perhaps through that irritation. So that it might be now that the floor goes but some car might drive by outside. And we have this previous small, small teeny maybe predisposition to be angry or irritated. And so that gets that's part of the next moments experience. It's not simply the sound of the car going by, but it's a little bit entangled with the irritation. So we all have that experience. I think, you know, in dramatic Much more dramatic forms where, you know, you've had a trying day, and you're irritated. And you something you go home or go someplace and someone says something really relatively innocence to you. And you, you know, lash out at them. Because you bring a certain kind of at you bring something with you into that experience. So there's a present moment experience. There's the attitude interpretations you have towards it. And it's what you bring along with you into the present moment. Are you following me? So there's three things are happening in the present moment. There's the experience, they're what we normally would call the kind of immediate raw experience. There's the relationship you have with that experience that's occurring. And there's the momentum, what you bring with you from the past into the present moment. Those three things are coming together in the present moment. So learning to be attentive. bringing attention, you can notice all three of those things you can notice. What's the present moment experience? What's the idea is the attitudes, the beliefs, interpretations? And what is it that I'm bringing with me? What's my mood was the attitude what's the underlying attitudes underlying mood. And as we get more and more attentive, especially if he can get very calm, there is value in being calm. We might notice some of the deep, deep, underlying and pervasive attitudes that we're always carrying with us. Some, some people, for example, are always carrying with them. You know, I mean, they say this way. It's fairly common on retreats, where people are paying attention all the time, and much higher degree they do normal life

for certain individuals to come and say, I had no idea how pervasively I'm afraid. Fear characterizes my state of my mind all the time. I had no idea. It's kind of like a shock. Or some people, you know, how pervasive You know, my judging Do some always judging myself or others I couldn't believe it. And on retreat it just so painful because you, you know, you notice all the time in daily life, you get distracted all the time from yourself, you know, you don't notice as much. People tend not to notice that they're in the same kind of way the underlying good disposition. So someone's kind of as an underlying tendency to be kind. It's actually harder for people to notice that we don't give ourselves

that kind of credit. So often, we tend to be much more attentive to underlying tendencies towards anger, fear something, it's painful, but underlying tendencies we have to be unkind or compassionate or generous. Somehow, we're not so disposed to kind of recognize it in ourselves, but it's there for there also, and some people have been more than others. So perhaps I've already said too much. Because there's, there's a teaching in Buddhism. If you tell people too much, then they'll be looking for what you told them to you I told them, if you're looking for what you told them to look for, then they're not going to notice what they want experiences. So the emphasis tonight what I want to make is that it's really simple. The beginning point of practice, the beginning of point of practice, is your experience. When you first sit down to meditate when you first start to pay attention, what's your experience, and then one thing you want to be very careful for with then is things like any kind of judgment is, this is not the right experience to have. Remember, the color couple years ago, I was doing walking meditation. And I was walking through my walking meditation. And after a while, I noticed it was kind of like, I felt a little bit of pressed by the walking meditation can a little bit off like I was pushing. And I realized when I paid attention to that pushing was that I wasn't simply paying it. attention to my experience. As I was doing walking meditation, I had this subtle idea that I was supposed to get concentrated supposed to get to a different kind of way of being suppose to be a different kind of Gill, I concentrated when I was doing walking meditation, so it's kind of like pushing myself to get concentrated. And it was kind of like a bird. And when I noticed it, then I would let go of it. And then I simply was there presence for what was actually going on for me. And it was much more pleasant in that particular moment to be present for how I was than it was to try to change how I was. So we pay we notice what's happening, and let's be very attentive to do we judge it do we push it away? Do we defend against it, we argue with it. Do we? What do we do with it? That makes it more difficult for us that brings us stress that brings us suffering the quest In a sense, is to see how simple you can become around the experience you're being aware of. Can you free yourselves from interpretations? Can you free yourself from attitude? Can you free yourself from getting karmically involved with that experience? So you don't make more karma. The definite one of the definitions of someone who's enlightened, fully enlightened, is they no longer create any karma for them in the way that they're involved in the world. They still do all kinds of things in the world. And there's still mechanical cause and effect, but the way in which they act in the world, the way they respond to the world, there's a kind of peaceful stillness, perhaps in the psyche. I'm not fully enlightened, so I can't speak for them. But there's something that they said that they no longer are making karma with the way in which they respond and act in the world. There's a kind of a there's no traces left. There's no wind drag. There's no there's a simplicity in there. There's nothing that's left over. Some people talk about, they burn themselves up in the moment and there's no carry over into the next moment. So, in a sense, one of their goals is to become very simple. With experience that you're having in the present moment, it can be very, very peaceful when you have that simplicity. But when you hear that, then you think, Oh, I'm supposed to become simple. And then you overlook the fact of how your what your experiences right now. Now, what I really want to encourage you is to start with where you're at.

And be content that the whole Buddhist path will will unfold for you. in your own way, weight supposed to unfold for you. If you are very honest, about what your experiences uncompromising honesty about

what's actually happening for you moment by moment, without measuring yourself against what it should be or what it shouldn't be or what you think it's all about just uncompromising honesty, what's happening now. So it's really then, about you. Or say this is really about your attentiveness. And being honest with what you attend to what you notice. It doesn't have to be limited just to your own personal experience, but just also what's around you in the present moment to be attentive to that. And to be honest least to yourself, but what you see around you. Today, I was with some friend of mine, and for some reason, I'm not sure why maybe I didn't eat very well today. middle of the day with I wasn't feeling very well I started getting a headache coupled with nauseous so I certainly noticed it and then My kind of initial idea was I shouldn't admit this to my friend a little bit embarrassing, you know, shouldn't somehow I felt like election tell him, I should somehow be cheery and energetic and vital and have engaged in conversation. But it certainly didn't feel like it. And there was, you know, there was longer gaps in the conversation. And so after a while, I just told them, You know, I don't feel good. And as soon as I said, you know, said how I was feeling was honest about it, then that wasn't being burden anymore about having to somehow be different than who I was. And some strange idea had in my mind that the honest is saying it out loud. freed me from lightning for mercury. I mean, it made me a lot lighter. saying what's there is a way of becoming lighter, more often than not. So I probably talk long enough, I don't know if this has been useful. I think you got the point. The point is don't look outside yourself. So what are your thoughts? What are your comments, reactions or anything else you want to ask about to practice? meditation, anything on your mind?

Anything when you pay attention to yourself, what do you notice that you'd like to discuss? Yeah, just thinking about

the experience.

People, which can get confusing and damaging

Yeah, yeah, that would be a version of the interpretation, his experience and his interpretation and the experience. And so when it's, you know, we talk about projection Now, when we interpret the other person, that other person is that way. And we project our ideas, our interpretations, our attitudes, our history, you know, on that person. And then we do the same thing to ourselves, we project ideas onto ourselves of who we are. And we always attitude towards ourselves. And part of the part of hopefully what mindfulness does, is to begin to wake us up to that process. And so that takes paying attention paying attention, it can be very helpful to get calm, the mind it's very, very calm can see the movements of the mind as they're occurring much more clearly. So it's like you know, if you have a A surface of a pond of water, or a lake. And there's a lot of strong wind and a lot of agitation a lot of, you know a lot of waves and, and you take a pebble and you throw a pebble into the water, you don't notice that the pebble makes any further waves because there's so many big waves already. But if the pond gets really, really still, and you throw a pebble into it, then you see the ripples of effect of that particular pebble. And so same thing with your mind. If the mind is really calm, then you can notice this

person who walks in through the door, you notice the person arising, coming through the door, and you notice there arises in the mind. The idea you know, that person is dangerous, that person is the person I'm going to marry, you know, or that person is you know, we're all you know, whenever you have something arises, and if mine is calm, you can catch and see that around. And then you can take responsibility for it. But if the, you know, see through it, but if the mind is agitated and busy, there's so much going on, you're not going to notice that particular thought. It's just that thought that thought the thought that arises that person's dangerous. Just kind of in an initial thought is lost, you don't even notice the initial thought. And already, then you're making plans about how to protect yourself or how to propose or how to whatever you think about that person that respond to you. So it's very helpful to get calm sometimes in order to do this process to unfold well, but then don't set up calm as being you know, as a wave. Don't try to get calm as a way of not being honest. But what's happening now.

One way to one way check it kind of check in balance system for projection is is without gossiping. Tell it to someone, this person came in I thought this or that person, or tell the person directly. And then you know, is that true? And then hear what they have to say. Sometimes I do it with, you know, with my wife, I tell, you know, I thought this person today and I was had this thought about this person. And she'll say, I think you're interpreting, you don't really know. You don't really know what people are like, just, you know, a simple conversation. And then I often have the experience of spending a lot of time with someone who I didn't know idea that person was like that. You know, so it was it was an experience I had many years ago that was just chastising the right word was very sobering to me and kind of a wake up call. could that happen on the same time? I'm remembering now. The first was I'd read the book by Steven Devine called who dies was very inspired by it. And then I went to a Steven Devine workshop weekend workshop on death and dying in Marion County. And I was just oh, you know, anyway, so I was there and all these people showed up for the workshop. And they look like knocking What do what can I What can I say without projecting something on them? But that was the problem I projected. These are just like regular ordinary, I don't say these are just, you know, ordinary kind of people, you know, whatever that means. And, and then the workshop again. It was a workshop on death and dying. And people started speaking who were there and people Start talking about their grief and, you know, who had just died and their child that just drowned or, you know, they were diagnosed with terminal illness and they were about to die, they had to be given a, you know, a month left, and there are all these amazing stories. And I was just, I was just like, shocked. These people, these are people, you know, ordinary could have passed them on the street, and I wouldn't have thought anything about them and they had this huge, you know, you know, suffering in their life that have been invisible to me until they started speaking. And I realized how much I didn't know people. You know, I kind of projected normality on people, whatever that is, or you know, and then a little bit later I was I was working at this restaurant. I was a cook. And my shift ended and next shift was starting and so I was in the changing room. When this guy came for the next shift, and he would say came through the door. We were kind of we're friends and I kind of it was it was kind enough my expression it was kind with him and nice and friendly warm, but it was kind of like I was kind of joking with him when he came. First first thing came through the door and I was immediately sorry to joke with him. And his best friend that just died. And then about that morning, but he just died on me

yesterday before something. And I felt so bad that I hadn't taken the time to somehow get a sense of who this person was before I kind of imposed my automatic kind of silly response to kind of seeing him. So those two experiences were very powerful for me of that, you know, maybe I should stop and look more carefully at people and not assume that I know who they are just, you know who first appearances and just really, you know be more careful And what I've come to really believe is that everybody deserves our careful attention. Everybody, you know, as much deeper and more profound and more and more, you know, more profound than when we first when I first think about when I first meet them, my first impressions in terms of projection, you know. So what I project now into people is, Oh, I think I should get to know this person better. It's worth getting to know this person better.

So I was wondering, what do you do with the feelings and emotions that arise during the meditation city, but that survived.

linger on after that.

And some of those get stirred up more because

they start off more meaning that after you get up from sitting,

yeah, like you may not have been thinking about those things, but just because you've been sitting quietly and your mind is somewhat calm, and you can survive on,

give me more concrete example.

See if you realize that you've been afraid, and that's like your

force in your life.

But that becomes more apparent because you can sit in for a while. And then that kind of overwhelms you.

Well, the first thing you do you should do a little bit is Be very careful that you don't judge yourself negatively discovered you're this way. If you can, in some way kind of appreciate the fact is great. Wow, this is great. I discovered how afraid I am. Wow. It's much better to know than to go around, not knowing so it's a great no it's really good you know feel encouraged by it. And then really depends you know on how powerful it is in your life. Some things can be dealt with through meditation, a regular meditation practice some things you can get a handle on you can you can you know you can incense be free of it, that free from ever being free of it, so that you see some like fear arises, and is because you see it so well. You've learned how to identify it and keep doing what you need to do without having to get in the way. Or, if it's really a problem in your life, then finding some more dramatic way of

dealing with it. Someone who wants to deal with things through meditation might want to go on a long retreat. Long retreat is a place where there can be enough concentrated stillness and insight and awareness that sometimes you can get deep down to the roots that kind of the root of what stimulates it, you know the cause of it in a sense. Sometimes it's more effective to do therapy, for example, if there's some ongoing chronic issues, you notice it over and over again. And it really has, you know, grips you and you kind of affects you in ways that are not very healthy. Sometimes spending a little bit time with a therapist can be very helpful. And someone who's trained professionally to deal with some of these kind of emotional issues. Is that satisfying or ask more? I'm not very satisfied with my answer. So if yes, if you ask him more questions about it, then I would, perhaps have something more useful to say. Is it good enough? can't satisfy everyone. Its physical exam, but not me. When do I didn't satisfy me? Yeah.

question and I know that there isn't a Buddhist golden day. banishing reality. And yet, we have to sit on both sides of the fence to notice what's happening in this say, Oh, I agree.

But it's not enough to simply notice on some level of greed for children

to substitute something to give something away, to practice on. And so we're always balancing this kind of noticing which there but not be merely being contextual let it rest. But to say is this a useful things and fruitful thing if it's not to try to work through it? Great. We have some both sides of the fence at the same time.

I don't know. I don't know if it's the same time. But

this is my question.

unsatisfying, because, you know, we notice something we carry wouldn't wait. Implementation

we have to act upon. We have a process. Yeah. We don't want to just let it process.

I mean, I've always say we have a wonderful process us continuously.

Great. Great. So it's very articulate. I like that. The. So we notice what's going on, we notice what's happening. And the next question is what do we do with that information? What do we what do we do with what we've noticed? And you know, for tonight's talk, mostly it was emphasizing just pay more careful attention. Again, stay with attention, be more attentive, keep discovering what's there, what's there, what's there. And what it isn't offers a lot of other tools of things you can do besides just bring attention to your your experience. It's very powerful. It's very, can be very, very powerful to not do anything with your experience except hold it in nonreactive, non evaluative attention, you're not going to evaluate the experience good or bad, you're not going to react to the experience for or against it,

you simply learn how to hold it in a spacious mind. And just let it do that. That's very, very powerful. If you do that you're not caught by it. Because you're in essence, independent of it, because you're holding in this spacious mind. If you're caught by it, if you've somehow got, you know, if you're for and against it, then you're you've been caught by or it's caught you. So the Vipassana, this meditation that we that we focus on mostly here to our center, does emphasizes this nonreactive awareness, just keep coming back to the non reactive wareness, what's going on. But there are many other in Buddhism, at least in other places, a lot of other ways of responding. It's one strategy. That's your use. But it's not the only thing you're allowed to do. I've noticed a few people who've spent a lot of years in this particular tradition, this insight meditation tradition, somehow got the message, the only thing they're allowed to do is with what arises in their experience, is to practice nonreactive awareness to it, accept it in some way. And you know, that was kind of sad that that's the kind of thought that's all they're allowed to do. It's pretty limited thing to say there's a whole repertoire of other things you can do. And so you have to decide, you know, what do you want to do? You might decide what you can do is to do nothing, or just do this not this nonreactive wareness thing. It's very, or you might have two suits that you try to bring antidote. So there's a lot of antidotes, for example, antidote to fear, could be very classic. One is cultivating loving kindness, and really cultivate that. And not only is an antidote that balances it out, but it tends to recondition for heal. So part of the psyche that somehow that is producing the fear So, it's very helpful to kind of shower the psyche with loving kindness. It's kind of like filling yourself with this wonderful warmth of love. And that you know, as your warmth love kind of begins to soften some of the places where we're afraid in some deep way. That's one way. There's also other practices. For example, Lewis mentioned generosity. Practicing generosity builds certain kind of strength in the psyche, that then can be very helpful. In places where afraid, or cultivating virtue becoming a virtuous person living by the precepts is another kind of antidote except the antidote to fear. What kind of antidote to fear in the sense that, at least classically, it said that as you live a virtuous life, you'll have less and less reasons to be afraid. And so that helps you can go and go into it says, you can go into an assembly of people and not Be afraid because you know, your your behavior has been virtuous doesn't work so well in the West. Because we don't have to have done anything to feel like we're somehow wrong. Many of us question you know, meaning, I don't know. Sorry. There are people here who are not maybe didn't grew up here in the West. So I don't want to kind of say things that assume everyone hears take away apologize for that, if that was came across that way. But I noticed a lot of among a lot of these Caucasian types who grew up in Western society or not, and put my foot in my mouth and I have noticed among people who've been conditioned by Western culture, wherever their conditioning came from, that sometimes they just they feel as if somehow something's wrong with them, before they've even done anything. Nice. assumption in the ancient texts, at least in Buddhism is that there was no person who wouldn't feel that there. Something's wrong with them unless they had done something wrong. So A, B, C, or D in the west of the original sin, were born this way.

And you know the great story about when the when the psychologist talked to Dr. Ilama, but what was the word? Was it self loathing or self hate or something? Another story. It's a great story told a lot. So I apologize if you've heard it many times, but there was a psychologist that came to the event was

interviewing the Dalai Lama or asking a question in a large hall of people and asked the question, they would have something but maybe low self esteem or self hate or something. What do you do about self hate? And dilemmas speak some English but translator toward translated the question. There was this long back and forth, you know, long back and forth. Or translator, they're talking Tibetan, back and forth, back and forth. And no one knew why why, you know what they were talking about simple question, what do you do what self hate? And then at some point that allama apparently got the question, and he started crying. And what had happened was that he had no concept of self hate and his vocabulary. It was like foreign idea to him. And if he got he got it from the translator, this was an epidemic problem in the West. And so we started crying. He was like he was so shocked to realize this was the case. I don't know why I'm saying this. Why don't I get up on the stand it

don't have to

wait isn't virtuous to feel no fear from our surroundings

and disclose That's one. Yeah, so one thing I was saying. And yeah, I tried to do some retrospective thinking, hearing back what I was thinking you're saying earlier. So with your suit pointed out, there's there are. So there are things you can do. So for example, you know, zork, whole whole slew of practices that Buddhism offers, that develops the inner strength. And so if you have fear, for example, it might not simply a matter of resolving the fear, but also maybe developing inner strength, that becomes stronger than the fear. And that's one of the things so one of the common things you see in the in one way of doing that, for example, is cultivating concentration. And one way of working with fear is to not do mindfulness practice for a while, but to do concentration practice. And so the concentration develops the mind so that the mind becomes stronger than the pool of the fear. So you have a great there's a gravitational force of the fear in a sense, but if you can have a greater gravitational force Getting beyond the get concentrated, then the mind is going to go towards a concentrated calm state rather than going off into agitated fear state. So by cultivating concentration, and there are people who are meditators who then notice their fear, and the response to the fears, they just do a concentration practice likes concentrating on the breath, until their mind has become free of the fear because it concentrated it. And it's also very healing like loving kindness, it's very healing, to have a concentrated state. A very concentrated state is very healing experience because it's a, it's a psyche, which is become unified, it's become harmonized, and the various ways in which the psyche can be frag fragmented and fractured and scarred, at least temporarily and get healed or you have this wonderful sense of well being that reconditions the conditioning of that You know, that we have from being scarred by life in some way. So some people use concentration as a way. This is better. My

the point I was trying to make in the talk part of tonight is you want to be very careful. If you do anything like an antidote and an antidote, don't practice, or if you need to cultivate concentration in order so you don't be afraid. Be very careful about what the intention is of why you do that. Because

it's very easy to have a version to your experience trying to get away from it. And then aversion creates bad karma creates bad habits in the mind. So I'd encourage you before you do anything, With your experience, change how to change yourself in any way. Because our Buddhist practices we change yourself hang out for a while with a practice I'm encouraging you to do which is just be attentive to what's going on. Just be really tend to be really honest what's happening now what's happening now. If you do that really well, that also is free. Yeah.

If we go with this, so if we

were they would take responsibility for their underlying attitudes we're carrying with us into the future.

The interplay between was with

our experiences upstream,

what is what is the process that carries them along? What do you think? Some sort of attachment, some kind of attachment or discontent. But you know, one of the things you can bring upstream to the future the next moment also is kindness. You can have a predisposition towards kindness. And is that an attachment is that this content you can have a predisposition to be to compassion or generosity that you carry with you. The certainly discontent is a very powerful thing that carries a lot with it. It's like a magnet for all kinds of attitudes

and attachment, you know, as it carries a lot, it's phenomenal how deep attachment works in our psyche. You know, it works at a gross level and our body can feel you know, if you're attached to something, you know, your shoulders get tight or your stomach gets tight, or your jaw is clenched or something. Because of that holding, it can be physical. But then the holding also can be very mental. You know, if you've ever had, you know, something that you're obsessed about, and you can't get rid of the obsession, you know, someone someone's wronged you, for example, you're really angry and you just can't, or you know, you're, you know, you worried about something you just can't get rid of the worry just kind of obsessing over the mind attach it's holding on, it's clinging to it. But then it gets you know, as the mind gets quieter, you see, surprisingly, the subtler and subtler things that your mind is still holding on to. So one of the things We carry with us into the future is a very most of us is, is a very, very subtle, subtle doesn't mean that it's powerful. But, you know, it's lightweight or kind of meaningless, but very, very kind of hidden, quiet attachment to who we think we are, who we want to be how we want to represent ourselves, our identity. And people can go through a whole lifetime, without ever noticing they're attached to having a certain identity. And they can notice a lot of other things about themselves. But sometimes it takes a little, you know, really getting quiet, really getting very, very attentive, listening very deeply to the inner, inner voices in the psyche, to see oh, you know, I'm attached to being a kind person. So, all being attached means you don't necessarily always kind of carry that with you as an image. You're trying to fulfill that You're trying to hold that I'm x, you know?

And so we're always carrying that with us wherever we go some idea of who I who I am is with me and then that's a filter through which I, I process my experience. So am I being kind enough right now? What would be the kind thing to do here? You know people noticing them kind of you know, it'd be hard for people you know even even the concern the attachment the concern about how are people seeing me right now? You know, how are people interpreting me how people are maybe a bit my being liked. When I was in the monastery, I was in the kitchen. I was a kitchen manager. And it was a pressure cooker of a lot of people working together in a small space in the monastery. monasteries can be pressure cookers like pressure cookers. And I told someone once that had to cut the cucumbers little bit smaller and she started crying because Such as you know,

such and such.

You know, in the monastery, CJ, everything's so important. And I learned painfully that how much I wanted people to like me because I was a manager of the crew and had to tell people like, you know, please cut those, you know, those cucumbers little bit smaller, and then they get angry with me or they cry and they think I was you know, horrible. And, and so I was always trying to figure out how to say things and do things and so people would like me, it wasn't like what I brought with me all the time. But because it was such an intense place, the cost of that was too great. And so I saw the cost of doing that I just couldn't do it anymore. I had to give it up. But if I hadn't been in that pressure cooker situation, it would have been a lot harder for me to see in the cost. Because I've been doing it for years before that. But I hadn't seen the cost of of kind of visible to me that I was doing it. Always trying to be liked. So we carry things with us, you know, that are very, you know, we don't notice. Yeah. Was in Iran at neurotically, 22 all the time, I mean, that you can get to him was a very intense place that it was a great crew of seven people under me, it was a lot of pressure to get things done quickly, because meals had to be on time and a lot of work to be done. And I go around telling people what to do all the time, all day long. And when you're telling people to do when you're the boss, you know, people don't, you know, if you tell them, they're not doing it, right, or tell them to do it quicker, or tell them who they are, you know, and I want you to do the soup today and not make the bread and they want to do the bread, then you're not a nice guy anymore. You know? So there's lots of you know, it's just like, constantly, you know, this thing, you know, because I was telling people what to do. So, you know, it was very lucky to be in this very unfortunate circus circumstance. So it says it all the dresses, you're basically Yes.

Sleeping? How do I pay more attention to?

You do the best you can? Physically What does it feel like physically? What does it feel like in your, in your eyes? What does it feel like in your shoulders? Your face? What's the temperature differences on that? So physically you can do things like that. You can also notice something about the quality of your mind. Does your mind your mind slow down? Is it cloudy? Is it you're getting vague images, dreamlike images, are they What's happening? Are there you know what's going on. You know if you can notice,

you can definitely notice and sometimes people pay very careful attention to the experience of sleepiness. in meditation, they'll wake up because they're interested in something so fast. And sometimes you pay attention the best you can you fall asleep. That's okay. At some point, you'll wake up Or you notice how sleepy you are. You see, I think there's a better way. Maybe I'll just stand you're standing meditation, maybe do a walking meditation for a while. Or maybe I'll open my eyes. We'll sit up straighter. So sometimes you might do something to bring more energy back into the system. So I talk longer than we have five minutes for short sitting. But I think it's nice to end with a little quiet.

One of the beautiful things about learning to be attentive, is that when you learn to do it well. It's a very kind thing to do. attention and kindness, attentiveness and kindness are maybe closely related. May you all discover refreshing kindness in your ability to be attentive.

Thank you very much