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SPEAKERS

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In thinking about the body and his body's role and in meditation, there is a two very, very interesting concepts in many spiritual disciplines that come up from time to time. And that's the idea of remembering, and the idea of forgetting. And they go some ways close together, that we remember. So we set up something so we can forget the other things. And part of spiritual life as I understand it, is it does involve a kind of remembering, recollecting reawakening aspects of our lives and also of process of forgetting, or dropping letting go of there's a very famous quote quote by the Zen master Dogen that goes to study the Buddha way is to study the self. to study the self is to forget the self. And to forget the self is to be awakened by all things. And to paraphrase this, to study the Buddha way, is to remember the self. To remember the self is to forget the cell and forget the self is to be awakened to be present, for all things. We part of the process of remembering the body remembering to be present is to help us to forget our self consciousness, the way in which we consume caught by issues of self identity and self preservation and being self conscious the word Sati Pali word Sati, which is usually translated to the English word mindfulness has nothing in the word that relates to mind, in and of itself. But with English, we have received mindfulness. And so it tends to kind of give maybe a greater value greater priority to the mind is being part of the practice and you do with your mind. You're full of it, you're full of your mind. And, and it's fine to do that. But it kind of does, in a sense kind of suggests maybe not much to do with the body in this practice. It's about mind, not the body. And I think you can use as well, almost as well translate Sati as body fullness as you could mindfulness. Certainly because the body is so phenomenally important. In mindfulness practice, is really the foundation. Maybe we should for a while, say body fullness practice. Body fullness, learning to be in our body, be present for our body to a greater degree. And the words the word Sati is is one of the one of the meanings, or one of the cognitive meanings of Sati, in Pali and schmidty in Sanskrit, is to remember. And then there's a kind of little bit maybe too cute kind of thing you can do in English, where to remember is to remember to bring the members back together, or to recollect, to bring, you know, to collect yourself together. And this is a very important element of meditation practice, that meditation practice is meant to collect to recollect the different disparate parts of ourselves, which are often not

working together in some kind of harmony, some kind of unity, some kind of working together. And it's very easy for us to get disconnected, to be fragmented, and to have you know, different parts of our psyche in our mind body kind of going in different directions.

One of the interesting things that happens is that it's very easy to become disconnected with a body. It can be disconnected the body if we're too busy running around too much, too many activities, too much stress of pressures and things to do. We can be disconnected to the body if the work we do or the activities we do is primarily intellectual or mental. And so it's fairly common for people, for example, who spend all day maybe at the computer computer as a kind of fairly mental kind of activity looking at screen and you're mostly processing things with your mind to lose touch with your body. And until you get carpal tunnel disease or bad back and you really have to pay attention to your body and how you sit in your posture. Another interesting way in which people get disconnected with their bodies, is there's a very intimate relationship between our emotional life in our bodies. And it's been said that you wouldn't know what emotion you would have Unless you somehow got the cues, from the bodily expression of that emotion, you know, you feel hot. And, you know, maybe some other things, maybe it's expression of being angry, or you feel afraid, if fear is tightening in your stomach, or, you know, so many different emotions have a quote corollary way that what happens in the body, the muscles in the body, different parts of the body react. And because there's such a strong relationship between the body and the emotions, if a person doesn't want to feel their emotions, then sometimes it takes the form of requires shutting down or numbing, repressing or being disconnected to that part of the body where those emotions are manifested. So if a person has has some great trauma in their life has been very difficult comes with a lot of fear or a lot of anger or something. And maybe that fears you know, that anger that sadness or grief or whatever, is maybe perhaps maybe it's held in the stomach or held in the shoulders or someplace In the back. And so that probably kind of Rocky, I don't want to feel that I want to be there for that. And so we kind of numb, closed down that part of the body. So there's many reasons why people kind of disconnect with their body, and don't pay attention to it. And one of the things that I hope happens when people meditate is it becomes a kind of reclaiming or recollecting of ourselves, in our body, bringing ourselves back into our body. And in order to in order to feel like that's worthwhile or to do that to really work. You have to really feel that it is worthwhile to do you have to feel there's value in being in your body. I know it can be very, there's a very powerful authority, unspoken, unspoken, you know, almost unconscious authority that we give or is taken, we give to our mind to our thoughts to our stories. And many people are processing their lives trying to understand their lives, by thinking about their lives. And for example, if you you know, spend if you had, you know, remember Something happened earlier in the day. And you're reliving the conversation over and over again trying to come back with a better rejoinder, you know, better answers to, you know, better replies. Or you're thinking about what's going to happen tomorrow. And you're kind of going over the plans, planning and planning and planning. And you're using your mind then your thoughts to negotiate to understand to relate to what's to your life. Some people spend a lot of time judging. And so they go come into a situation and they're judging the people around them. They're looking at them thinking about, oh, that person's this way and that way, and I don't like people who have purple jackets and, and White Sox. You know, and so you judging and so we negotiate in the world, the world again,

through our thoughts through our judgments. And there's a lot of ways in which we kind of negotiate the world through our thoughts through our stories we make. And one story I like to tell of this is when I said it's a three month retreat, a three month meditation retreat, which is done Silence. So I didn't talk to any of the retreat things for three months. And there was a woman on the retreat, who I was attracted to. And but I didn't have any way of talking with her having any contact with her and you're not supposed to make eye contact even. So I kind of, you know, I knew she was there, I was, wherever, wherever presence nearby, but I didn't make any contact or do anything. But what I did do instead was I started having a fantasy life about who this person was, and how wonderful was be at the end of the retreat to talk to this person. And of course, you know, we would make a good connection and how then infantis just went from there to you know, dates and vacations and marriage and on and on and when children and divorce and then they live happily ever after. And

and so, you know, it wasn't it wasn't the very wasn't obsessing about this, but three months is a long time for various thoughts to kind of go through periodically and And then, at the end of the retreat, there was a breaking of silence. And people started talking. And I heard her talk for the first time. And she had a really thick French accent. And at that moment, I realized how much I'd been living in total fantasy. Because my fantasy was all based on her being an American. And all that mean, that means whatever that means I don't have the means. But I realized I didn't have a clue who this woman was. And all this fantasy was built on these thoughts and story makings about this person. And I think that goes on a lot in our lives, where we're making stories. We're sitting in meditation or some other situation, and we have an itch.

Oh,

I think I've been too much in the sun lately. I'm sure it's melanoma. And then we start making stories of must be and it is melanoma that I know what's going to happen next and Well, you know, hopefully the chemotherapy is going to help. But if it doesn't help, you know, you're better start planning my will now and you know, and the mind goes off in a story. And sometimes we sometimes are really, really, really compelling movement within us to take a pick up the story, pick up the ideas to negotiate our life through the story, making ideas of what's going on. It's such a wonderful thing to do at times to use our mind and our thoughts and reflections. I don't want to knock the importance of it. But I think it's very easy probably for all of you to see in your own lives. The way the degree to which sometimes your story making your ideas or your fantasies, get an upper hand sometimes it really kind of disconnect with with you know, actually what's happening in your life in reality. So, to feel like there's real value in temporarily at least, letting go softening the hold shelving. The story making abilities and Mind the thoughts and ideas so that the mind can begin to, or the attention at least can begin pulling away from that absorption obsession with thoughts and ideas. And the attention can go into the body can flow into the body start paying attention to what's going on in the body. So you really have to feel that it's a valuable thing to do. That the being in the body paying attention to the body is valuable. Some people get bored very quickly, when they start feeling their body, they feel what's the point of this the body is a

solid mass of stuff, it's nothing there. You know, it's not as fascinating as my thoughts and ideas and relationships and activities and video games and so it can feel very, very challenging for some people to start starts feeling their body or they can be very strong feeling I don't want to feel my body because the body is uncomfortable. And when I feel I feel my body, I'm reminded of how uncomfortable I am my life, how painful it is. People have all kinds of ailments in their body. We carry tremendous amount of stress in our body, or we feel it carry exhaustion in our body. And so to start paying attention to our body means to feel those kinds of things. And then I think the common sense thing for some people to make it make some sense to it is this is uncomfortable, why should I stay here and better it might as well go some places more pleasant, and, and sometimes a more pleasant place and go back into the mind. Sometimes it can feel more secure. To go back into our worrying. If we're worrying and thinking about things, then at least we're engaged in trying to protect ourselves and make things better be trying to problem solve. You know, that's where we're going to fix our life is by worrying enough and figuring out just the right solution. And so we recoil from the body perhaps. I don't want to, we have a message that somehow that it's not we're not supposed to feel discomfort in our body. That's not you know, that's not cool, or that's not a spiritual appropriate thing. And so There's all kinds of reasons why people might not want to stay in their body because it's uncomfortable, or people receive religious messages from certain some religions. I think probably all religions do this to some degree, two corners of the religion to Buddhism does some places to where the body is somehow denigrated somehow considered to be second class, third class citizen. And it's not really where it's at. It's all about practice. Spirituality is all about the mind. Or some I know some religious traditions. Put a very heavy heavy guilt trip on people about feeling joy in their body pleasure in their body. You're not supposed to feel that at all. And so to drop down in your body means to feel parts of yourself, which maybe are considered inappropriate to wrong. I read an article some years ago, someplace in the Midwest, I forget where it was.

It was ruled that people couldn't do meditation in schools couldn't follow their breath because they're taking a very simple meditation following your breath, I think, because that was consorting with the devil. Somehow, that being in your body feeling your body is, you know, can go against the grain of certain religious kinds of teachings and practices. So that's another reason to pull back because many reasons to pull back from the body. But I would argue that for the most part, doing that you do a disservice to yourself. Because a very important if you want to be home, if you want to avail yourself to the wisdom and the that's within you. You really need to be in your body to feel that need to be in your body to feel whole. And remember, a Zen teacher I had many years ago, described the body as being an antenna. And I think it's worked very well the body is a very sensitive organ. takes up a lot what goes on within us and outside of us, I don't know if that's exactly accurate to say picks up like an antenna. But somehow as whatever instruments of sensations we have takes in our the world around us in our inner world and outer world, it somehow resonates or affects or has an impact on her body in all kinds of ways. You go into a situation where maybe the first indication you have is something a little bit off, is you feel a bit tight and constricted or tighten your belly to all you know, maybe here, maybe there's a reason to be afraid in a situation and the body is giving you a cue. And sometimes that's really accurate. And sometimes if you're too much in your head, however, and projecting on the world,

then you might not be really in a frightening situation, but you're projecting, you know, fear, a threatening situation and your body then feels it. But the body can pick up a lot. Or seemingly, it feels like the bike because it's like an antenna more important and more powerful. But another important aspect of the body is that as you begin to be more and more in your body, the body becomes the, the processor for our life, the body in Buddhism is an activity, it's not a thing. And he many times we think of the body as being a kind of thing, it's solid, it's what it is. And when the body is an activity, the mind also in Buddhism, it's called an activity. It's a whole psychophysical being we aren't, we aren't we are as an activity. We're not fixed kind of thing never changes just moving. We're an activity. Unless the activity of our life the activity of the mind, the body is somehow frozen by our attachments by our fear by something, some kind of preoccupation that stops things. So for example, if you if a person is afraid, for example, the shoulders can go up. You get nervous and it's an activity to do make that happen. However, we then get freeze in that activity. And it's possible to go around for days, four months, four weeks, whatever, a long time, years tense. And that activity of tightening up when you're afraid, has become rigid and solidified in the body with a body, but the body itself wants to be a process it wants to move and wants to kind of relax and wants to kind of, it's a process, it's not a thing. And so when we bring attention to our body and feel our body, then it begins to let the body move again. So back to the shoulders. If you can really feel your shoulders, it might feel really uncomfortable. And you might feel what's the point of feeling this discomfort. The point is, as you feel it, you're giving in a sense space, too constricted environment. So that becomes more it feels more open has more space, which to relax into. And so slowly, slowly You'll find probably your shoulders will relax. People will feel what there's a lot of emotions that get held some kind of way.

And so for example, sometimes people feel grief, and they don't want to feel it or they stuck in it in some way to drop into the body and feel a manifestation of the grief in your body is one of the ways to let the body help you as your friend, to process the grief or to process the anger process of sadness, or the depression or whatever's going on. The body can help you process what's going on. The body can help you hold emotions, that if the mind is only trying to hold it can seem overwhelming. Because of the mind holding it, the mind will start making stories and the stories is what tends to make things overwhelming. But the body is not a story. So you kind of have the body helps you to drop out of the story making capacity of the mind and helps you if you drop and feel what's going on in your body. Then the body will begin relax And softening around what's happening emotionally, physically, even mentally. And as you feel the body, these constrictions, these tightness is begin to unravel. And it's really marvelous thing to feel these things unraveling and the deeper you go in meditation, the more subtle in your body feel these places have the tightness and holding. Sometimes these are called in Buddhism, this some scars, which can maybe be translated to kind of directly from the etymology of the word as complexes. formations, holding patterns. And there's all kinds of things sometimes meditation is very odd. Sometimes things get worse before they get better. In the body, you know, if you hold your body tense for a long time, the seemingly the muscles are the sensations in that part of your body go kind of numb, and you can go around feeling your everything's quiet. Fine because you're numb there. But then as you bring attention to your body, in that part of the body begins waking up, then you can start feeling a lot of the pain of attention, because it stops being numb. And then

people complain, so Oh, I'm getting more tense to my meditation. The opposite is happening. But the process of doing that involves is kind of going through that pain, letting the pain, unravel, pain is not a bad thing necessarily, to let the pain begin to show itself so that it can unravel, unwind. and soften is part of a part of part of the process that sometimes happens in meditation. The other reason to feel the body to live in your body is that the body if you're going to experience some of the depths of joy, and happiness, bliss that can come through meditation. I believe you can experience it much more fully and in much more healthy And useful ways, if you if you experience it through your whole body, if the joy and the happiness is something of ripples and moves through your whole body. And so it's a holistic experience, not just kind of a mental kind of joy and pleasure that you could might have. And I believe that the more fully someone who is in their body is at home in their body, feeling their body, the greater capacity than to feel joy and delight that comes, you know, some point at times through a spiritual life. And then for joy and happiness is not necessarily the point of meditation. It's one of the nice byproducts that can come. The ultimate point in Buddhism is to begin is to is to release anything, any holding any tightening, any clinging in the heart in the mind, so the heart and the mind can be set free from the shackles on it and the body Turns out to be one of the very useful cues, one of the useful places to learn where it is you're still holding. We're Tituss. In very, very deep, subtle meditation, one of the instructions people are given is to look around and see Where's there still some holding some tightness. And that might be somewhere it might be the way you access it is through feeling maybe you feel really good in your body, very relaxed, but you feel Oh, there's a little bit of tightness in the center of my chest, a little bit of tightness and center in my head. I didn't know it was there. And then it gives you kind of a gate or the cue, the signpost say, oh, pay attention here for a while, bring your attention there. So the body can be very helpful. In pointing pointing to you, we should bring your attention by showing you where the tightness is where the holding is.

So, to live in your body to be comfortable with your body. There was a magazine article many years ago that I saw it was headlines titled, The body, friend, foe or total stranger. And that's the attitude some people have. And what I hope is that through meditation practice of learning how to pay attention to your body, being interested in being more embodied, exploring what it means to be embodied, and learning how to rest in an embodied presence with yourself, that you will find that your body is a really, you know, maybe your best friend. And to having a relationship with your body gives you a friend which you can perhaps bring with you keep with you your whole life. So those are my thoughts for today. And I don't know how sleepy you are listening to all this in this hot weather, but perhaps if you Have some questions or some comments or some thoughts about this. We could have a little bit discussion now or about something else.

Perhaps it's setting off topic. Particularly I know it's tempting to try and use concentrating so

much instead of having a thought that wasn't paying attention,

but then I decided to really emphasize do that. And when you really

start to come back

to the body, I noticed that you're pretty relaxed all the time, I should say, don't pay attention to comprehension, understanding life.

And then the veteran officer cutaway right up here.

And I was really surprised to see how much has to settle down and relax while I was just again.

Yeah, the

part of the art of mindfulness is to know where your attention should be at any time in meditation. And sometimes the best strategy is just to stay with a breath and just get absorbed in the browser, stay with the breath. And the more fully the mind gets into the breath and is engaged with the breath. The less mental energy and mental attention goes into our preoccupations. And as less attention goes into your preoccupations, they begin to relax. And as our preoccupations relax, then our body relaxes. Because our preoccupied mind will express itself often with as a as you know as a tense body in some way or other. So one of the functions of concentration on the breath is to begin shifting where this food of attention goes and what is feeding when it's supporting. And if attention goes to feed our preoccupations, then we're feeding attention probably. But if the food goes into something very simple, like just being with a breath, then we've taken the food away from them, and it starves, it relaxes, like let's go. So sometimes that's the wisest strategy. Other times the wisest thing to do is to let go of the breath. And if you feel like some very strong tension or pain or discomfort in the body, is then to bring your attention directly to that and feel that and be with that for a while. And sometimes just being with a breath is not enough for you be with a breath and you really feel something really strong is calling you I need to pay attention to this other part of my body, this tension. So. So I do that sometimes sometimes, very simply in terms of tension, I carry some tension in my shoulder, shoulders. So sometimes when I meditate, I'll just be with my breath. And I find that you did, at the end of that sitting that the shoulders are much more relaxed than they were before. But sometimes, that doesn't seem to be the right call. And sometimes I'll just, I'll just do mindfulness of shoulders just be with the shoulders, feel it, kind of scan, shoulders, feeling just different sensation, feeling, feeling exactly where the tightness is and attention. And, and that's what's really called for that bring that careful attention, a friendly attention to that part of the body. And that's what gets it to relax and see what's going on. So it depends with you know, it's, there's no hard and fast rule about where to go with both strategies. Is that an adequate response to what you said? Yes,

if you notice something body that Tiger hurts or whatever sensation is more helpful to try to put words to yourself not judgmental words, but trying to describe it as say, tingling or war or something? Or is it better just to not put words

is a great question. The kind of spirit or the attitude or the approach, the approach of this kind of practice could be called a trial and error. So rather than me giving you the answer, this is the way it's better. It's different for different people. Some people find it the labeling, the noticing of experience with tingling, whatever, is very, very helpful. And other people find it gets in the way from really feeling it. And it's, it's more helpful to be silent about it. So I'd encourage you to experiment a little bit and see what you find to be most helpful. And you might find out that you know, one way or the other The only The only warning I would make is that people who are interested in meditation tend to be a little bit biased in favor of silence. And so they don't really give themselves sometimes a chance to really learn the value of what you suggested of labeling the experience very, very simple non judgmental labels tingling, and like it's phenomenally it can be phenomenally useful to label experience. Yes.

sukha

I don't know of any particular Buddhist instructions around, you know, for children along those lines, so I can't you know, the Buddha didn't have texts and that kind of experience. I do know it's a little bit not answering question directly, that it's very common. I mean very strong, too strong. It's common enough for adults who come on retreats, and do long retreats and really get into the mindfulness practice, in that in that kind of context, will sometimes have to

deal with pay attention to work through holding patterns in their bodies that are leftover from trauma that has children. And so it manifests in many ways. Sometimes it's very strong memories come up, sometimes very strong body sensations of various kinds, very all kinds of things. Sometimes certain emotions might come but suddenly they get really sometimes get really slowly get an inkling what's going on. Sometimes it's suddenly POW there it is. And so then oh How to respond to it as an adult, is depends a little bit in what the person's depends a lot on the person, phase A person's in with it in relationship to it all. In a mindfulness context, the first thing would just be rely on mindfulness, being very careful non judgmental mindfulness, when you allow it to be there, and you try to train yourself not to get caught in the stories about it, make more stories about and all that produce, let it move through you, they move through you steal it, bring presence to it. Sometimes in addition to that, it's very helpful to bring loving kindness to it to actually bring a very friendly, loving attitude towards it. So to extrapolate from that, I would say then, that if you're trying to counsel help a child has gone through trauma, that they can't necessarily be told and taught those kinds of practices. But it's the role of the parent to try to do for the child. So to bring attention and appropriate way, presence to the child so that the child The child's psyche or body feels someone else's bring is holding the presence holding what's going on there and in a safe way, in a loving way that or they are the adult brings love to the situation. And then you know, the art of doing that depends on what the situation is and how his child needs to be held. When somehow somehow that the adult do the holding as when we become adults, then the practice would be to learn how to do it for ourselves. So then my thoughts Yeah.

Just spent three days a business off site.

And it was run by someone who had been traveling and showed up and said that she was very burnt out.

So I would characterize the three days.

And so, what at some point I

noticed another important tension by so I take my practice

and sort of watch my breath and get back into my body.

And that sort of very interesting some

interesting feedback,

which was

your serenity was made me very uncomfortable.

And so

I guess I don't know.

I'm not sure how to

do that just Uh huh.

Yeah, yeah, I mean, this is one of the unfortunate thing is sometimes can happen is that if someone else is really

caught in some very strong reactive mode that they can't Don't want to separate them from it. They can't, that sometimes people who are calm or not caught up in that can make the very can highlight you know how bad things are for them or, or they can project Oh, that person's judging me or I'm not living up to some standard, or you know, all kinds of reactivity that can go on and they see someone who's not that way. I had a conversation with someone today who, who has a very hard time with their family, because a very large family because most sounds like everybody in the family is alcoholic except for this person. And, and so somehow, the fact that this person I talked to today has separate

herself from the alcoholic environment and better herself in her life. It's very hard for people back to her family because they get very uncomfortable when she comes. And so it's true. Sometimes, this can happen. The Buddha even said, some people got very upset around the presence of the Buddha and got very reactive. So it can happen that way. Then the question is, you give up your serenity in order to make this person feel better, or is there some way in which you holding your serenity, which is not a healthy way, you know, sometimes there's ways of, you know, being too cool. Which, you know, kind of kind of filled with stinks. You know, Zen stink, sometimes they call people or to Zen. And, you know, and so there are ways of doing that. Then remember when I was hitchhiking around the country in as a young man, it was his girlfriend. You know, it's like, you know, back in the hippy times and I was staying in communes and stuff and, and I was practicing being cool. You know, you know, it's a you know, nothing, nothing really matters, right? It's all one nothing matters. And, and I remember she lost her flashlight. Nothing matters. It's okay. You know, we don't have to go back and look. And she got angry with me because look, we just go back and look for my flashlight. And I was like, everything is fine. Just go with the flow. And, you know, years later I realized, you know, she was writing a little bit irritated with me. The other thing is it occurs to me in response to you is, again, how do we take care of other people? I think it's important question. And so it's not just a matter of your own well being your own calm, but how do you take care of other people and so, you know, maybe you were excessively taking care of yourself and not really tuned in to the needs and situation around you. I had a Zen teacher who, whose practice was he was he, by himself. He was very athletic, very upright and, and, you know, always stood very straight and very true, you know. But his pride he told me his practice was that when he was he met with someone, he would always try to mimic Their posture. So, you know, if they're slumping or leaning against the wall or something, he would slumped and leaned against the wall. If they were sitting in a chair kind of like bumping, he would sit in the chair kind of relaxed. In order to I guess it's a therapeutic technique some therapists used to that, I guess, but in order to kind of make the person comfortable, so that he, you know, he wasn't kind of putting off different kind of vibes or kind of highlighting that he was different from them highlighting how they were something, and then try to meet them as they actually were. So I hope that doesn't mean that you have to get, you know, burned out yourself in order to help the person but maybe there's some way of, you know, being with doing what you need to do, but also tuning into the person so that what does this person need from me here, so that this person could also be more relaxed. This is all helpful. verbally boxed. What exactly

happened is The serenity that sort of that attack Yeah.

And so at that particular point by changing

Oh, I see. But how what was the relationship between your verbally sparring with the person and your Serenity? By what the person complained about your Serenity? Not your sparring right?

Yeah, actually they were very comfortable that

for the sparring?

Yes, please.

depends on the person. It's a very old ancient technique. to count the breath, and some people find tremendous value from it. I spent years counting my breath and I found great value. Sometimes I occasionally still do it. So I'm, you know, I'm a great believer in counting the breath. Some people don't find it very useful to do it. So for whatever reason, and so if you're inclined to count your breath, I'd encourage you to do it. It is more of a concentration practice. So if a person wants to do mindfulness practice, at some point, they probably need to stop counting the breath, but as a way of building up concentration and presence. It's really helpful.

No, no, the usual way that I've been instructed, and we've seen instructed many different places you count to 10. And then you get a 10. You start over again. And if you lose Count on the way attend. Don't think about it, don't try to just go back and get into one. And if you get to 14 or 200, that means you've kind of lost your mindfulness, you're on automatic. And just go back to one, you know, just to go back to one whenever you can. And I had a friend of mine who practiced Zen in Japan. And his Zen teacher, also taught people to count their breath. But he taught taught them to count up to one, and then start again.

There's different ways of doing it. The way I do it, is I count the exhalation and, and I count the full Excellent. So I kind of used to use the word count, to kind of feel the explanation in this way, I would say, to breathe in, and then silently I'd go exhale, lawn. Breathe in

to.

So kind of rather than just you know, one. Yeah. And I know some people will as they exhale will count 11111 kind of repeatedly as a way of maintaining the connection. Some people will count the in breath and the out breath, the same Count 1122 like that. So different ways, but I guess what I've done is the exhalation

was Buddhist, Buddhist Scott rhythm. Yes. Yeah. Thank you for bringing it up. It's really a wonderful practice.

I don't think of them as having a hard and fast there's not a sharp line between them. So it's a little bit so we can talk about differences and how they're different from each other. Right? They I think they overlap and certainly they, they support each other and they're always worked together in some degree. It's a matter of what degree they're working together. Concentration is primarily holding or fixing the mind the attention on one particular place. That's the general kind of definition of mind of

concentration. And there might not be any insight or understanding or awareness of what you're paying attention to. So for example, if you're with the breath, you might be aware that you're breathing in and breathing out, you're concentrating on that breath going in and out. But you're not aware of the subtle sensations, the very sensations make up that experience. You don't really understand, seeing and feeling and sensing in a very rich way what that experience is. Mindfulness has to do with understanding or seeing the mindful, being cognitively cognizant of what's actually what you're experiencing. When you're concentrating, you don't have to be aware of what you're experiencing. You have to hold your attention there. When you're mindful of actually becoming aware, awake to what that experience is. That makes some sense.

You are you are, if you can't, if a person is practicing concentration, there is going to be some mindfulness there. Also, you can't really develop your concentration without being mindful of some of the factors of what's going on how to support that to theirs. And you can't really do Welcome mindfulness without some concentration, some stillness and ability to stay with the mind, some place of the mind scattered is going all over the place, you can't be mindful very well. So they're both both come together, it's a matter of degree. Some people find it very useful to spend a period of time, just cultivating concentration. And other people find useful is a period of time just cultivating mindfulness. Some people will spend years on concentration practices. And some people will spend years a lifetime on just doing mindfulness practice. And it depends a little bit on the psyche of the mind how individual mind works, and what is useful for that person. If a person has a strong ability to get concentrated, maybe they don't have to do anything to develop their concentration anymore when they do mindfulness. If a person is very poor ability to get concentrated, then maybe in order to help their mindfulness, they should go do some concentration work for a while, until the muscle has been built up strong, and then come to do the mindfulness practice. So it really depends and different teachers also have different ideas about priority of concentration or mindfulness or mindfulness over concentration. And so there's a lot of there's a whole slew of theories and ideas about how these play together. The tradition that was trained in in Burma had a very strong, maybe bias or teaching that you didn't have. You don't have to do concentration work. You can just everything all you need to do for Turner in terms of letting your spiritual life unfold, can be done through mindfulness practice. And it you know, it was very powerful. For me, it was very powerful. A lot of people go through that system. And other people, there are some people who went through that system, it didn't quite work for them. And so they found great health by then leaving that system for a while and going and doing concentration practice with a concentration teacher. And so there's all these different ways. So I hope I didn't confuse you, but is that does this answer your concern? Are you

Curiosity as I was taught, when I first learned the labeling, which is that,

like the body

guided

meditation really

felt like it was finally consummated.

So

maybe, yeah. And one of my one of my meditations, one of my mindfulness, vipassana teachers, I came to him and said, I think I need more concentration. He said, Oh, do the body scan the body did the body do what I did but much more systematically much more carefully, because that is, is one way of developing concentration. And then no other teachers who will teach breath meditation first as a way of developing concentration prior to doing the body scan, and that's the right way, you know, so there's all these different ways. And so, ideally, you'd either find your own way or you know, through this, these, you know, the balance and how to work these together. Or you would have a teacher who talked to the teacher would help you guide you to what's appropriate at any given time in your practice.

Yes, is interesting.

That's, I did that for two years. And thinking I had to be able to sit still there. Anyway. But but but as a result of that, because of the way I did it,

anything that I was,

there was, you know, synchronous with my breath.

You know, it just, it took me away from the bar. It took me away from the body into the numbers. Yeah, that made voting harder, actually. So I kind of had this bad reaction against that. But then I kind of got reintroduced to it. Teachers suggested I do it. So where I'm trying and here's what I'd like your reaction to, I'm trying to count in between the breaths, you know, give

full, full in and out that's fully

paying attention to the sensations in the body. And then I just come when I'm feeling when I'm paying attention to sitcoms, that's when I'm trying to

kind of fiddle around, find something that works I was wanting to that's,

it sounds great. That sounds great to me. trial and error, right? Sound sounds good to me if it's working for you and helping you get still and centered and go for it.

So I hope you appreciate a little pep talk. On the importance of the body and hope it maybe those of you who haven't heard this kind of teaching before, sparks your interest maybe to take your body a bit more seriously and drop into your body more and start paying attention to what's going on in your body sensations and what the sensations mean what's going on and just offering is really, really loving and healing. Attention. You know, I think I think of attention as being a really healing balm that we offer to whatever whatever we bring attention to careful attention. And if you bring it to your body, I think you'll find to great benefit. So, we have about four minutes, what I like to ask you is we spend the last couple of minutes, just doing a very short sitting, so we can leave little bits in that meditative mode.

Taking One long slow, deep breath as you exhale dropping into your body

Your relationship to your body develop to such an extent that you can call your body

your friend.

And maybe maybe some of you have already already realized this today. That heat is very helpful aid to being in your body. So, appreciate that benefit that comes from the heat. Thank you