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SPEAKERS

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And beings Ever wonder today's looking at the announcements, I was thinking that maybe the function of the announcements for me is to get me talking. Because sometimes after I see it, I don't feel like talking. And, in fact, there was once on a Thursday, we were back in Palo Alto where we rang the bell and the sitting. And I didn't talk. Was anybody here for that time? Anybody here but you were there that day? What was that like when I didn't talk? I waited about 15 minutes before I said that. What was really

good.

So I didn't know what to expect either. But I sat there. I didn't feel like I needed to say anything or wanted to say anything. And so I sat there and after a while they're sitting there in silence for a while. It was clear that something was happening in the silence, so I just let it be. And after some time, I don't know how long it was. But then I said finally something something like that. Or, you know, if you're waiting for something to happen then you've missed the boat.

And, and then we had more silence. And then people started talking asking questions, I think and we didn't have a discussion at the end. And so because of the announcements, I can't do that.

But I did last week, here Monday night, talking about papanāca, the tendency for the mind to flourish, proliferate and obsessed with bots, and made reference to how the Buddha talked about once these obsessive thoughts kind of get the upper hand and turn away. They in return attack us and you feel a sale by them. And the kind of a, as I'm sitting here now that contrast to a mind that's obsessed with proliferating thoughts and obsessions, churning of mind, it's a silence. And I'm very fond of silence. And sometimes I think, you know, we should just sit in silence more. I've told the story recently, I apologize if it was recently for all of you. The first time I came into the center, which is very recent, it was last Monday, I told us forget. The first time I came in here was about two years ago now to be two

years ago, I guess, beginning of September, end of August. And we had been talking with the ministers about buying this church for some time. And I guess for about eight months or so, but we never been inside. We just been had these conversations on the phone and they want to sell it to us. They're pretty much set on selling to us, I think but they hadn't really showed it to us yet. And after about eight months of this wonderful telephone conversations with these wonderful mystical Christians, they were gonna show it to us. And I came an hour early before the board and other people going to come and see the building for the first time. And I met them on the street out there and they were lovely people and elderly. And then did the common sensical thing. They brought me in here to do a tour of the building. And, and I didn't think about it until really afterwards, in essence but for as we were going around talking about the building, there would be pauses in the conversation, the silence and that silence, as pauses became longer and longer. Until finally we came in here and there, the pews all lined up here and there was kind of a cross up there. Above Glenn. And there was And so we sat down the front pews. And we had one of our these pauses in the conversation. And I think we we pause maybe 10 or 15 minutes. And then someone came in one of the board members, I think came in because it was time for the board members to come into the ever showing up. And so then we just got up from our seats. And then at some point, I went over to the administrators or said to him, whispered to him and said, Oh, someday, we'll have to pick up where we left off. And sitting there with him in silence was actually probably the probably the most significant or very powerful part of the meeting with them. It was a very rich, very pregnant very, you know, very strong sense of presence and the fact that we're really together in a way that we couldn't have been together I think if we kept talking I really love They, they loved it, I think it just was a natural thing to do.

I suspect that someone could write a dictionary about all the meanings of silence, all the different kinds of silences. You know, they can be a silent treatment. silencing of this, I guess, is kind of silencing of women, for example, there's all this stuff around silence. So then silence is very frightening people. It's very oppressive. For some people the way silence manifests itself. But one of the aspects of silence is the silence of I don't know what to call it, spiritual silence or the silence of the soul or the silence of emptiness, the silence of and there's a kind of silence that that can be kind of a wellspring of energy wellspring of inspiration, wellspring of health and healing or wellspring of joy wellspring of kind of feeling at home or feeling well or feeling kind of a depth of life. And I wonder how many of us give ourselves time to be with that silence, to appreciate it to love it to make it possible to happen. Sometimes doesn't take much, but sometimes much is what it takes for the mind to be silenced to some degree. There's expression in English called to have one's breath taken away. And I think one of the often one of the consequences of having a bad breath taken away something amazing happens is the usual thoughts and concerns we had leading up to that moment of experience are usually quieted, silenced, maybe becoming irrelevant or just become seeming so trivial and mundane in religion, To them, whatever it has been, but sometimes the immensity the are you stepping into the middle of the Sierras and takes your breath away. Sometimes if you someone's dying, you walk into someone's room and they're dying and kind of take your breath away things changes a lot very quickly, or someone just died. or someone's been born. A silence after someone has died, is quite something at times. And it's been said, I think by many people that our culture a modern culture

doesn't have much place for silence in it. It's not like building on built in silence, do we? We try you know, our culture tries everything it can to fill the silences and you go to all kinds of places in the music going, and people turn on the music or at home and when there's silence if people are oppressed or afraid of silence It's afraid of being alone. And so they have music, the kind of radio or whatever to fill the space. And, and there's a kind of strong momentum for many people in our culture, to always be doing to be doing activities and engaged in many, many things. And it's almost as if the dizziness sometimes precludes the possibility of experiencing the silence which is deep inside. I think when you really feel a silence maybe doesn't even make sense say it's deep inside but the silence the when I was a Zen student for a number of years, I remember we had to have these interviews with a teacher, and then interviews that kind of formal and you come in and you have to do these vows to the person who's standing values, you're getting through the door and then you do a full bow to the Buddha perhaps and then you go to either standing by her Bow to the teacher. And so as long as ritual takes a while to get in there, you don't just kind of show up and say, you know, you know, how are you how's the weather. But you know, after a while you do all this very, very formal kind of paying of respect. And then you sit down in meditation posture, and you sit there and make yourself settled and composed. And, and then the interview starts. And from many times, I found that I didn't want to speak. I valued the meeting the interview, but the sense I had was that if I said anything, there would be a loss of integrity. And so it was enough to sit there. But it was a little bit awkward to remember this story about when silence was a little bit tangential but the How many of you know Steven Gaskin

and Stephen Gaskin. Stephen Gaskin was a ex Marine Sergeant ex Marine who dropped a lot of acid in the 60s. And he was teaching English at San Francisco State and started holding these called Monday night classes and became kind of one of the great gurus of the psychedelic generation. And at some point, he got into a school bus. And all those school buses joined him and his whole caravan of school buses going across the country of hippies. And they ended up settling in Tennessee, and a commune called the farm when I visited there 800 people living there in this commune. And by that time, they've been busted for drugs and stuff and, and they had decided that they didn't need to do acid anymore, they'd find a better way. And that they found that honesty was more powerful than acid. So they dropped the acid but

And so as Steven Gaskin was in jail when I came there, and so I spent a couple of months there with him still in jail for Pete took the rap for the community. And, and when he came out, I remember the first time I met him. I went over to introduce myself and I said, you know, I'm like, I'm Gil and I'm new here. And I expected him to say something like, Oh, that's nice, you know, where you're from, and, you know, something, you know, some kind of, you know, question and there was no question. And it was meant by this silence, but the silence was just man looking at me with these eyes and be looking at him in his eyes. And the next thing that happened was that my mind exploded. And it just exploded, it started going out into space, just you know, the black space kind of beautiful luminous kind of space is going out and out and out. And And then it was pretty amazing. But then I realized that, you know, this guy was there. And you know, you're supposed to have a conversation supposed to say something,

you know, some social niceties or something. And so I contracted and came back. And that was over that trip.

And what would have happened if I hadn't been caught up in the social conventions, the ideas, the fear, you know, this person gonna like me, or you say something here, you know, just kept going. What happened? So, you know, not being comfortable with silence. It's quite common phenomena, a common but at certain depth of meditation, it's relatively common that people feel afraid of either what's just happened to an experience of silence or stillness or emptiness, or they're, they feel up against the edge of it, and he'll Oh, I can't Go, that's too much. I won't exist, there is one fear. I'll die in some ways. I mean, this isn't exactly a physical death, but you know, the ego will die. You know, do we really want our ego to die? The ego doesn't usually want to so he pulls back. So pulling back from the depths of silence, it's possible.

I see. One of the things that kind of inspired this talk was, I've seen it very, very powerfully in my own meditation at home sitting. How when I sit down to meditate, even here when I sat with you tonight that I'll sit down and compose myself. Let's get started with my meditation. And after about five minutes, I realized that mostly been thinking and it's Oh, no, I need to get serious here. And so then, but it becomes this point in my meditation where I couldn't make a choice, or I can make a choice between where I'd rather be with my attention, where I'd rather kind of let myself keep drifting back into that world of thoughts, or whatever, I'd rather choose something else rather than kind of drifting in my thoughts and concerns. And I've done enough meditation to now to know that there's something much more valuable for me much more deeply satisfying and much more important than allowing myself to wander and drift aimlessly in my thoughts and concerns and plans and wonderings and, and, you know, things that can happen until there's a shift away from that towards a kind of silence towards a kind of silencing of at least the mind is very busy and caught up in thoughts. And it's exclusive. It's really pleasant. I really love it. And even though it's so pleasant, so it's so satisfying, are so profound, there's something appropriate to something like that. There's still this This, these threads these Velcro this thing's, you know, creeping up and you know, grabbing my attention and pulling you back into this, you know, into the world of thoughts and ideas and it's like a superficial mind kind of kind of creeps in like creepers like plant keepers that keep it you know and for a while have to keep cutting away the creepers they keep cutting away those plants that are creeping in and make it without turning away or letting go of them or having a little more resolve to stay with the meditation. And then at some point the concentration kind of starts in a sense or the mind gets tamed or quiets down enough so that that kind of proliferating thoughts, that kind of mind that kind of superficial chatter of the mind quiets down and it becomes a lot easier to maintain that choice to stay focused then on, per example, on the breath, and as I stay more focused in their breath, Then this wonderful thing happens occasionally, where it seems to be surrounded by silence or silence or stillness seems to be very common phenomena of what's there. And in that stillness, that silence, the breath or a sense of presence and the mindfulness that I have what's happening seems to become much more highlighted much more powerful, much more, much more aware of it. This becomes like I sounds like, I wouldn't say it's louder, but it's like, becomes clearer and more crisper or more prominent prominence could work. And, and usually, if things are

going well, it feels very, very satisfying to have his prominence of mindfulness is clarity and clear awareness of what's happening moment by moment, is the ability of mind states there. But I see in my own mind, how much how powerful the authority is, of seemingly authority or the allure of the mind that wants to think about things and there has to be some wisdom. Meditation about when it's useful to think what kind of thinking is useful, and, and what kind of thing let go of the 99.99999% of the thoughts, which is meditation are not useful for the purposes of meditation, probably not about meditation at all anyway anyway. And to have some willingness then to say, Oh, I don't have to fix my life, I don't have to organize my life. I don't have to solve my life, through my thinking right now. And so, to be to be a willingness to kind of separate ourselves, not so much from the fact of thinking, but separating ourselves from being glued to the thoughts or wedded to the thoughts or invested in our thoughts no longer invest ourselves in the world of thinking, as if our who we are is dependent on the conclusion the results of our thinking. So there has to be some new orientation to the world of thinking I think that's one of there's many kind of revolutions that happens in the mind as people learn something like meditation. And one of them, I think, has to do with a wise relationship to our thoughts. And to know, when it's useful to think perhaps, when it's useful to thank me gauged to engage in it. I love thinking fondly I'm fond of it. But also thinking of salesmen attacks me sometimes it's completely ridiculous. And I know that at times, it keeps me from this depth of silence and stillness

that is available. So there must be a willingness to turn away, or willingness to let go the investment into this. And that's really fascinating to explore how we're invested in our thoughts and we invest ourselves in the world of our thinking. That, you know, we, we think it's going to do something for us, subconsciously, perhaps unconsciously, what is it we think that think thoughts are going to do for us, we wouldn't be so glued to them. Unless we really thought they were going to do something really important for us. Part of the path of meditation is to realize that perhaps there's something really valuable that can happen to you when you dissolve that glue. And we don't try to negotiate your life through thoughts anymore. And so that one new kind of meditation exercise that some teachers will give is to, in your, in your meditation, look for the silence between your thoughts. What is that silence like? And who are you in the silence between your thoughts? There's no one there thinking. There's no one there having words telling you who you are. Because then you're in you're out of the silence, right? So there's no one there to tell you. You're not there to tell yourself who you are. So who are you and you're not there to tell yourself who you are. You haven't died yet. So you're still just fine, I think. But for some people, that's a frightening place. It's challenging place. Because Oh, it's disorienting. Oh, I'm not telling myself who I am then what's going on?

I think part of the deepest silence that can come from meditation comes from a mind which is not relating to anything. And maybe that's a very poor way of trying express what I want to express. But when the attention when the mind when I thought it's usually focused on something, it's usually concerned about something, it's usually relating to something. So, some of you in our listening to what I'm saying, so you're focused on this, you're relating to my, my words, maybe relating to your thoughts about what I've said. Maybe some things triggered something inside of you. And so you're thinking about your thoughts, or maybe your emotions, your feelings, maybe you're inspired, maybe you're

depressed about this, I'll talk about silence and whatever, you know, board. And so you're relating to that about that that's what's going on. Or maybe you're thinking about tomorrow or thinking about the television program you missed because you came here. You know, there's always thinking minds thinking about something engaged, it's relating to something. And there's a surface concerns which are quite easy to see. But underneath the surface chatter of the mind, there are very strong powerful currents of the mind relating to something our deepest concern our deepest worry. So some people for example, being in relationship to other people is one of the deepest concerns and underneath the surface chatter of the mind, even when that quiets down, scanning the horizon for to be in relationship to other people, is, you know, such a primary thing of the mind to us, or maybe sense of security to the mind. Looking out Security trying to find security or the mind is very deep level of the mind is concerned with boosting its ego, expressing itself being someone being a self identity. So in the depth of meditation, there's an experience of the mind, where the mind is not relating to anything, the mind is freed from always looking is that is that is the mind is not about something, not thinking about something or engaged in something or looking outside of itself or looking inside of ourselves towards something. The mind is not towards something or away from anything. The mind is not relating to anything. You now that can be disturbing to some people to hear that possibility. But it's or that you know, but that's in an innate ability that the mind has, the mind can be luminous or self luminous mind can be. It said that in Buddhism sometimes, the mind is luminous by itself, except for the visitors that defile it are covered or tainted. So in its in its essence, in a sense, in Buddhism, it seemed as if the mind is luminous, self luminous, the mind was not relating to anything. It's almost as if, when the mind relates to something, it covers the luminosity of the mind. If we use different kind of language, some very deep sense of presence, deep, satisfying, still sense of presence. You might feel yourself kind of right, leaving it kind of lifting yourself up out of it, perhaps, or contracting away from it. When you start relating to something. I'll give you another silent story. Then again, I apologize for saying this before. Some years ago, I was teaching a retreat. It was actually a Catholic convent. And so you know, it was a Buddhist retreat, silent retreats for 10 days. Two weeks it was and there was a woman He was quite disturbed. She had a lot of anxiety a lot of worry about all kinds of things and very much involved in the world of thoughts and really didn't see any way out of it didn't know there was anything outside of that and was only trying to negotiate the world in your thoughts and it's kind of like being stuck in a maze if you're only trying to do things inside the world of thoughts there's no way out ultimately. And very troubled woman very much in conflict with herself and people around her. And we had this morning sitting we both of us with at the morning sitting It was a beautiful sitting I think was a guided meditation which really helps people get really settled and quiet. And after that meditation immediately afterwards, I had an interview with her. So I left there the I left the hall to go upstairs this little nuns room, very sweet little gnome Santa Sabina and if you know it, and it's beautiful, then you know, I love these little monastics sell It's my hope that one of my hopes kind of likes ideals or dreams, it's kind of like to die in a room like that.

And, and so we sat there and light was coming in. And we both showed that we also are sitting there and she came to sit next to me and, and we were so filled with meditation in the stillness and silence of the meditation, that we just set the kind of, I don't know how I was, but, but I shouldn't talk to myself,

but she was sitting there glowing. And she was so much at ease and at peace and, and it felt like there was nothing we need to say. And I was just in awe that she had come to that. I mean, she didn't know she had the ability for that. And it was just like, so beautiful to see I knew her for many years was really to see this as a possibility for her and, and enjoying that together. Just being in that space together. It's like this communion of silence. And then she said something like, you know, this is really great. But yesterday was different. Yesterday I was, you know, having some trouble with this kind of thing. And with that, and, and as you started telling me about yesterday, I could watch transformation in front of my eyes. So this woman who was radiant and peaceful into someone who was filled with anxiety and distress, because she was telling me about it, recounting it, how it was yesterday. How sad. I felt, you know, this luck. It was it was here, it was right here. But she had a mind which was so powerfully relating to something, concerns, worries, anxieties, that stuff. So the mind that doesn't relate to anything, the awareness doesn't relate to anything. In the Buddhist tradition, in the early Buddhist tradition, that experience of tasting the stillness, the silence of the mind, that doesn't relate to anything, is said to be something you touch with your body. I love that expression. They touched with the body, you touch it with your body. And so it's not something just with them. But something kind of it's an embodied sense something that kind of fills you maybe fills your body, something physical, almost a physical sense of, maybe in a very different kind of spiritual tradition use a physical sense of presence. But it kind of stillness which is almost like a force or power, stillness or freedom. So the question I like to leave you all with this is two things, do you in the course of your days and weeks and months, give yourself quality time to be in silence? Do you have access or ways of being in silence with others or with by yourself going in the woods or sitting and looking out the window or you have some ways to really allow silence to be to nourish you, can you or the, you know, ways that that silence can really nourish you. And if there is those ways, if you know those ways, I will say I would encourage you to maybe Consider that that nourishment is probably worth a lot more than some of the other things you do for nourishment or for entertainment or for pleasure or for. And we so often sacrifice, the deep satisfaction of silence for a lot of things, television. So that's one question, you know, do you have? Do you have that access? Do you take a time and I encourage you to make that time? And the second is, in your meditation practice? Can you look and sense feel your way into the silence there in an appreciative way, in a way that brings you the kind of sense of satisfaction or joy, the subtlest, satisfying silence, it's already there. We could say can you feel your way can you sense you? Can you listen your way? Can you taste your way into that silence can touch your way into it? Can you do that little bit of decision making analysis consideration, where you realize, Oh, these thoughts that I have, I think it's okay to let them be for now, I don't have to be engaged in them. Put them down, let them rest up for now to be inspired or to have the wisdom, understanding that there's that the solution for your life, maybe it's not going to be found by thinking. And so maybe for a little bit, you can put that aside. And having a consideration might make it a little bit easier to do that. But if you don't have some serious wisdom, or understanding or appreciation of this little point, it's all too easy then to be swept up over and over again by your thoughts. Because somehow in the psyche, the psyche, maybe even subconsciously thinks this is really important to think right now. This is the most important thing I should say has to happen right now is thinking about You fill in the blank?

Yes.

When you go into the pool, or the question is, when you experience the silence, and you're aware of the silence, aren't you then thinking about the silence. They can it can be there are very powerful sense of presence or silence, that it doesn't preclude the possibility of thinking about it. It's usually those small little voice in the mind that kind of at all, just really deep silence here. So there's layers of silence there's so you know, and so you know, this thing where you know, your breasts taken away, you see something really advanced and the mind gets really still, and you can kind of some reflection about that as possible. That's possible. But it's also possible to be aware that silence without thinking so If you if you go for example on a hot day and lower yourself into a refreshing pool of water Are you aware that you're in the water without thinking about it? You're in the water.

Did you hear the laughter when you said that the room? Did you hear the laughter in the room? Did you think about that left when you heard it? You did things that are fast.

It's also partly a matter of degree. So you might look a little bit at your mind at the degree that possibility because I'm sure you have to some degree. So you might look at the degree and, and it might be most obvious when the mind is obsessing about something really caught up and churning away and, and versus sometime when it's not that you feel more at rest at ease with the world. A friend of mine who is a very good meditator said once that he was in a conflict with someone very serious conflict about something. And it took him six months before his meditation could get really still again. Because that little conflict was kept pulling him in pulling him in. So that points to something. Another thing that maybe I should say is that it's one thing to talk about, like I talked about today about, you know, going into meditation and putting aside your thoughts and going into the silence as if it's easy, an easy thing to do. It's not an easy thing to do for many people, or most of the time for most people. And sometimes, other things are needed as it preliminary or support for that there's a possibility. And so for example, when there's a lot of anger, resentment, perhaps a process of forgiveness is necessary or perhaps solving some issue is necessary going and talking to someone we have issues with certain things you know, we need, you know, all kinds of ways a spiritual life includes a lot more us sitting in meditation it also means taking care of other things. Today I had a conversation with someone who wrote a dissertation on rights speech. And, and I told her my little story about the thought exercise I teach sometimes where I say imagine yourself in a you know, some you got a nice hike, you know, and it's been beautiful spring day and the grass is green and you had a wonderful little lunch and you had a nice nap and you woke up you under the oak tree and just beautiful weather, it's just the right temperature and just feel so refreshed and you know, next to your friends laying next to you and, and you turn to your friend and you lie. And how does that feel? And probably in the context of being, being you know, so calm, so peaceful. The life feels like a real transcript. But then now in contrast, imagine yourself on highway 1015 o'clock it's rush hour traffic, you're late for some really important meeting, and people are cutting you off in the smog and your air conditioning doesn't work and, you know, and you know, and you're getting more more irritated and

hot and, and, and some one person one more time cut you off, and how quickly it is, you know, we'll say something or do something with a finger or something big, the quality of our mind is what I told this woman today on the phone was the quality remind affects a lot the decisions we make about how we express ourselves and, you know, affects our ethical decisions even. And her response she said, great, you know, she like that. And then she said, Yes, but it's not just the quality of your mind because I use the word mind. It also has to do with also it depends a little bit on your, on your, your physical condition. And, you know, if you don't take care of your body, how can you expect you know your mind You know, you take care of your body also. And so you need to do something like yoga or, you know, go for a walk or do something for your body. The Buddha, you know, was a big time Walker. That's what he did. I don't there's no evidence yet did any exercise, but he did a lot of walking. And walking is a great toner for the body. And so again, so if a person's only relying on meditation, and not doing the appropriate things take care of their body and just just a minimal so the body is well toned and the energy goes smoothly in their body. It's very hard then to do the kind of deeper work that comes to the whole range of things that support this possibility. Yes,

is it effort possible to meditate with the intent to have some sort of Something like if you have some decision you need to make about your career or some something that you need to find a way to, you know, are you meditating? Is that you're thinking? or? Yeah,

sure. Well, there's so many different kinds of meditation, there's like a whole big array of what meditation is meditations. And so there are forms of meditation that are more contemplative in nature that actually involve reflection using thoughts in helpful ways. We don't want to make thoughts of the enemy in any kind of way. And, and thoughts have their role in spiritual life for sure. And the our meditative our ways of meditating, where we put thoughts aside completely and we're not going to engage in them at all. And there are forms of meditation where you actually use them for with deep reflection or even decision making, and one small way of doing that, for example, is to use your meditative ability to get as quiet still as you can. And really put aside your concern, as best you can for 1520 minutes and meditation or whatever long you can and get as deep please still and quiet is available to you. And then when you think you've come to some point where it makes sense, to change the focus, then you bring up the topic. Maybe if I have a very simple question, or you have a word, and then let the mind begin reflecting in its own way. And sometimes the mind that's concentrated and still is much more creative in making connections and making understandings than the mind. That's kind of surface chatter and worried concern and all that and you can be much more productive kind of reflection when the mind is still. So that's a very wonderful thing to do.

That kind of reflection is that what we would call

Both you know anything's possible it's all it's all valid you asked me Is it okay or something? Yeah give me permission to have fun with your meditation have a good time try different things I often don't feel like it has to be one way and there are some times when when you might find that doing exactly what

you said just being really still and cropping a thought or the idea and just see what what bubbles up and sometimes the mind might stay silent and then there's a little explosion of some feeling or explosion some thought and you're not really engaged in thinking per se but you've made a space for something to happen that wouldn't otherwise happen. And sometimes you might your mind might pick it up as a theme and you think about it you look at it you engage in it very intentional into intently in the mind drifts away. Start thinking about what you're having for dinner tonight. And no, that's not what I'm doing. I'm focusing on this issue. This question and, and there's ways of doing that for personal concerns. And there's also ways of doing that for deep Dharma insights, can we actually think about some of the teachings of the Buddha, for example, the deep reflection about the theme of impermanence, or about death, or about, you know, a number of things, but self, what is the self, and it can be very, very productive, very, very, very profound, profound to do that kind of reflection. The problem with teaching it to Westerners is that Westerners are predisposed to think so much already. That sometimes you can get carried away and not be so useful. And so usually, I think most of the Western Dharma teachers have really mostly emphasized. The other side of the other kind of meditation is focused much more non discursive awareness. As non discursive awareness is the one that really usually will take people to further meditation. And so we don't teach that so much But it's certainly a rich part of the Buddhist tradition. Many different traditions of Buddhism

I don't know if it's useful but even before I became a meditator right, discovered this when I was designing the scenery and i would be given the problem of design piece of scenery and if I thought about it, I was lost, I was completely lost. So that the procedure for me has always been do the homework. Find out what the possibilities are, and then forget about it. And then the idea that you trust is the one that bubbles up from the deepest quietest place. You can hear that

then what are the questions that that query so say that you've done your homework done yourself? went and you put it aside, and you're sitting and meditating. And poof, the idea comes, what do you do then? Do you go with it? Do you then start thinking about reflecting on it because the creative juices are flowing now. So, you know, the great American novel is happening. Or you put it aside in metaphor for the purpose of your meditation. And it really depends a little bit what you want to do, of course, but there is a lost opportunity. I think it's kind of like because in meditation itself, when the mind gets quiet and concentrated, you can be very creative. And it's very seductive. To be caught up in those creative thoughts might bubble up. And it's fine to do that in a sense, but it is a lost opportunity, because it's kind of like you're on a really good track and your meditation things are going really well. And sometimes you're practicing really well. And then you take a detour that doesn't take you further in the math. And since you're on a good track, what would have happened if you just kept going on the track. And going further, don't take a detour. But those thoughts bubble up and then put them aside. Anyway, thank you for listening. And I hope that this was a little bit evocative of possibility for you and as you explore your meditation and your life and your silence, I hope that you have fun and enjoy it and it brings you happiness and delight. Thank you