

# 2004-04-26 Joy Denial

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## SPEAKERS

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I have actually to relate to themes. I'm going to say related, they're maybe related but maybe not so related. I would like to believe that related. One is the importance, the usefulness the possibility of enjoying meditation practice, enjoying a mindfulness practice. And the other comes out of two conversations I had today with two different Buddhist teachers. And both of them talked from different angles, different ways of looking at it. The ways in which Buddhist practitioners might one person use the word deny, use their practices kind of deny or avoid in denial about certain parts of your experience and the other talks about People can use Buddhist practice to, to become very conscious of things. But he talks about how if you bring light on something, the light often creates a shadow kind of union idea. And so the stronger the light, the more the greater the shadow. And so, Buddhist practice, sometimes doesn't help doesn't help a lot with revealing certain aspects of our experience. And he'd mentioned two things. In particular, he thought Buddhists were not very good at bringing awareness to or waking up to. So kind of the blind spots of practice is one side of one theme, and the other side of the theme is enjoying one's practice. And I think it's really, really good to enjoy oneself when one's meditating. It doesn't always happen sometimes. There's physical pain or emotional pain or sometimes, you know, there's just meditation is flat for whatever reasons, goes up and down. And you can't you know, exactly You know, exactly, you can't, you know, we'll have you meditation a certain way. But you can certainly dispose yourself or lean yourself in certain directions. And, and make it possible to enjoy yourself more more often than not. If it never occurred to you never occurred to a person to enjoy meditation, just being told that you should enjoy it might just open up a whole area of meditation practice that was accessible to you, you might have some joy, some enjoyment happening in the practice, but you ignore it. I know some people think that enjoyment is not supposed to be part of Buddhist life. And so and so you should, you know, not pay attention to that you should ignore that and that bubbles up if kind of pushes up, you know, into awareness, then you kind of try to push it back down. It's not a Buddhist today, so don't and there is that kind of approach. Sometimes people kind of grim about the practice, and there's not much happiness in it. And I know sometimes I've been very serious, but practice and sometimes a seriousness of practice or you know, makes me kind of

avoid the lightness of practice or the sense of well being that come with practice. I think it's very helpful to look for a sense of well being, as we're meditating, to be able to learn to recognize a sense of well being within ourselves as we're assuming practicing or mindfulness. And it might at first or might sometimes be just a very mild sense of well being. But the recognition of well being helps to develop it tells strength and helps to strength, strengthen it. There's a teaching in Buddhism, that unhealthy states of heart or states of mind, unhealthy trains of thought, tend to thrive when they occur. I know I know where Without any awareness and healthy states of mind healthy, healthy, healthy

trains of thought tend to be developed, be encouraged, as we bring awareness to it. So the lack of awareness, the darkness tends to help proliferate things which are not very healthy for us. And awareness tends to develop things which are healthy for us. And a sense of well being is one of the things that I found, grows with attention to earth and grows with awareness. So to tune into aware to a sense of well being, and it might be that sense of well being and you sit down to meditate, might not be right in the forefront of, you know, right there, obviously there if you sit down and start paying attention to the breath, and I've sat down to pay attention to my breath, or do walking meditation, and had some agenda, some idea I'm supposed to be a really good breath meditator, kind of ride my breath and be really focused. Just kind of that's that's the going to be solution for me. It's just being concentrated, my breath I have this one thing I'm going to pay attention to. And, and then sometimes it works out, okay? And sometimes it doesn't. But what it does, that kind of one pointed kind of attention sometimes causes me to ignore a sense of well being, or pleasure or enjoyment that might be there. And I found that even at times when I'm not feeling very well, there can still be a little bit of sense of well being and some part of my body's part of who I am. And so learn to recognize and look for a sense of well being can be part of mindfulness practice. Sometimes people do mindfulness practice, there's the idea that it's supposed to be choiceless, you're not supposed to have any agenda. You're not supposed to be looking for something or wanting anything to happen. But to some degree, there's a very wise teaching, but it's a little bit of an advanced teaching. It's fine to spend some time initially in various times in practice, to look just try to develop a sense of Well being recognize it, too. And once you've recognized a sense of well being, or enjoyment or pleasure or something that might be there, then then it's a lot easier I find to focus on the breath, it's slightly easier to be mindful with that as a background with foundation. And it's possible to have a lot of enjoyment in doing meditation practice. And different people will find enjoyment for different reasons. Some people find enjoyment because it can be physically pleasurable. And there can be physical pleasure that comes with following the breath. Sometimes a breath can feel like you're getting massage, or just very pleasant sensation kind of ripple out from the sensations of breathing. Some people find it just very pleasant because it's peaceful. And it's enjoyable just to be quiet, you know, not being disturbed or not being very active and running after things and doing a lot of things that some people are overdue or is in our culture, and to actually be in a situation we don't have to do anything. Just sit Be quiet can be very pleasurable, very enjoyable. Some people find enjoyment and practice from a kind of a sense of investigation or the sense of exploration of awareness whenever using their awareness. Sometimes I actually have kind of playfulness with my awareness that sometimes is very helpful, just be very attentive very much in the present moment to be playful. So one of them what they wanted one of the kind of kind of silly ways

that I didn't playful, I'm not gonna say it's wise, or even useful. But just one of the things I've done is use my awareness like, like, I was playing me like a, like a pinball machine, or, or like, you know, like a, you know, the arcades and you're shooting something, you know. So there's something, there's something there's something and you know, it's gonna Have fun sometimes. And sometimes, you know, and you can certainly do it in a way that's not fun. But you know, I've done that it's kind of playfully kind of just, you can have fun with awareness, you can kind of take awareness and kind of let it move through your bodies in different ways and explore different parts of your body. And what's it like to bring attention to this now and that and, and look at this now. And what's it like to kind of ride on this kind of surface of all the sounds that come around? So I'd like to have awareness kind of feeling like it's like it's surfing or riding on the, on the currents of sounds happening all around you? What's that, like? You know, come on. So people come up with interesting ideas. It's it likes to bring awareness and do that with awareness. I know one friend of mine who imagined awareness was like, Great Soaring Eagle bird. And all the things that happen were like the updrafts. And she was going to soar and the updrafts of her experience of drafts of her breath going up and down. And we've had a playful way of being with a practice. overdone. It gives the wrong idea with mindfulness practices.

But as a way of helping us get concentrated and helping us get mindful and be present, I think it's very helpful to have a sense of enjoyment, a sense of playfulness, a sense of sometimes you have pleasure in the practice itself. And if you're doing mindfulness meditation for a long time, and you don't feel pleasure, you don't feel enjoyment, or sense of well being from it, then it's useful to come and talk to a teacher about it, and explore what's going on and see what what it what can you do to bring more enjoyment to the practice? One of the things that I find that brings enjoyment, it actually feels very important part of practice is to bring awareness to the places in my experience, which are not pleasant. If I feel tension or if I feel stressed, or if I feel some anxiety about something. There's an art there's a way of bringing attention or mindful To hold it in awareness, that that that interface of awareness and the tension or the stress or the whatever I find to be, there's, there's a kind of pleasure or satisfaction from that bringing awareness and holding it there physically in my body. If there's some tension, physical tension my muscles in my body, then I find it very, very injury, I find it very, but I find enjoyable to kind of massage or bring attention to that tension in my body. Sometimes if it's in my torso, then I'll bring awareness to as the torso is moving with the breath, expands and contracts. shoulders go up and down a little bit. It's kind of like a massage. And so I kind of let the movement of the body kind of really ripple through a really kind of, I really feel what the movement does that part of my body which is tense, like shoulders, for example, right? It's common place to be tense for some people. And I have some tensions there sometimes and so so I feel it there and then my shoulders are moving, expand, expand and contract, lift up and, and, and down or sideways a little bit as I breathe. And as I breathe, I feel the texture or the movement or change in the sensations of the tension in my in my muscles. And I find that to be actually enjoyable to do, even though I'm paying attention with something, something which is unpleasant in of itself. So I do the same thing sometimes with emotional discomfort is somehow bringing awareness to it. And there's a way in our to bring awareness to that, which actually has a sense of satisfaction to it and enjoyment. one form of satisfaction is that of, there's a rightness to it. If you think oh, this is right, even though I'm feeling

uncomfortable, and this is what's happening for me, emotional discomfort or whatever. There's a given that given that this is what's going on for me. There's something feels very right, about being honest about it, and not really being honest about it. presence but actually feeling and attending to it at the same time. And I find this kind of sense of well being and satisfaction from having the ability to bring mindfulness to that part of my my my life, which is uncomfortable. So there's an enjoyment from that also, that becomes part of the instructions, you know, to enjoy your practice is to be on the lookout for ways in which we are not enjoying the practice. And there's many, many ways in which people don't enjoy their mindfulness practice, their meditation practice, sometimes by trying too hard. Sometimes by having very strong expectations was supposed to happening and if not happening, then we feel disappointed, sometimes by having judgments about what's right and wrong about ourselves, or a meditation experience, whatever. And so we judge what's going on, we compare or we compare ourselves with other people, other people are sitting still, or than I am, therefore, I'm a terrible meditator. And so we have all these, you know, all kinds of ways which we don't enjoy ourselves in meditation. It's very, very Important in mindfulness practice, to monitor oneself and to notice, if there's no enjoyment or sense of well being in the practice, to then be honest, but why is that? Why is that the case, and then not be patient, not be tolerant, not the unconscious, or an attending to the causes the conditions for the lack of enjoyment, the lack of what's going on. So then the other theme is that of kind of the denial of the unconsciousness of Buddhists. Sometimes there's a tendency for people to meditate, if they're starting to get proficient with their meditation, a little bit good meditating, getting concentrated, to use that as a way of ignoring something else. So if you want to know if you really get absorbed in your breath, or if you get very concentrated on your, on your you know, whatever your meditation subject is, then the more concentrated you are, the less you're aware of the things around you things to underside of it.

So, you know, I used to have sometimes physical pain in my legs when I sat. And one of my strategies of dealing with that was trying to get really concentrated on my breath, I knew if I got really concentrated on breathing, get absorbed in the breath, I would lift myself out of the pain and so just kind of leave was exactly leave my body, but it was kind of like the concentrated states we just kind of there was simply wouldn't be any physical pain there. Partly because I was so absorbed in the breath, that wasn't any space who paying attention to anything else. And, and sometimes I was able to do that, and sometimes I couldn't, and then I'd be more miserable. But sometimes, you know, that wasn't very beneficial for me to use that kind of avoidance mechanism. But there's many things if people feel emotional distress, some people will use meditation as a way of trying to avoid that emotional distress. pull away from it. I'm not gonna pay attention to I'm gonna try. I'm going to try to get concentrated so I don't have to look at this. Some meditation practices techniques are more, you more, lend itself more to avoiding parts of your life than others. So for example, when a person has a very narrow focus of attention in meditation, then this tends to more easily lead to avoidance. Then if that's the, the focus of attention is very broad. So what I mean for example, if the focus if a person is following the breath and the following the breath at the nostrils, so there's a very common Buddhist practice to follow the tip of the nose. It's very, very effective and very, can be very effective, very useful place to pay attention to the breath. But it's a very narrow part of our life. This part and not very much of our life happens at the

nose, the nostrils and partly that's why it's easier for some people to get concentrated. There's less to pay attention to us distractions less enough our life there so we can get more concentrated for some people. But it tends to be sometime that expense of not having a very strong foundation, broad foundation of kind of working through stuff or purification, or settling stuff being honest, what's really going on. So, but if you pay attention to the breath, in the torso, in the chest or in your belly, much more of our life happens here, there's a lot that goes on area of our heart, there's lot goes on our belly and our torso in general. And so if you're paying attention to the breath in those places, you tend and also become aware of the emotions, the feelings, the responses, life that goes on, in this part of our body, the muscles that happen, how they change the heart, the stomach, whatever. And so as you begin breathing here, in this part of your body, you're more likely then to begin working through or to relax or soften these places. And as you soften the physically, you're also then softening the emotional holding that might be there. So Buddhists often talk about traditionally talked about practices being a purification process. And so we're trying to kind of purify ourselves or cleanse ourselves of the ways in which we're tense or holding or tight or attached or you know, stuff that's kind of held. And, and so by breathing with a body and beginnings, kind of like using the breath as massage, to loosen up the kind of constrictions and tightness that connects it to the breathing or in the torso, that purification process begins to happen. And as it happens, it tends to create a bigger, better foundation like a broad foundation for going really deep in practice. If you follow a meditation that's very, very precise and very narrow focus, people sometimes can get very, very concentrated. But sometimes occasionally, what happens is that they don't have a solid basis. Like then they have this really narrow poll that's done straight up. And if you probably stick it, stick it near a pole, you know, and stick it up like this. Pretty quickly. It's going to fall over pretty easily right? But if you have a triangle And then the pyramid doesn't follow very easily, right? So there's a very important principle of Buddhist practice, where you're trying to mend a kind of incense construct a pyramid in your practice, we have a very solid base to begin with. And my suggestion is that, that solid base at the foundation and all along as you go up and build that pyramid, well being is one of the key aspects of it. A sense of well being a sense of happiness, a sense of enjoyment.

In other aspects of denial, or avoidance, or blind spots for Buddhists, is more maybe almost a little bit psychological and also cultural, as you know, as a Buddhist culture. But it tends to be a phenomena of having certain ideals, and then having those ideals somehow ignoring or avoiding or pretending they're not there. Those things which don't look like the idea so for example, one common shadow aspect of Buddhist culture that I've seen in the different places I've been, is the Buddhist cultures I've been in often is anger, Buddhist, like being kind. And they like being kind of, you know, not too caught up in the reactivity. And being angry is often seen as being as being the opposite of being kind. And it's often seen as being kind of caught in your reactivity. So good Buddhists don't necessarily want to, you know, you know, flaunt that there are places in society we find to flaunt your anger. And so, you know, people do that they've developed real abilities. You get reinforced and get help and doing it and it's really great. But, but you don't really get a lot of support in Buddhist circles, you know, and, you know, working up your anger and helping you you know, get a good be enforced. And so the tendency in Buddhist circles People don't show their anger that quickly. They kind of keep it from, from fellow



Buddhists. And, and then if they do a little bit, then the idea is, oh, you're not supposed to be angry. And then it kind of becomes kind of a cycle, where the cause of culture, we tend to kind of be less and less validating or anger or less willing to show it or conflict is another one. Buddhists are not supposed to be in conflict, right? They're supposed to get along peacefully. And so we feel some conflict, we kind of didn't. Don't, don't talk about it so much. Ignore it, we pretend it's not there, or whatever. And because we're, you know, it's not so validated to be in conflict. And so, these these cultural aspects, what I call cultural shadows that exists, and it's not unique to Buddhism, my theory is that every culture has a shadow. And so as soon as you have a group of Buddhists together, they create a shadow or is it creates aspects you know, ideal and what they don't want to look at and things like that. They can be bit you know, greater and lesser degrees. How how much it's done. But Buddhists have that the hope. The hope is that Buddhist practice is the cure for the Buddhist culture. That the mindfulness practice awareness practice is helping to help us to be honest about the things that otherwise there are circumstances we might be wanting to ignore. And so, our lack of well being, or our sense of discomfort, or unhappiness, or the tension in our body is something that is very important to stop for, and be very honest about and see what we can learn. We can learn from that. I think it's very hard to stay unconscious or stay denying. If we're in our body, we're paying careful attention to what's going on, physically, emotionally and all that. So if we quiet ourselves enough, or be still enough for be attentive enough, will notice in a certain situation I'm in kind of hockey, oh, I'm feeling a little kind of resistance here from letting people see what is really going on for me. And that sense of resistance or holding back, then is a clue to telling you what's going on. And then hopefully, in doing the practice, we don't stay in denial, we don't stay in avoidance. We don't stay in ignoring that which doesn't match the ideal, but rather, the function of the practice is to reveal it all. Now, one of the things my friend said today about how you see Buddhists are kind of in our unconscious areas that are unconscious about was interesting. I don't know if it's true, but it was kind of interesting way pointing to one was the inter relational dimension of how people relate to each other. And I said, Well, that's not right. I mean, Buddhists put a lot of emphasis on ethics and be mindful in in speech.

generosity, kindness and loving kindness. They're all kind of inter relational part of our relational world, how we relate to each other. And he suggested Well, yeah, but it tends to be a one direction, it tends to the most part to be, you know, I'm going to be kind towards you, I'm going to be generous, I'm going to be ethical, has been, you know, gender is something that someone generated from inside of us how we relate to others. But what he was talking about is something that occurs in, in the interaction between people to give and take, the way we mirror each other, the way that we unconsciously kind of adjust ourselves to how other people are. And he said, Buddhists aren't so good, so good at seeing the kind of unconscious subconscious or kind of ways in which we adjust and modify ourselves based on who we're talking to who we're in relationship with. And you know, we do a lot I mean, most of us know it. I mean, I was surprised that someone at some point in my life when I realized I was somewhat different, depending who, which friends, I was hanging With no. And there's some I remember, when I was younger, I actually didn't want some friends to see how I was with other friends. Because I was a different Guild. And then when I realized that there was a different Guild, depending which language I spoke, because I grew up speaking different languages, and it actually was, I learned a different kind

of like you learn a personality by the culture you grew up in. And so the language is very much part of that. And so by learning a different language, you learn different culture, learn different personality, because personality is not a fixed thing. It's something that partly also gets co created by the, by the culture around you. And so we tend to, you know, adapt ourselves to the situation we find ourselves in the people we find ourselves in. And so the suggestion of my friend is that Buddhists are not so good looking at that, that part of the relationship is how we adapt how we adjust ourselves, subconsciously, unconsciously, to who we who we encounter who we meet. And then the other thing he said that He thought Buddhists were not so conscious of was what was it? That was relational stuff? And then when he called the unconscious, and he said the two are closely related. So that's a huge topic, but I thought I would just share that with you. And hopefully that's useful and interesting and enjoyable to hear. And if it's not, then I apologize. So now's your turn for comments or questions. Yes. What do I get angry at? What do I get angry at? When do I get what do I get angry with? When do I get angry? Oh, sure I get angry. I'm the angriest in probably in the last 15 years in relationships having children. And sometimes it was just kind of wasn't really, at least I wasn't consciously aware of it being directed towards anyone. I was just so frustrated at how things were going. And, and that things were not going the way I wanted them to go. And, and so if your frustration is closely connected to anger, I mean, it happened, you know, it's just like, it happened two hours ago. Little bit more than two hours ago, headed towards my son and behavior. I mean, and then I didn't know it's just behavior, something that I tolerate, or just behavior which I had to stop in some way. And it's always so clear. You don't want to you know, create some complex and these kids, you know, you can't do that. You know, just because they're acting silly. You know, every time they're silly. That's it. Whatever. And so I I do hear I was frustrated I was annoyed and I didn't know whether I should I don't think he's always always useful to tell a child you're annoyed when mostly is because you know, it doesn't do with him the issues and so then I finally I got it. We got involved in a woodworking project and it turned out that way what really helped him was he just started sanding. I couldn't believe he started sanding and sanding his pieces of wood. I just I just cut these pieces of block in the blocks right? He started sanding and he was going I don't know if he was doing intention. I don't know what he was doing but it The effect was that it calms him down. But until he got calm, I was like this is you know, it makes you different species. I also got him to eat. I said I'll do what I'll do what are working with you if you eat first? He said okay. Anyway, so what happens One of the greatest values for me of having children

has been that it's there are aspects of my my things that I'm attached to things that I didn't really know I had until the limitations that come with parenting. Hit me over the head yes.

Oh, some time ago yeah. healthy. Yes.

Beautiful. Yeah. I think there's a lot of causes for happiness or enjoyment meditation, but that's very much one of them. And it's very can be very powerful when, at least for me, it's been very powerful and very It kind of sometimes comes as a surprise, especially early years of practice. When there's a very strong sense of beauty or purity, purity and beauty, I feel as in meditation are closely connected.

And when there's a tremendous sense of purity, that somehow kind of permeates the heart, the body, the mind. It's like one of the best things enjoyable things. I know

sometimes

Here's a question. It's very interesting question. So, how do you see he said he has an anxiety in his life when he sits and meditates the kind of he Sue's out he gets calm or settled. And so it disappears that anxiety but he hasn't resolved or dealt with, it's just kind of gone away and then guess after meditation, it comes back. And sometimes that can happen. And then the bigger question earlier, it was, was, how do you know how do you understand or know that what you don't know? How do you discover that? That was your subconscious or unconscious of and so the first part about anxiety sometimes if something persists over and over and over again doesn't you know just regular pattern of anger or anxiety or some something that's doesn't seem very healthy to have over and over again. And you sit and meditate and it goes away. But then you know you haven't really dealt with it just goes away and then you come back comes back again and meditate, it calms down. Or if you're really good at letting go of it, you should even be let go of your anger really easily. But then, you know, five minutes later it's back. If you let go of it again, it comes back right away. If then it then probably person should stop doing those things. Stop, stop letting go. or stop meditating in such a way that meditation makes you calm. And so there's a term I think in psychoanalysis called hovering that a second term hovering to hover. It's something I learned because at one point, a therapist taught me pointed out to me that I was really They're good at letting go of my anger, but I hadn't understood it. And so she taught me to hover with the anger. So not let go of it right away, but let it just stay there for a while, so that I could investigate it and explore it and really get to know with no way that I hadn't because I'd be so good at getting concentrated and letting go of it. So you might want to try not to get concentrated when you sit. And you might still sit, but you might sit with your eyes open, you might sit in such a way, don't pay attention to your breath, you might just bring your attention directly into the anxiety. And sometimes that can help they bring you directly into the anxiety makes it go away, then you might want to hover at the edges of the anxiety or do some kind of different kind of exploration. There's a lot of experiments experimentation could be done different ways to do for your question. I tend to have a strong bias towards going through the body. So going into the physical aspect of the anxiety as a route to really understand didn't come to terms with it. The body I kind of almost like to say the bodies of world world to the unconscious. It's so effective. But how do you know what what you don't know, the body can be a great help. mindfulness can be a great help getting concentrated and calm and still can be a great help learning a little bit about how the mind works. So you can learn to look in the areas that normally you would not pay attention to can be helpful. So sometimes study can help because you Oh, I didn't know that part of my mind. I think I look there. Another thing aspect way that's really helpful is to ask for or just pay attention to feedback from others. And sometimes other people can see things other people can help you see things that you can see for yourself. And so there's many, you know, from talking to can be from talking to a friend, to noticing how the checkout clerk at Safeway rise raises her eyebrows when you show up. That's interesting. Why is that? As feedback here, what is it about me and how I am sometimes just asking for feedback from friends, you know, sometimes it's



their therapy, getting feedback there being relationship there. Sometimes it's in the relationship or the people that we get feedback. Maybe that points to what my friend said that Buddhists are not so good at the inter relational aspect. In this chaplaincy training program that I'm helping to teach, one of the things that one of the exercises we did there was to have people walk into the room as if they're going to walking into a hospital or a hospital chaplain. And then and then people sit, people point out. People you're kind of all these people watching the person walking in and pointing out what they see as the person who walks in. And, and there's a wide range of things that people see somewhat some of which is projection and some of it is not projections at all.

You know, what I see is a really big, big man. And when I see really big men, you know, I get intimidated because I'm four foot five. And big person had no clue that this big body was intimidating. Or someone else you know. So we we carry yourself certain ways that sometimes we have no clue what impact we have on others. And so sometimes that we learn that by asking for feedback, you tell me something about myself, and maybe I don't see how other people experienced me when I walk into the room. And we get experienced in different ways in different settings. If, you know it's one thing to walk in any way, different kinds of people, you know, if we're, for those of us who are white or white males, we get perceived differently by different people. different ethnic ethnicities will experience us differently in our culture. And for many years when I was younger, I had no clue that people are seeing me different than who I've actually was I'm just still you know, unit unitary single kind of thing. And everybody sees me sees me exactly how I am and so there's there's people see through their own filters and so there's there's this wonderful interplay between how we understand ourselves and how other people understand us and that it's not a it's a porous dynamic to kind of affect each other so anyway getting feedback is one way a great ways you know, great person to get feedback as spouses and children it's used It's said that if you really want to check out a Zen master you supposed to check out teachers supposed to be really important if you want to study with somebody please check him out for a long time and see you know, if they're really okay, not supposed to settle no teacher really fast with a check them out for a long time. And it said it kind of you know, not many textbooks said kind of in a circle in the kind of alleys of Buddhism, galleys, that if you really want to check out a teacher, you go check, you go, you go talk to the children they find out you know, for the children thinking and you find out something that you know, no. Anyway, but don't ask my son until he's a bit older. I think he's too young for that. Last one, then just stop. Yeah.

was a big topic. But the i think i think that being different people in different in different settings is is healthy, it's normal. And it can be unhealthy if we're kind of being insincere. Doing it and trying to put up a front then you know, and playing games. But I think it's really healthy and normal in every every secret situation we find ourselves in, we change, we change by that situation, that who we are is not some solid, fixed self. But it's something that exists in relationship to the environment. And we're different in relationship to the same person, same friend on different days. You know, it's just kind of who's always malleable and moving and changing. In Zen in Zen world, they say that you you can never find out who you are in some way that you're now you know, forever, this is who I am. But rather you're constantly rediscovering yourself in every interaction. And you don't you don't you don't know

who you are until you interact. If you sit, you know, in your own privacy of your own room, and you know, when and don't interact and you don't know who you are, but you discover who you are in activity, kind of what they say. It's a little bit a little bit simplistic, but Then the mirror mirroring is a little bit difficult, it's best to talk about it first and that permission. But you know, if you want to explicitly and talk about it, you know, what is it that you see here, you know, if we meet, what are you seeing here, you ask them, ask them to your feedback and tell you, but the mirroring happens anyway. I mean, while I'm sitting here talking to you now, and you're nodding your head, and that's, I'm getting something back, I'm getting some kind of interest. You're mirroring What I'm saying is, looks like may be interesting for you. And that's helpful for me and we'll keep going. If you had different facial expression, if you were going with this. You know, that what have I said, you know, I'd Mir so you get it, we get a lot of a lot of feedback from people around us and we pay attention to those cues. We learn a lot from what's going on and we do that kind of often subconsciously, anyway. And then we do it sometimes in an unhealthy way. So I don't think I've noticed that I do that so much anymore. But I remember many years ago, some point we should teach in Palo Alto, that if there was one person in the room of hundred people who was sitting there in the back going you know, I was focusing on that person while I spoke, that was the mirroring I was focusing on everyone else's, you know, Doakes shining and radiant ism was billion things ever been said and Buddhism, you know, and, and I wouldn't, you know, put that one person and then I found out later the person, you know, that had indigestion. And so, you know, as I was allowing myself to be mirrored in, in, in something, you know, so we often do it anyway. So sometimes the agenda, the way in which we select what we select out of environment, is has to do with our own sometimes our own fears, our own agendas, our own things. And then to learn how to have you know, healthy marriage and really kind of take it all in. It's an art in itself. It was helpful. So, thank you. I hope this is okay this talk today and, and if it helps you enjoy your practice a little bit. I'd be very happy