

Mindfulness

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So I want to talk on a theme, on a talk that I talked about on Monday a few days ago, and a similar talk. I apologize for those people who were there on that Monday. I don't really like to give the same talk kind of twice, so I feel apologetic. But I like this topic, and I thought I would do it again. And I thought it might be useful for any of you to hear this talk, because it has to do with the nature of mindfulness, which is the core of practice that we do here at C, the insight meditation, or the mindfulness practice. And the question is, what is mindfulness?

It is an interesting one to the uninitiated. It might seem strange, perplexing. Or it might seem very obvious if mindfulness is just being attentive, paying attention. And to kind of warm you up to why this might be an interesting topic. As I've been a mindfulness teacher for some fifteen years, and I'm not sure what it is, you think of that. I hope you'll say resolute thought.

And part of the reason is that I'm not so sure what it is, that in the Buddhist tradition there are actually different definitions of mindfulness, different meanings of it, different contexts. So when I give some of the background for it, I think of it as one of the great crown jewels of a Buddhist practice. There's a variety of jewels in the crown of Buddhism, if you allow that analogy. So when I give some of the background for it, I think of it as one of the great crown jewels of a Buddhist practice. There's a variety of jewels in the crown of Buddhism, if you allow that analogy. And mindfulness is one of the key ones.

And almost all Buddhist traditions have a very honored place for the practice of mindfulness, for the mental functioning you call mindfulness. And some traditions use the word explicitly mindfulness, or the Pāli or Sanskrit equivalent, Chinese equivalents. And some traditions are more implicit that mindfulness is of little importance. The word mindfulness in Pāli is

sati, and in Sanskrit is *smṛti*, and in Japanese, Chinese kind of Japanese pronunciation of Chinese characters is *men enigatnenan* Chinese, and it is a. And the word *sati* in Pāli, *smṛti*, has a very range of meanings, and the best way of probably translating into English is not using the word mindfulness, but by the expression to keep in mind. Mindfulness is a mental function.

Sati is a mental functioning that helps us to keep something in mind. And when we use that English expression “keep it in mind,” we can mean a variety of different things. You can keep in mind your shopping list: Oh, no, you know, you’ve forgot about my tibulis. You know something? I keep it in mind. Or you can keep in mind a poem that we memorize, so it has connotations of to remember or to memorize. You can keep in mind values that are important for you: Oh, I remember that being honest is really important.

You can keep in mind values that are important for you: Oh, I remember that being honest is really important. I kept that in mind when I went into that very difficult meeting, and I always kind of relied on life, on being honest in that situation. So you keep that in mind. To keep it in mind, also to keep in mind the present moment is kind of that’s closer to what we mean by mindfulness, and mindful meditation to have presence of mind when we’re aware of what’s happening in the present while it’s happening. So we keep the present moment in mind as part of the meaning. So *sati* has a range of meanings that we could use.

At least we use the expression “I keep in mind” in English. It’s defined sometimes in the tradition as non-forgetfulness. So we don’t forget about the present moment. We don’t forget about—you must only remember. We forget about our values or what’s important. Don’t forget about our priorities or what’s important for us.

The non-forgetfulness of that capacity of mind not to forget what’s important is partly what mindfulness is. In English we have the expression “presence of mind.” And it’s very closely akin to that. And probably in that mindfulness practice we do, *sati* has the meaning of developing a presence of mind where you really are in the present moment, with a certain capacity to be aware of what’s happening in the present. I think then we have a presence of mind, either clearly or indirectly, we could—we know that we were present? I think then we have a presence of mind, either clearly or indirectly, we could—we know that we were present?

Then you’re really clearly—you have a strong presence of mind, early strong sense of presence. Here I am paying attention, aware. Then if you’re so aware, can know that you’re with, as opposed to a presence, a kind of awareness. What’s going on? And you’re not so aware. What’s going on?

You know, Oh, you're aware that you are aware while you're doing it. A crazy person, when one is deranged, perhaps could be quite aware of his or her environment or what's going on. Or could be aware of a lot of different things, but there might not be much presence of mind. Might not be so awareness of him or herself being aware, awareness of what one is doing, when one is thinking, and what one's impact is in the world around one. So when there's a strong presence of mind, it's kind of like you're taking in a lot of different information of what's happening in the present moment, in the present moment, while what's happening, and you're kind of aware that you kind of know that you're doing it out of sense. Yes, this is what's happening right now.

I'm really here at present. In the Buddhist tradition, it says that mindfulness is needed in every situation, just like salt is needed in every curry. And we would say that he sought a suit for something. You don't have too much of it. They say on salt, but they say in Buddhist tradition, you can never have too much mindfulness. It also points out in the Buddhist tradition that mindfulness, its capacity of non-forgetfulness, of present presence, of mind, of keeping things in mind, is a faculty that we all have.

It's a capacity or potential we all have. And as a faculty, it's something that can be developed. And so we think, you think of it like a muscle. And you can develop that capacity to be present, to be mindful, to be aware, to hold things in mind. And along that line, one of the very classic, important practices in Buddhism, has been to memorize, and it's memorized, Buddhist texts, for example, Buddhist teachings. And part of the historical value of it is that in the old days, they didn't have writing.

So the only way that Buddhist teachings were preserved was people memorized, and they had a very elaborate way of memorizing that kept the accuracy of it down through the centuries. But even nowadays, and you go to Thailand and places here in this country, how you find Buddhist practitioners, we memorizing various things—short things, sometimes long ones. It's interesting that in 1954, they had one of the very rare what's called Buddhist councils where all the different representatives came from all the different kind of Theravāda Buddhist countries—Ceylon, Thailand, Burma, I think, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam. They had as big a convention, bringing them all together, the first time in maybe two thousand years. Always different groups in different countries, and Orders of Buddhism in the South East Asian tradition. And they called a meeting in Burma.

And a lot of countries didn't want to send representatives to this meeting unless the Burmese could prove that they had someone—a monk in their country—who had memorized the en-

tire Buddhist Canon. And until they could prove that they really had that, it didn't make any sense to show up. The value of memorization was so high, and the Buddhist canon is, you know, is huge, and some of the most respected monks in Burma to this day are those who have memorized the whole canon. You can go to Burma, meet a couple of these still alive people, and use telling you. Now, what about the age? Nasano is encyclopedic memory, photographic memory.

I guess some remember it all. But even for people who have very poor memorization, Adele, it's a faculty that developed the strength and earth that I memorized. And one of the reasons important for mindfulness students is that the faculty to memorize something is very closely connected to the faculty to be mindful in the present moment. I'd have to keep something in mind, whether it's, you know, some texts that you can memorize, or to keep the present moment in mind. It's almost a similar muscle to being used in the mind. And so the stronger your ability to memorize something, the stronger your ability to stay present like the ample you do in meditation.

So it's considered that an aid to developing a meditative mind, the strength of memorization. The other definition of mindfulness is that it's not floating away. So the mind, when it's paying attention to something, is not liable just to float away casually or, you know, against your will. The mind will stay rooted in what you want to pay attention to. You focus, keep in mind what you want to keep focused on. The opposite of mindfulness in the tradition is a word that's usually translated into English as heedlessness, a negligence.

But a mind which is not heedful enough, negligent, not vigilant about what's going on in the present moment—a mind which is negligent or heedless is one that is going to make a lot of mistakes, or ethical mistakes and other kinds of mistakes. Not heedful for your speech, then you might say something you may regret. So mindfulness has its capacity, then, of having enough presence of mind to be tracking what's happening in the present moment to help us with our ethical decisions in a like the choices we make. The most common, I believe, the most common reason or justification given in the West for practicing mindfulness is that a mindfulness practice puts us in the present moment, and the present moment is a wonderful place to live. Indeed, a lot of the wonderful things in life that we can experience, only can we experience more in the present. Or experience them out of the joy, a lot of love and friendship, sadly, peace, a lot of things we tend to value a lot.

Give me in the present. You experience them, and you increase in that day your opportunity to have those wonderful qualities. The more you are in the present moment, the less you're

in the present moment, the less of a thing out joy and friendship and love and peace. And these wonderful qualities have a chance to be present for you. So you increase the possibility of wonderful things happening in the present moment. If nothing else, we increase the value of living in a much more direct way, since a directness in our experience or a liveness in our experience that we really feel and touch and sense and live very direct in a medium way.

And it's very easy to kind of think we're that way, or be busy with life, and running along, and thinking everything is fine, and then something happens we realize, actually, for us, our life is not so pleasant, so vivid. We're distracted a lot, but preoccupied a lot. We're not really noticing what's going on around us. When I was in Japan, after being in the monastery or in the monastery, then I was in the monastery and a Zen monastery, and I would ask some of the monks there, why they became Zen monks. And there was one monk who had been—once he'd grown up, he can drop out. Kippy Conagai hadn't gone and lived on a farm for seven years, a natural kind of organic farm in Japan.

And he said, "After living there for seven years, I woke up one morning and looked around, and I realized that I didn't know the trees were green, and that's why I decided to go to the Zen monastery so I could realize the trees were green." Now, you know, of course he knew the trees were green, but I think what he was saying there was he was not really present. He couldn't. He was so preoccupied or caught in his world or attachments and everything that he couldn't really see clearly something as simple as the nature of the trees, than really be close and intimate with it or really here for. So he entered the Zen monastery in order to have that kind of presence and immediacy in his experience, so that greater sense of aliveness and directness comes from being present. Some people find it as.

Some people find it deeply satisfying to really sense and feel our life as it actually is, as opposed to experiencing life through our concepts or distractions or a virtual reality among paste create. Some people would rather not be present, because the life as this directory lives also has suffering, this part of it, and so we'd rather not then notice our suffering out of suffering. But part of the value of developing mindfulness at the present moment, his mindfulness, is also quite human. The directness and immediacy of opening up and experiencing things as they are—to see things truthfully, as many traditions point—is a very healing phenomenon. It helps the mind a lot. That helps our society later into personal relationships a lot if we begin entering it every honest and direct way as is actually being lived in the moment.

The analogy that I used when I gave his talk before, which no one told me was a good analogy.

But I'll take my chances again of, you know, someone who lives the whole of a board into a house and never leaves. And they have a great big television screen, monolithic, a fifty-four inch elegance, green flat screen up against the wall, living room television in every room of the bathroom and the kitchen, everywhere, right? And so they have cable. And so they grow up in this house, and windows or blinds are closed. They know anything about the outside world, but the world inside is pretty vivid and varied and pretty entertaining.

And if you get bored with one channel, you turn to another channel, and six hundred channels and cable, I've told. So, you know, it's great variety. How can anybody ever get bored? And it's really great. The person has a great life watching television, and then at some point the electricity goes out, and the person kind of wonders about this kind of piece of wood there with a knob on it, and so turns the knob, and his door opens up, and the person goes out. The person recognizes a little bit, you know, what's out there, because it's seen those kinds of things on television, trees and flowers and roads and all that.

But the person goes out into the street, and suddenly it's a three-dimensional world that the person wasn't aware of before that. And there's the wind and sounds and all the smells and all the stuff. That becomes much more alive and vivid. And there are times when people do mindfulness practice that the world suddenly can open up in almost the same way. Well, I didn't realize that I was living in a truncated awareness, or not so fully present for the richness of this life as it's being lived. I've been in situations where I've seen a candy wrapper on the ground and just been in awe.

It's been the most beautiful thing in the world. Look at it, silver glittering. This is great. Maybe that sounds like a silly justification to be mindful, but the way the kind of the world kind of opens up and can glitter when we can, to develop a capacity to keep the present moment in mind, really be present, and not to have the filters of our fears and preoccupations, our ambitions, in the way of truly seeing. Another definition that tradition gives for mindfulness, again, a negative definition, is its non-superficiality. It's a mind which is not superficial about our experience, but actually has some depth of penetration.

Depth of our experience actually is. And also defines it as non-obliviousness, not being oblivious. That lets one know. Another way of kind of angle, looking at mindfulness a little bit, is to understand how mindfulness functions together with other faculties that we have in our minds. And there are, so that there's a list in Buddhism called the Five Faculties, five capacities we all have. It's not something that's strange or mystical, just things we have.

And these mindfulness works with each of these other four. Mindfulness is one of the five. So

mindfulness works with the other four. It works with what's often called faith, which maybe seems a little bit odd to call that a faculty. I like the word confidence, and confidence certainly is a faculty we all have. And the presence of confidence makes a big difference in our lives, and the absence of it also.

And as a kind of a source of confidence or faith connected with a confidence in faith, mindfulness is understood to be a refuge. It's a place where Buddhists take refuge. Taking refuge is one of a very strong expression of faith in Buddhism or confidence. It's where we go for protection, where we go for safety, where we go on for a sense of a deep truth and value, a deepest kind of values of spiritual life. It's what we go to refuge in. And mindfulness is understood as a place of refuge.

It's not something that's abstract or dry or empty. But for Buddhists, it's a place that's understood to be very rich, kind of life. Maybe how someone deeply, you know, I apologize for example, but as a really deep faith is a Catholic, and they go into a Catholic cathedral, they feel at home. Yes, this is great, but up here, I feel comfortable here. This is a sense of sacredness that I have. Or a Buddhist, you know, going to Buddhist temple or something.

The sense of mindfulness has that power over people who have a sense of it, that it's a refuge, a place of coming home, is a sacred kind of abode, that, Oh, yes, here I am. This is a place of sacredness, of safety, of connection, that which is most holy or most valuable for me. So mindfulness objected to faith has a very deep meaning as a faculty of mind. Partly objected to faith or confidence is when mindfulness is connected with having the big picture of what is possible, a big context for mindfulness itself. Then if we really understand how mindfulness functions to lead towards liberation, to lead a deepening of love or compassion, to lead to spiritual development, then the sense of confidence and joy. Perhaps with a practice of mindfulness itself, it's not just something coming down, not something just dry, but something inspiring mindfulness.

The other faculty that's connected to is effort, and effort or engagement or applying oneself. Then our effort is something that can wane and wax. We can have really good effort when we're awake and energized, and not so good effort if we're tired. We can develop our capacity for effort, and we can have greater and greater capacity for effort if we build ourselves up, if we cannot exercise ourselves, just like if we go running. The first, you know, days or weeks of doing exercise, a regime of—we don't go very far. The effort is not there in the right way.

But as we keep doing it, we develop more, condition ourselves, and more effort is there. When mindfulness is connected to effort, it's a—we bring. We do something in relationship to

being. Mindfulness puts us in the present moment, and then intent gives us a choice of how we respond to what's happening in the present moment, and so we have to apply effort then in exercising that choice. So for example, if someone gets angry with you, there's a variety of choices you have how to respond to that person. You could, for example, punch the person out.

Generally, when people do that, there isn't much presence of mind involved before punching the person out. If there's a presence of mind—I'm angry and frustrated, this person being angry with me, and you're aware, quite aware of your reaction and your feelings—there can be some space in the mind around that so it doesn't become reactive immediately. And then we can apply effort to leave alone. I reacted. I am not going to act on that impulse in my arm. Or we can make effort and say, "Oh, maybe there's a better way of responding to this person if I can ask the person, Why are you angry?"

And to reply, there's a kind of effort that's applied together, that comes out of being mindful of the present moment. The idea of effort here is connected to the idea that the mind is made up of many different impulses, made up in thoughts and feelings, and you can't have much control or to a great extent over what you think and what goes up. Perhaps happens in the mind. Things pop up in the mind. The mind just—how it produces thoughts and ideas and intentions and feelings and all kinds of memories. And to some extent, things just appear, and it doesn't really help much to be critical of that, or attack it, or feel, judge yourself negatively because you have some terrible thought that pops up.

The idea of mindfulness is to be very accepting, spacious, very open and allowing for what's in the mind and not feeling its control. What appears in the mind, however, in that the mind has many different impulses, the mind is understood, can feel like a torporous board. Well, you have all these very opinionated board members, and the chair of the board cannot control what the next board person's going to say, "I think we should address this matter," and they stand up and say what they want to say. However, the chair of the board has a veto power, so nothing gets decided over the veto of the chair, so they can have all kinds of crazy ideas with the board. But unless the chair really feels in favor of it, it's not going to happen. So the same thing in the mind.

In a sense, we're the chair of the mind, and we don't have control of what the mind does, what pops up in the moment, but we have the power over it. Whether we act on, we have the power where we engage in, indulge in it, further. So some fantasy arises, and we don't control fantasy rising. But at some point, if you have presence of mind, what's going on? You

have some choice. Whether you chase that path, whether you follow it, involve me, or do you say, “No, thank you,” just cannot let it be there and let it go?

The incense. So effort is minimal—means the effort to let go or to say, “No, not now.” So we can stay mindful. We can stay at present and not caught up in what the experience is. If we don’t understand the role of effort in meditation practice, then in a sense we give up our responsibility for our lives. And a very keen aspect of good spirituality is taking responsibility for our reactions, feelings, what we act, not a feeling.

Take responsibility for what the mind picks up and holds on to, and then what we act on without taking, not understanding where our responsibility is. There is no Buddhist spirituality, and taking responsibility requires effort. So mindfulness and effort are very hard. Keep partners together. Mindfulness that in this regard that’s able to track and see what’s going on, and had the detail power, and cannot leave things alone, be left alone. I like to associate what’s called grandmotherly love, grandmotherly mind, that it’s the mind that kind of a grandmother who can love children, is equally around the grandchildren, but doesn’t necessarily knows how to say no, and knows how to say yes, knows how to not stay balanced and not caught in the drama what the grandchildren all are about.

But it is a kind of loving mind. It is said that a person who is mindful has enough presence of mind to be in control, enough to respond wisely to what has happened, that somehow, in relationship to being mindful, if you are mindful what’s happening in the present moment, you have let—you have some control over responding wisely, the choice and ability to do that. One of the paradoxes is people will say, “I’ve done this in my own sitting. Then my mind wanders away and gets distracted. I notice it and I’ll say to myself, Why I can’t do this, monks? This is terrible, a terrible bunflooding omen of that.”

And the paradox is that in order to have noticed the mind wandered away, I had to be mindful at that moment, the moment that I had enough presence of mind to criticize my ability. Be mindful. I had enough mindfulness. I might not have had it two seconds ago, five seconds ago, but in the moment I was criticizing myself, I had it. Then you get the paradox, this kind of like my whole thing. You know, someone sitting very quietly, mindfully serene in meditation, and quiet, a little whisper in the back of the mind that says the mind’s not thinking like that, and you believe it.

So if there’s enough presence of mind to criticize your mindfulness practice, it’s a paradox, a joke, you know. There’s no need to criticize it any more. The analogy here, kind of this mindfulness, this kind of point of tracking what’s going on and responding wisely, is that of

a gatekeeper. In the ancient world, they have fortified, walled cities, and to be a gatekeeper at the gate. And the gatekeeper's job was to watch everyone who came in and out of the city, and deciding who to let in and who to let out, who not to let in, whom not to let out. And so a mind one has a capacity to be at the gates of the mind, in a sense, and watch, you know, "Oh, here comes an impulse. That's an interesting impulse. It's very kind and nice. I think I'll let that one out."

"Oh, here comes an impulse to be hateful. I think that, you know. Don't you think we can leave that back in the city at A?" So the mind has its ability to track and to watch and make choices when it has its presence of mind supply effort. The next faculty is that of concentration. And concentration is a very important faculty to connect with mindfulness because it gives a continuity to the mind.

We must practice when the mind has developed its capacity to be concentrated that it's more likely to stay mindful over minutes. In over time, when there's very little strength of concentration, trend focus. You might drop into being mindful, or arouse mindfulness for a moment, and then after a while the mind wanders away. It floats away. But when the mind is concentrated, the analogy—it's like the mind is uprooted in the present moment, stable inside. The ancient analogy is that of a twenty-foot post.

That's half of it, ten feet of it is buried in the ground, and so it's really stable, and can't really push it over at all. When the mind is concentrated and then it has strength, stability, we can't push it around, and the mindfulness is much more likely then to stay in the present moment. The last faculty is that of wisdom or discernment. The Buddha, and we read the teachings of the Buddha, he didn't really teach what are sometimes called in the West choiceless awareness. He didn't really very often teach just being mindful of things rising and passing discreetly. But he often talked about that certain things are more useful to pay attention to than other things, that you can make some choice of where you put the mind, where you put your attention, so that in there are things which are useful or wise to pay attention to, and other things which are maybe not so useful or sometimes counterproductive to pay attention to.

So our capacity to keep things in mind also can be used in choosing where—what we keep in mind, not just simply being present in the present moment in and of itself. But given that we're present, some things are more useful than other things to pay attention to. So, for example, I find it very useful to pay attention to my body, and so I spend a lot of time in my day coming back to my body, checking in with my body, and experiencing the world around

me through my body, being in body. And it's something that's kind of almost a second habit now for me. That's that I come back into my body, and through my body, I find that my life is a lot easier and wiser if I'm aware what goes on in my body. I often check in with my breath.

What's going on with my breathing? I'm just—nice to be there. Can help the present moment. But the breath gives me a lot of information of what's going on. When I get tense about something, I can feel that my breathing sometimes the first time. And so it teaches me what's going on, how to be more wisely in the present moment.

One of the very important qualities that I've learned to pay attention to through practice is the quality of the mind or the heart, or whether it's a clinging to something or not, in whether it's stuff or not stuff. And there's a sense in the mind when the mind is free or open or loose: Oh, that's very different in the sense of the mind when it's contracted or constricted or held up or tight. And I find it very useful to track that what's going on, because I'd rather be free. And so I could just be aware of the sound of the birds and the sunsets and all those things, whatever is going on. But I find that actually having some choice, and some including some things more than other things helps me stay more present in a wiser way. And this is very much in line with what the Buddha thought.

Sometimes the Buddha emphasized certain things are very important to pay attention to. Sometimes it is to certain themes. So one of the forms of soulfulness is **maraṇasati**, mindfulness of death. And so it's said that's wise. At certain times in your life, actually think about death. Think about your death, about the meaning of death, or the nature of death.

Keep somehow the idea of death in mind, so that to help you live more wisely, to help you maybe clarify what your values are. Now, in many ways, that's considered a very wise thing. It makes you more morbid than the Buddha said. Don't do it. There's practice, but if it helps you become freer, then mindfulness of death can be very helpful. Another interesting mindfulness practice that the Buddha taught is mindfulness of the qualities of the Buddha himself or herself.

Then you actually spend some time being—keeping in mind our sense of the meaning, our sense of the qualities of the heart or the mind of the Buddha—are there is the freedom there, the love there, the compassion there, the peace that might be there. And that's considered, in tradition, a very helpful thing to do. It's inspiring to do that. Have a central connection to that. Partly, I feel, as we think about them, reflect on the qualities of the Buddha. Hopefully what it does, it helps us to understand these qualities in ourselves.

So it's a kind of mirror for what's inside of ourselves, in that way inspiring something beautiful within ourselves. So the function of wisdom is to help us understand what right mindfulness is, as opposed to wrong mindfulness. There is a distinction in tradition. Right mindfulness is one of the Eightfold Path. So where is use?

Q: Is it useful to pay attention to in our lives?

And along these lines, it's useful to remember what our highest potential is, useful to remember what's really possible in human life. We don't have to be in a skim along the surface of our life—we don't have kind of go along or with life. It is kind of a improve quality, lilly being, having less stress. But it's possible to cultivate some the deepest potential of peace, of love and compassion that's available in human hearts. And it's not an easy thing to do, and so requires a lot of mindfulness, presence of mind, and a lot of remembering that it's really possible and valuable to do that, so that we begin changing, making different choices about how we live our lives. Without keeping in mind—when we remember being reminded of our highest potential, it's all too easy if you cannot get caught up in the superficial aspects of life.

And if we can always keep in mind of what's important, then we make wiser choices, which stay in touch with what's important. It's said the Buddha said in a number of places that the proximate cause for liberation is hearing the Dharma, hearing the teaching. And I think it's maybe nowadays he would say, you be also reading about it now. But then that didn't read—I have books said the Dharma, but somehow hearing about the Dharma, hearing about spiritual teachings on a regular basis, keeps those teachings in mind. You know that we begin acting in ways that are harmony. It's as values.

So mindfulness is much more than stress reduction or even a psycho—some kind of psychological feeling. It can lead us to the deepest levels of inner purification and inner transformation in freedom, partly because it's the nature of mindfulness itself, in its purity, to be a state of freedom. And I leave you with the little question for you. It is an exercise for you as you go about this week, got to pay attention to your ability to pay attention. Notice your quality of mindfulness. Notice when you really sharp and strong.

When you really feel a strong sense of presence when there's, notice when it's not so strong. Notice when it's kind of absent. And when it—notice when it's really strong, see if there's some quality of peace or freedom or tenderness and beauty in that presence of mind. Even of itself are the reason why mindfulness has such great transformative power in us is that mindfulness itself has those qualities in itself.

Clarine: So the more you develop that mindfulness, more noble qualities of freedom become yours to keep in mind. So I hope that was clear enough, and I apologise for not keeping in mind.

I pose you a short talk, but perhaps we can take a few minutes as we can exercise the mind. And if you have any questions on, ask. Not pass those mics around somewhere on the stage here. People in turn it on. And how does consciousness fit into this? Well, consciousness is another thing that I don't know what it is.

And what do I think it is about how mindfulness and consciousness intersect, and consciousness is—and I think when we're awake we're conscious ends. I don't know what you think about dreaming, whether that's consciousness or not. I think that's different in mindfulness. But a crazy person is conscious also, right? Crazy person put breath. What does the Buddha say about consciousness?

It's a little bit hard, you admit. You know, maybe it could be really easy, but maybe I know too much or read too much, you know, inside my mind's been soiled. But now there that we have the English word consciousness, and we assume that that's a valid concept, valid points to something very particular. We all have it. It's pretty clear, and that there should be an obvious translation into Indian Buddhist language. What consciousness is.

But it turns out there isn't. And it's kind of like the human experience. We think all human, whole human being and human experience as being a pie. Different cultures divide up the pie differently. But everybody is human in the same way, perhaps. But then that they divide up the pie, and come to the language in the description.

It's just like, you know, there's the English metric, the English measuring system, and the metric measuring system, and it's the same distance we measure, but whether a kilometer or mile now, of the noise of riding up the pie, right distance. So we have the word consciousness in English, and we all think we know what it is, but then you go to take a class, and Conscious of Stanford you realize if we different definitions, get to ask what the definition is, and we try to find a good quarrel with it, with the Buddhist, with the Buddha had to teach, you find it gets hard and harder to do that. So it's a little bit not so, but it seems like consciousness should be really obvious thing. Everybody knows what the conscience is. But it's like trying to touch your own elbow. You know, I can't call you. You know, you have an elbow that we can't quite touch it. Know what it is. That's my. That said Phil again is not helpful.

But I said you try again. Maybe you won't answer the question. Yes, just having a thought.

Maybe mindfulness is a quality of consciousness, that there are a lot of different qualities to being conscious, and mindfulness is one. Could they? That's nice. Certainly mindfulness is a quality or aspect of the mind, and there are many different aspects of the mind.

One distinction that maybe it can be made is that mindfulness tends to be something that's more active, and sometimes it has an element of choice as part of it. Whereas awareness or alertness can be something that you cannot carry with you for mindfulness, and kickstart alertness and awareness, and that once something you can let go of, mindfulness must be very alert and aware. But mindfulness has a kind of more active quality than awareness. And so some people talk about resting in awareness, or because respiration awareness is not the doing. What is the nature of the mind to be aware and so mindfulness? But different than then, you know?

So mindfulness has a quality: clearly recognize and clearly knowing what is going on in the present moment. There is a kind of quality of knowing in mindfulness awareness that might not be the same kind of clear, precise recognition of what's happening. And some people have a sense, a very clear sense that awareness is something that's separate from what is known. And so Buddhists sometimes talk, but resting in awareness, very peaceful and very nice a thing to do. But is awareness the same thing as consciousness, and people in English would like to say to the same thing. And with any kind of, any kind of situation that you have something that's undesirable or bothering you, is rather than trying to get rid of it, is to understand it first.

So use your mindfulness to understand judging, include to look at it very directly, to turn the mind close round. So in judging here, what's the nature of this judgment? What's it feel like in my body to be judging? What is it, what the emotions that are connected to it? What's the quality of the inner voice that's judging? And to really see it, and stop for it, and sometimes it's really helpful to talk to friends about it.

Now I have a lost judgment, you know. Sometimes just talking about someone else takes some time to sting away from it, that power, waking it. So that's one thing. Is to look at it very honestly and see what's going on? Another thing to do with judgment is to switch for mindfulness practice to love and kindness practice. And that part of yourself that's judgemental—it's probably a part that needs some kind of attention and love.

And so sometimes to bring love and kindness to that part, very helpful. The doctor: It is a question of consciousness. And I remember that I twitched that one sentence, and I said to own, "Well, you don't want to call it mindfulness, and want to call it awakeness of being

aware.” And I, too, recognize that mindfulness is my dry and an art. It has to be my fee. And awakeness gives me just much more space, and on and includes a mystery of my being, and not understanding who one I am and why it is.

So if you want to say something to this awakeness, there’s Monorrofsinas market I like is wakefulness, a wakefulness to be awake. You’d rather be mindful of our experience, to be awake to the experience. And the idea of being awake to our experience has a more quality of spaciousness, of allowance, of acceptance, of openness to it, of nothing. Do anything about it. And just let it be as it actually is to be awake to the draught, awake to this experience. And because sometimes mindfulness does have a quality of effort, or coarse, or a kind of different feeling for people, then it is useful to have and mindful.

So I just rediscover how to be awake to the experience. Rather than mindful to explore the not as nice as the last one in sleep, a place Ermaieantena making stuff like this one. I do excuse me. I’m thinking about the discussion consciousness, and wondering, you know, in I think it is a Pāli way, and how it’s translated often as consciousness. Ayana here is one consciousness, saññā is difficult to put on her is a clue. What’s your explains, is it, as you explain, is a stand or precise definition or a clear understanding of that one?

There is a word in that phrase, viññāṇa, dīnavijñāna, which is usually translated, very often translated to English, as consciousness. But the lay scholars who really study carefully what you know with the tradition, Pāli talks about this and what the meaning this word. I mostly point out that that’s a kind of sloppy translation. Something has a kind of particular meaning. And I like to point out that the word *viññāṇa* is made up of two parts. The vi-, if it means to divide, and ñāṇa means to know.

So it’s knowing which divides things. And so some people like to call it discriminating wisdom. But discrimination has a kind of bad connotation in English, though. Then, as one scholar, I like the word discernment. I could have the kind meaning discernment of seeing karma divided, knowing clearly, know the distinction between things. So it’s said that saññā is a kind of knowing which lumps things together, understands how things are.

I look at you, I can see you’re a woman. So I lump you together with all other women. But my discriminating wisdom is that which separates me. I see you, as you know, some of wearing glasses. I can tell a distinction between you wearing a different color and the woman next to you if I close. So making distinctions and as a function of the *viññāṇa*.

I wish to see how things are separate from everything else, to make distinctions from the big

buzzing confusion of sensations that go on, I suppose, to understand them. The commonality of categorizations. So that's kind of a technical definition. Once kind of in people's minds, can getting confused, cheating arises. And some people, some people won't translate *viññāṇa* as knowing and it has a quality of knowing something. So it's knowingness to that other part of the mind that knows.

And that's not quite that in accord either. But the English word consciousness is so vague in what we mean by, you can say popularly, locally, not—I'm conscious of this paper. I'm conscious that we are running late, you know. It needs care to know it. But conscious is a wide open up all other range of meaning of what it might mean. So to translate a Pāli word in the English art consciousness then lends itself to a lot of sloppiness.

So *viññāṇa* is to translate his concepts often, but it might not be merely accurate to Suyoamtrunkba translate it. Discriminating Wisdom A dam. Some one has said he translated his discernment, I think, to horse fish, sometimes translated as non. So is so, I said, in five aggregates and so on, that discriminating stone is impermanent and suffering and not so. Thank you. So you enjoy your mindfulness, and I hope this is—it'll mina kept thought for it anyway. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.