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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Traditionally, in Buddhism, there's the idea of a path, a Marga, or a mug and Polly, and there are various depictions or descriptions of what the Buddhist path is like. And some of them are a little bit more technical in description is similar with maybe more poetic or. And one of the famous ones is the 10 Ox reading picture pictures in Zen. And in Tibetan Buddhism, they have a rather Oxfam's idea of the elephant in this picture of an elephant, and various stages of not the whole Buddhist path, the stages of the metaphor of what happens in meditation. And there are many descriptions, and I'd like to offer you one, a new one today. And less and I don't want you to take it too seriously. Only seriously enough so that what's useful is useful for you. But not so seriously that you try to kind of shoehorn everything into this, this four stages of the path of meditation practice that I want to offer today. And, and so you won't take it too seriously. I'll tell you that. The example comes from my son's kindergarten. And so, it has to do with the way that the kids in kindergarten were taught to work, beeswax, and they've come to school in the morning and the beeswax would be quite cold to be given a little block of beeswax and, and the first thing they're taught to do is to hold the beeswax in their hand, both hands, hold it in their hands, and let the their own body heat. Slowly warm the beeswax up. And after I think sometimes the teacher would tell a story while they're just holding it. And after a while, the beeswax would get warm. enough that you could start working a little bit. And then the kids would start working it kind of with their fingers and the hands and kind of begin to stretch it and poke it and push it and kind of start working until it got softer and softer and softer. And then eventually, it becomes soft enough that they could shape it into something. And they'd make little sculptures out of their beeswax. And then when they finished making a sculpture, they'd put it on a shelf someplace and go off and run, play or do something else. So those are four stages. The first stage is warming it up. The second is softening it up. And the third is shaping it. And the fourth is

putting on the show.

Releasing it's in your hands. And when I find that often when I come to sit down in meditation, it's useful to, to see the first period of meditation As the warming up, kind of warming it up, and not to have a lot of big agendas or efforts of what you're going to do, I'm going to do in meditation to sit down, boom, okay, I'm going to enter into the fourth absorption just like that, you know, I'm going to sit here and enter the world of emptiness, you know, just cold, right? Zero to 60 in two seconds. It doesn't really work so well.

It's kind of like taking the beeswax, it's still hard, and trying to pound it into shape. And rather than getting something soft and pliable, that's you make something beautiful with it. It just shatters. So sometimes if you try to force the mind, force the heart into some meditative state, or some experience or some different state that it's at too quickly, it might just shatter. And I've known people who've done that to kind of had experiences kind of shattering the mind in some way because they push so hard in their meditation practice, when it wasn't appropriate. And I think it's often nice at the beginning of it, of practice, beginning of a, of a retreat, to sometimes have the first day of the retreat, beginning of meditation session, sometimes the first five minutes or some period of time, to have the idea that you're just showing up and keeping it warm, warming the mind warming the heart, and you're not really trying to do anything. And part of that is just kind of bringing yourself in its presence, and then holding with it with your experiences in a warm hearted way, warm handed way. And that could mean a variety of things. But one of the things that convenience, a certain degree of acceptance, that the first task of meditation is to start where we're at, and acknowledge where we're at, acknowledge what's going on, and then have a certain degree of acceptance of that. It doesn't mean you're condoning it or doesn't mean you're going to forever gonna let it just be there. But kind of some broad mindedness or open heartedness or some spaciousness or graciousness, generosity, for what what is there, okay. There's the Regardless of what it is, and in some sense, the more comfortable it is, maybe the more initially what it needs is that broad acceptance or a presence that just kind of feels is there for everyone, my son was quite young. They were, you know, it was like a baby. There were some times where he cried inconsolably. And we didn't, it couldn't figure out what it was, we tried all the various things to figure out what he needed. And, you know, some people say, he was colic or something, but we, we tried to help him. And, and, and the only thing that, you know, seemed to make any sense was to hold him and we'd hold him and he'd cry and cry. And then very, very slowly, he would relax and relax and relax, and then eventually, he'd be okay and go to sleep. But you know, that the task of the parent, there was just a whole childhood acceptances. And I wasn't going to give them a lecture about how you go. You should You know, whatever. And so to hold something to hold yourself. And part of this idea of holding yourself with warm hands is, is at the beginning, especially the beginning of meditation, but maybe for a long time, in efficient practice, it's best not to have the idea that you're supposed to do a good job. The trap of being a good meditator is a really big trap. And, and to have a really high standard of how you're going to measure your meditation is a big track also. And rather, the idea of good enough is good enough is really important for meditation. You don't have to, you don't have to be 100% in order to get the benefits of meditation. And the analogy for this is, if you want to drain your bathtub, it doesn't matter if you pull the plug all the way out. Did rain or you crack it little bit. The eventually the water was right now either way, it'll take longer if it just cracked, but eventually it would rain. And so in same thing meditation, you don't have to kind of have this, you know, dynamic Dynamo kind of meditation, it's going to empty that mind as quickly as possible. But rather, if you just show up and do the best, you can sometimes be a little bit sloppy and meditation actually is better than being tight and trying to do a perfect job. So be kind of generous about yourself and, and not be so concerned about how well you're doing. being concerned, too concerned, but how well you're doing is kind of like but examples often given is that the farmer going out in our field and seeing want to see how the corn is growing. It's really going well, and so she pulls a seedling out of the ground to look at it. Oh yeah, it's going really well. And, but then you can't plan it back in again. So to be too concerned about how well you were doing and meditation and measuring all the time, doesn't, it's not really that helpful. So there's initial phase of kind of holding it in our warm hands. And then my suggestion is that that means many different things,

depending on what's needed. Sometimes the warm hands is the warm hands of compassion, just having compassion for what it is. Sometimes the warm hands are the warm hands of forgiveness, being forgiving for what is forgiveness for what is a forgiving for how difficult it is for foibles. Sometimes, it's doing loving kindness, practice, uphold, offering kindness to what's here. And that's just kind of what's holding it in warm hands. But somehow, the psyche to offer some something to the to the psyche, to the inner life to the heart, the mind, that helps to soften relax In warm up, and sometimes the way we relate to ourselves and be so self critical, and so in various ways, that it just keeps it kind of the mind brittle and tight. It's kind of defensive and upset and afraid to creative its own. Sometimes we can be afraid of our own inner critic because it is so unkind so difficult to find some way to drop the inner critic or the inner self criticism and begin kind of letting some kind of falling happen of the tight mind the hard mind the brittle mind, the fragile mind that often exists. And to some degree, this is very important because for people who live compulsive lives, obsessive lives, which in the Buddhist analysis is most people. If it isn't, you know obsessive compulsive about certain things. It's certainly about our thoughts. But you always kind of thing kind of chasing after thoughts chasing after plans chasing after doing doing things, or always living in a world of resistance and fear, feelings, threats everywhere, whatever it might be. That that activity of the mind does make them my heart and kind of tight. And so we need to find some way to be in softening. And to try to force it to be soft. It's just going to shatter it. So very broad. So you find sometimes in the positive circles, emphasis on mindfulness. Mindfulness being this very broad, accepting presence that just holds what is there doesn't try to get rid of anything, but just allows everything to be as it is, and just holds it in awareness. Now, this part of the practice of holding with one hands, is often a time of tremendous learning for people. Because one of the things we learned is we can Try to do that is how difficult it is even just to hold our experience with some kindness or some warmth or some just kind of acceptance right now, it can be so much a lack of acceptance going on your mind. Thank you. It's nice, nice, nice to have little songs. It's better than the old one with a ring. So some. So often a lot of learning goes on. And we learn about the activity that might be learning about how difficult it is to stay present in a kind way, accepting way or forgiving way. And that that's a very important part of stage of the practices, learn about all this activity of the mind. All the work makes it difficult for us to stay present in a kind way and be present. And so those very difficulties or the maybe the very things that need our wants and our kindness in this initial stage, the very things that make it difficult for us to be present represent the very things that need to be offered love, compassion, presence, mindfulness to be seen there. So again, that which makes it difficult to be present should not be pushed away or criticized or considered to be unfortunate. They might be the very things that need to be included into. So we can kind of soften these relax the mind. But sooner or later the mind begins to relax or to warm up sooner or later. And so at that point, it makes sense to start talking about working the mind. And, and so working the mind has been softening and massaging it so you can kind of stretch it and make it softer. You can. If you only hold it warm in your hands, then it's only so far you might be two people who are satisfied With just keep, you know, they have the beeswax and warming up in their hands. After a while It feels really nice. It's a nice texture, a little bit of a smooth surface nice and warm. And some people are content with that that's good enough. And so they Okay, hold up in your head for a while. So some people meditation practice, at this initial stage of just acceptance and warmth and holding it there. Some people get content with that because it feels nice comes to place, which feels kind of good. And, but there's more more that can be done and the mind can be worked, the mind can be developed, the mind can be stretched and softened even further. And so one of the ways that we can just soften the mind further is to begin massaging it and working it. And

so concentration practice is one of those ways. We're having some time we're disciplined about trying to keep the mind in the present moment. And so kind of pushing that a little bit the edge of your ability to stay present and hold the mind in the present moment. Hold the mind on the breath or Whatever the object of the concentration is. Now, as we're trying to develop concentration in the present moment, I think the idea of needing the beeswax is a very good analogy. Because you don't just take the beeswax and just hold it and expect it to get soft, you kind of work it, you pull, push down on it, and you release, you push down and release. So the same thing with a mind is that you don't just hold the mind concentrated, there it is, there's the breath and, you know, hold it there. And that's often kind of the unconscious idea that people have, okay, so just be concentrated and didn't work. Didn't work. But rather than having some kind of idea that you're supposed to be perfect at doing the concentration thing, the concentration the Navy, it's good to see it as, as it's a process of beginning to need the mind massaging the mind. And, and, and what will happen is that you'll apply your mind your attention to the object concentration and sooner or later Your mind will wander off. That wandering off can be seen as part of the rhythm of meeting of massaging the mind. So when it wanders off, it just it's a part of the phase of that rhythm that cycle and needs to happen almost almost. I don't know if you know, it's nice policy not to use it, but almost needs to happen, the mind needs to wander off as you're developing concentration. Because you need that rhythm of the mind. So rather than being upset with the mind wanders off, take, oh, the pendulum has swung. Now they're really not aware that that part of the cycle right now, with the mind wanders off. As soon as you notice that your job is to come back. onto the breath again, is to be focused again. But to do have a sense of it's a rhythm that you're playing with you're working with, as opposed to something to be reactive to upset about and not something to jerk your mind back from when the mind wanders off into the way from the breath. Some people get upset, they get kind of hard again. And some people kind of pounce back at the breath, they jerk their mind around, come back here. But think of it as a rhythm, going to mind goes off. And then with a gentle way you can kind of let the pendulum the rhythm kind of come back, kind of like the waves and the shore. Now I'm going to go back on the breath. So you don't stay with the breath. And then we stay on the breath, try to stay there the best we can kind of pushing the limit of how long we can stay there, rest there, how long we can rest there, videos to rest on the breath. That's when the rest of the object of attention and then sooner or later, the mind will wander off again, and then let the rhythm come back. Now part of why this is a useful idea, I think is that in order to develop concentration, which is a very important part of Buddhist practice, it's not done so much by an act of will. Active will, can can very often lead to making the mind tight again, hard again, make it cold again. It's rather best to see the concentration requires two elements, it requires resting the mind on the object of concentration. So rather fixating the mind. It's resting the mind on the object of concentration, and then letting go of everything that prevents you from staying there. And letting go is injected, in contrast to holding everything else at bay with letting go so resting and then letting go letting go supposed to be softening, relaxing. So that kind of, so when the mind does wander off, it's important to let go of that. So you can come back to your object concentration, but you let go of it with softly gently, kind of like like go into softness, and kind of, kind of let it swing back gently. So you begin to the idea of you working the mind. The mind is not a fixed thing. It's a it's quite malleable. It can be quite malleable once it gets soft, and we're trying to soften it even more. Saw a description of a concentrated mind in Buddhism is one that's soft, pliable, malleable and workable. Great, you realize your mind Exactly. So try to stay in the present moment, coming back to the present moment, trying to get concentrated or being focused in what we're doing can be seen as a part of the practice to begin to soften the mind much further than you can get if

you're just keeping it warm. So stretching the mind developing it, and, and that takes time. It takes a sense of rhythm and a lot of patience a lot except it's kind of working it working it. Sometimes it takes a long time to do it. Sometimes it can go quicker, depending on how things are I guess or whatever. But, you know, that's part of the stage of practice. Sometimes, you know, there you can see the difference in my getting saw After more concentrated in one sitting, sometimes it's over several months of sitting every day you can start seeing some change. Sometimes in retreat, you see it after a few days, perhaps after a few retreats, it varies and person to person, there's no one right way of doing it. Now, this effort of softening the mind, relaxing the mind also has its challenges. And that is that as the mind gets softer and softer as the heart gets softer, there are various places in the in the heart in the mind that are kind of crusted over and sometimes as it gets softer, some of the crusts break off and then they kind of travel through the you know, the mental circulatory system. And stroke Yeah, you get you get a spiritual stroke. dangerous, so dangerous. You know what the rumba said after He got his stroke. He said, I've been struck by God. And so sometimes things get dislodged that process of softening. And so sometimes it's a bit of a surprise at old memories come back, or you realize old and you know, animosities or fears or different kind of things kind of that we often haven't seen for a long time haven't really addressed will bubble up and show itself. And sometimes it's a big surprise because practice is going well, versus feeling getting concentrated feeling quite open to 95 good feelings, and then they feel like they're kind of sometimes sideswiped by, Where'd that come from? You know, I was doing just fine suddenly. You know, the next sitting the next day I sat down to sit and suddenly there's this big issue that's come up. And a big things come up and I must be going backwards in my meditation practice. How can this be and When things get dislodged, we're not going backwards, just with the purification processes going on, we can purify. So this the stage of concentrating the mind, working the mind is often called the purification stage. And there's often a lot of stuff that needs to be purified. And in the body, and the heart and the mind. And so, at any one of these stages, sometimes it's useful to go back to the first stage, something gets dislodged. Oh, maybe it's time to go back and just hold what's been dislodged in the warm hands with acceptance. Maybe that's what's needed. Now in this hard little crust disappeared. That hard crust needs to be softened. So we need to practice forgiveness, loving kindness, compassion, except we're just holding it. And if you kind of think you're supposed to kind of stay with concentration practice when something's been dislodged. You're asking for trouble. You have to go back to stage one, like monopoly Not like the bad example. bad example. And so then at some point, this process, the mind gets really soft, and pliable, workable. At that point, you can actually begin shaping the mind. And this is where the mind can you can actually doing things with the mind. You can't, you know, can't do with the mind is hard and brittle. And so one of the things you start doing with the mind, for example, there's a variety of things you can do, but you all of them have to do with deepening the practice even further. One of the things to do is to start entering into deeper states of concentration. And one of the ways that this is done is at this particular point to practice when the mind is soft and warm and really workable. The mind has access to a lot of sensitive A lot of happiness, a lot of joy, a lot of sense of well being. And so then to allow that well being that arises from a soft mind to begin pulling you into the world of greater well being greater joy, greater happiness, and to such a way that that you get absorbed, the mind gets absorbed in this, this process of tremendous well being. And it's a lot easier to for the mind gives like reading a really good novel. It's really great book you really love it. If you were the good, you get absorbed in it, you forget everything else time stops, the outside world stops someone calls your name you only hear it You're so absorbed. At some point in meditation when this feeling of well being is so powerful, that you get so involved in it that you can absorb like

reading a good book. The advantage of this is not because we want to indulge in joy and happiness is that it helps the mind becomes still it still helps Mind become more and more quiet, more still, and being quiet and still is not important in and of itself. But quiet and stillness allows us to see more deeply. What if What is and that's kind of the question but in Buddhist practice still to see as deeply or clearly as you can the depths of the mind the depth of experience and depth of life. And that's still mine is one of the ones that can see the best. And so just happens to be that part of the process of stilling mind goes through a period of tremendous sense of meditative well being of joy. Isn't that good news. As as a person can see more clearly and more deeply as the mind gets Still and quieter. Very soft, very open. Very still mine then We shape it into something quite beautiful. And then at some point, when it's shaped beautifully, when the mind is relaxed when the mind is still enough, it has very little attachment, very little clinging in the mind, which is a big order because a tall order because the normal human mind, the way it's almost like the way it's structured is to be structured a certain degree of clinging, or Velcro in it. And so to begin having the mind still enough to let go of our clinging to the mind, not clinging to anything, not clinging to any sense of self self identity, not clinging to pleasure, not clinging to security, not clinging to pleasure. There's a lot of us letting go of all kinds of clinging, clinging, letting go the clinging to know, letting go there clinging to the right, letting go to clinging for success, failure and all kinds of clinging Get let go of the mind. And as we let go of this clinging, the mind gets softer and softer. And then, in the kindergarten example working with beeswax, the kids eventually mixing beautiful they put it up on the shelf, they release their object. At some point. The mind we release the mind the mind releases itself. And to have the mind release itself is the experience of Nirvana or Nirvana or liberation in Buddhism. When the mind can release itself, there's no more you don't even mind doesn't even hold to itself. So it's kind of the final or ultimate level of letting go. It's hard to let go that ultimate level just cold you sit down when you're cold. But this whole process of working the mind working ourselves, and eventually we release it, and then release it when the mind is released. The mind in a sense, it's difficult to describe that experience, but to have in mind which is localized have an awareness which is on localized and directed on unbounded unlimited data mind which is just quickly open, so open that it doesn't even see itself. So I offered four different stages and each of those stages is great and, and to think that the stage you're at is not great they're not the best is probably a symptom of the mind getting cold Against getting hard. But to, but to be contented happy with the stage you're at is a symptom in mind getting warmer and softer. So wherever you're at, whether it's the first sitting, the first, you know, tremendous turmoil and difficulty, you sit down to meditate, and you need a lot of broad acceptance or that broad container compassion, or whether the mind is pristine and quiet, just boundless. It's all great. It's all the practices great. The practice a meeting that is great, and to have confidence in one's practice. And one has a practice that you can engage your life wherever it's at. can offer a lot of hope, a lot of confidence, a lot of encouragement and can lead to sense Oh, yeah, it's all good. Wherever. And I think for most people that The spiritual path is spirals, this goes back and forth. There's a rhythm to it. There's times when the rhythm swings around. And we have to sit with tremendous difficulties. brittleness and hardness. At times when the pendulum swings, we sit with great freedom and openness. And to be very, very relaxed about the rhythm of that, just like I talked about the rhythm of working the mind to get concentrated. So I think there's a large rhythms that lasts over days and weeks and months and years. And to realize that actually, part of the art of spiritual life is to be able to work, the various rhythms and things kind of swing a little bit back and forth. And you're working to connect the two. There's you're working at the micro level, and you work with the rhythms in macro level. And over time, things will get warmer and warmer. in that kind of way, when we talk about

something, the warm hearted that kind of wants so much for kindergarten. So what do you think of that you have any questions or comments about that analogy or that kind of teaching?

I have a question about this, putting the finger on a mantle and then your son goes home and the next day you start working with clay again. Is that what happens in practice to

Oh, in the kindergarten, I guess I don't know what happens when they finished making something sometimes they bring them home. And we used to have things on our shelf at home. And I don't know what happens to those things. So some things get saved and some things. I think they're my wife has this mysterious way of you know, she does something with some of the hidden You know, if you didn't do something with some of the artwork that we have so much, I mean piles and piles of mysterious things happen. And so I'm not sure what happened to all that these wax. It's been released. But why do you Why do you ask the question? Yeah.

It's like the book about,

you know, the laundries the next day or after an ecstasy the lawn.

Yeah. Right. And, but it's also that it's not permanent. There's an impermanence about even that state. So that's a yes or no The

some of the more profound states that can happen in meditation practice or spiritual life can have a permanent effect. So like, you know if is a variety of ways of seeing that mean one is that if you if you never knew that's putting your foot in the ocean would make your foot wet. You know, you read a book and that's what it said it does. But then you really finally you go and you put your foot in the ocean you're really does make it wet. Look at that. And then you know what's going on experience then you leave and then you You're always changed in the way that now you always have that clear understanding that putting your foot in the ocean makes it there's going to be a very clear realization about truth that will stay with you that realization can stay with you forever. There can also be very deep insights into the nature the nature of the working of your own mind that you'll never see your mind the same way again. You'll never be fooled again. So you know if you if you You can be endlessly fascinated by magician's trick until you're told how the trick is done. And then you get bored really quickly, you lose interest. So the mind is kind of like a magician. And so as long as you don't know how a trick is done, we're fascinated by the ego. But once you can kind of see through the ego and see how the trick is done, you're not going to be so fascinated anymore. And you'll go on to more interesting things. Also, certain things are wonderful. mind goes deep enough required enough a peaceful that gets released enough then some of the common forms of clinging or drives of the mind that a person might have are also seen through and some of those common drives begin to lessen Sooner sometimes it's been said completely disappear. And a person has deeply realized from that deep experience. So there is there's meant to be the deep experience in Buddhism, the deepest experiences are not meant to be experiences for their own right. They're meant to be experiences that change us. And that changes hopefully from the fact that please wait for the mic.

When Come on meditation and let your mind go and so on. What happened? It was situation people always bring the battle in your in the toaster, okay, you try to go and, and let go and another flow through you. And it's like a rope. You let that deliberate Tension our bet. People put put a rope let us let go, they put a slack and then try to pull some more. You kept letting go and then and get to the point that you're at the end of the rope. How you let the other person have the whole rope. And how do you I mean, get to the point that I say, Can I say after the point like screw this and I'm coming back. And I guess I'm just not being able to meditate deep enough. How do you get in when you get to that stage? How do you bring yourself back?

Well, it's hard to do it with an A with a kind of done exact examples. It's a bit hard to know what to say but the I think it's important to realize that and letting go that has such an important part of Buddhist practice. is not meant to be letting go of things in the world, per se, but rather letting go of a particular way that we relate to things in the world. So if I'm attached to my glass of water and clinging to it, I don't have to kind of get rid of it. Because the water let go of it, I can still keep it up here and use it for what I let go of is the clinging in my mind, my attachment to the head in my mind. So it's a movement of the mind that we let go of. So in a real world situation, where you're having conflict with someone else, you might not get what you want. What you want to look at is, where's the clinging? Where's the attachment in my own mind here that I have to let go of? That's a healthy letting go for me. If it's not healthy, let go then watch out. But is it healthy for me let go and then once I let go, then can I relate to this person in the appropriate way, and the appropriate way might be been bombed before you reach the end of your rope and say say No, you can't do that. But you do it with a relaxed mind. Because Because let it you don't necessarily let go of the situation, you let go of your attitude about the situation. And then you're in a situation might require you to be quite strict. Maybe, but, but it's not a battle in your mind. So maybe it has been that, but what you do interpersonally requires a lot of wisdom. So maybe you don't say no. Maybe you say, Can we talk about this a little bit? You know, can we sit down and talk a little bit about what's going on here? Or I've noticed that if I continue letting you have your way, that sooner or later, I explode. And it's not good for everyone, including you. If I reach the point where I explode. So before that point, can we sit down and talk a little bit Would you be willing to talk to me about this so I mean, this, you know, real words, real world world situations. It's hard to know. So the Buddha gave a couple of some advice about when to speak. One of them had to do, shall we speak with kindness, speak the truth. And you should. And if it's useful, and he can't talk to us or if you know talking to someone not useful, then maybe don't waste your your effort. Sometimes we bring mediators in facilitators in to help us the conversation. Sometimes we write letters, you know, the wisdom and the wisdom in order to deal with real life situations is, you know, is complex, we need a lot of wisdom. But But what a Buddhist practitioner does first and foremost in a sense, is they watch their own mind, their own heart, so that that's, that's clean. And that when so whatever we decide we tried to do, with least we know that our heart is clean and the actions we have to do so Wendy,

can you apply the same technique to opening your heart to compassion?

and compassion? I would think so yeah, that, that if you feel if you feel there's something that needs compassion, that perhaps in the beginning, you don't want to rush in to be compassionate, if it's hard to grow, the first thing to do is just to hold the experience hold what's going on, and take it in. Because compassion arises. The most part, compassion arises out of our contact with suffering. And so we have

to allow the suffering in and to really, really have an impact on us. And until it has a healthy impact on us, of healthy compassion, probably not going to arise. And so maybe the first stage is just okay if there's a suffering happening here. And let me just hold it here in my hands for a while. And then once it's there for a while Then maybe we can start working with the compassion. Is

concentration an integral part of meditation? Or is it just like priming the pump? And then you meditate afterwards?

The answer depends. There are so many different kinds of meditation. It's like sport, right? There's you say, You Asked Question a question you do all, you know, is having a, I know. There's so many different kinds of sports. So it's hard to generalize to all is having a ball integral to all sports. No. So is concentration integral to all meditation? It's kind of hard to answer that question. So you have to find out what meditation you're talking about. In Buddhism and Buddhist meditation. Generally, concentration is an integral part. Always Because constantly the ability to be concentrated is an integral part of the mind. And so we want to use that ability. And in the different schools of Buddhism, there's a difference between how much concentration is considered necessary. So some schools will say a lot of concentration is important. Some schools will say, you don't have to focus on concentration at all. Whatever concentration you need, will follow naturally, as you do the mindfulness meditation. Some schools of Buddhism, say, start with concentration, get really concentrated, and then switch over to a different kind of meditation once you have that strong concentration going. There's different strategies. So I don't know if that was

what I'm talking about. The concentration, I mean, the meditation that we are doing here, yes, presumably, we are we're doing we're all doing something similar, right here, here.

And here, concentration is integral part of mindfulness. to two wings of a bird, you need to have both mindfulness and concentration. However, if you focus primarily on mindfulness and do digital diligently, concentration will follow in its wake. And so the general tendency in our movement here kind of attention here is to focus on developing mindfulness. But as we develop the mindfulness, there's concentration that comes along. But some people, the concentration doesn't come along fast enough or doesn't get strong enough. So sometimes people then will cultivate concentration practice, separate from the mindfulness. And that's what I'm teaching Wednesday nights right now I'm teaching a concentration class, partly for that reason. Thank you. So class one. What's the difference between mindfulness and concentration? concentration is generally holding the mind or resting the mind on one thing, without necessarily being concerned about what that thing is just holding them Mind there. And as the mind is held there, the subjective, subjective states, our experience can change, because everything gets oriented or unified or integrated in that one path at one direction to focusing on something. mindfulness practice involves seeing clearly what is. So it has to do with having insight or seeing. So rather than just holding the mind and not really seeing what's there, it's seeing what's there really clearly. That's what, so if I'm focusing on this glass, I can get concentrated in this class without really knowing the details. But I can, I can also be mindful of it and be aware of its shape and its texture and what's in it and the drops of water and really study it and get to know different aspects of it. So mindfulness is a process of knowing and knowing more and more deeply. Concentration is a process of stealing and getting still and still there in the As it holds something fixed. And the two were very well

together because if you want to be able to see clearly something you have the mind has to be still enough to be focused. There's some degree of concentration, you'll you bring your attention to look at something and it'll immediately go off and think about something else or do something else to have some concentration. So, with mindfulness meditation, ideally, concentration and mindfulness are paired, and they're working together as partners. Thank you