

# 2005-10-28 The Nature of All Things

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

happiness, blossom, activity, mind, sankara, refreshed, place, stillness, lotus, emptiness, impermanent, life, formations, chant, greatest, practice, peace, open, wonderful, mental

## SPEAKERS

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One of the most common chants in Theravada. Buddhism is a chant that goes on nature. What does Sankara, part of why you're Who? Who put it to one year to chant to some possible Sukkot and that means something like all things are impermanent. They have the nature of arising and passing away. Ringing all the formations, to stillness to peace is the greatest happiness. So, here there's a recognition of two things, or three things. One is the possibility of happiness. And then at the beginning of the chant, recognition or acknowledgement of the world of impermanence, that things arise in past that nothing is not impermanent. And then in between those two impermanence and happiness, there's a movement. This is the practice movement was improvement of stealing, or bringing to peace. The, what's called the formations, the sand cars, all the different mental formations, all the mental activity that often gets expressed itself out into our body, into our emotional life. And it's sometimes counterintuitive, because many times in life, we think that if we just think some more we can think our way. It's a solution or just a matter of engaging in our world with a new kind of mental activity. We can you know, we can just Due to mental activities not working so well. So I just have to figure out a new kind of mental activity that works better with the tradition puts an emphasis that the highest or the greatest happiness comes when there's a stilling or a mental activity, quieting of it. And so part of the function of both mindfulness and concentration practice is to help see clearly enough, help have a stability well enough so that we can begin to do the work of letting things come to rest. I like the word coming to rescue a lot. Because some people in our society, the thinking mind, is if you really look at it, the thinking mind is exhausted. You know, it's been thinking so much you need some rest. And, and sometimes the emotional part of our life is always too much, sometimes very much reacting, this in that. It also is sometimes exhausted, sometimes over Active sometimes it's swings between, you know activity and then kind of recoiling from that and kind of getting numb or not still in some luminous clear way but maybe just kind of kind of paralyzed. And so the work of mindfulness and concentration practice, spiritual life in general, is to help us kind of figure out what how we conflicted. Are we driven by cravings by thirsts by fears, so that we can put those to rest in a healthier way and appropriate way so they can rest? not forcing them to be quiet. But how can we let them settle come to rest come to

peace. And you don't bring something to peace by you know, just by squashing it. And then some people will complain. You know, what good is that? I mean, just mind You know, bring bringing the mind to stillness I mean, what about all the wonderful things I need to do in my life and wonderful accomplishments and creativity and all that. And it seems like it's gonna make me less of a human being and more. And there's two answers to that. One is that just as you need sleep at night, in order to engage in the world properly, so you need to, it's really helpful to bring the mind to a tremendous stillness, where all the activity of the mind come to be quiet, so that it can be some very deep rest. And so we can see in in a refreshed way we can be refreshed, the happiness, of the stealing of all the formations, I think of as being a kind of refreshment, happiness feel very good. When you feel happy, feel refreshed, and light, delighted. And actually refreshed, energized. And so one of the things you know, we need That we need to have, you know, we can't just always be one way, we have to have the flexibility to be able to find some place of rest. And, and having that sense of place of rest, that place of stillness or bringing the formations to some kind of peace then becomes a very important reference point. For how we engage then in the world, we pick up the activity, we have to have activity of the mind, to live our lives. But how do we pick it up? And one, one result is to realize that our happiness that our deepest happiness, greatest happiness is not going to come from the activities of the mind with just fixing things and making things work out or getting just the right to understanding of things. That that is not going to really provide the ultimate happiness. We have to do those things. There's happiness in it can be, but we have some reference point of putting to a place that is not dependent on the conditions of the world. For instance, Well being a sense of peace. And I think it's one of the great treasures of life is to know to have a sense, kind of you can say kind of within of a resource, a place of well being, is not dependent on the conditions in the world being a certain way. And then the other response is that I'm very fond of this image in Buddhism, of a lotus growing out of muddy water, and the Lotus. I like the image a lot for several reasons. One is that the Lotus is still connected to the mud. It's going to actually leave them behind, it's not connected there. So it's still rooted in the world. But, but it kind of blossoms above the muddy water. And the and the blossom is supposedly untouched by the mud somehow I don't know what happens with lotus blossoms when they blossom but somehow the mud washes off or stays offered doesn't you know, so this is beautiful, beautiful, clear, pure lotus blossom. That's above The water above the mud. And so the same way. There's a possibility, through practice like mindfulness, to discover a capacity of the mind place in the mind of awareness, where the awareness is very present for the world. It's rooted in the world, but it's also untouched by it has a place of independence or freedom. And that place with a mind to kind of blooms and blossoms into this awareness, refreshing awareness. Open awareness is sometimes likened to a place of emptiness being empty or being open, empty and open and very closely connected. And, and then, you know, what good is that? Well, again, I like the image of this flower blossoming because when the flower blossoms i don't know i don't know about lotuses. Maybe it's different different for lotuses, but usually, the generic flower opens, then he can get pollinated. You know, wonderful things happen to that blog. Some things come, things visit the bees come visit, then, if the blossom stays closed, the bees can't come. So to open something really wonderful can visit. And sometimes there's a sense of grace, when opens, things can happen, that can happen when we're close and tight. And the other is that is once it's been pollinated out of that blossom, there can grow a

seed. A seed happens. And so this sense of openness, emptiness, stillness of the mind of the heart, that can happen in practice is a wonderful place where something new, unknown perhaps, can bubble up inside of us can germinate. And I like this idea of an unknown. Certainly that's been my experience in practice, that things unknown to me. I could never planned for seem to just kind of arise out of the conditions of stillness, peacefulness, calmness, emptiness, openness, whatever you like to call it. So this this then, you know this chant, I need your water Sankara Potter, why your Domino bucket to keep the one near the sun to pass the most to go. All things are impermanent. They have the nature of arising and passing away the stealing the bringing to peace of all the formations is the greatest happiness.