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SPEAKERS

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I think that meditation practice has a lot to offer people go when people live in a urban environment with households and work and things like that. Sometimes it can be hard to sustain a meditation practice. And some people are challenged to find the time or all that. I just came back from spending five days at a Zen monastery. And it's easy to get up and meditate there. They ring the bell to wake you up in the morning. And so everything's kind of like God's people are going really, in some ways easy. And, aside from meditation practice, sometimes it's difficult to sustain or to nourish a meditation life or contemplative life or spiritual life in such a way that not just our meditation life is fostered continued, but also that somehow the balance Using the presence, the way of being in the world, that meditation might foster is continued into our normal life and becomes such a seamless, something that influences effects benefits the rest of our life, not just something we do in meditation itself. So, one of the interesting questions then is what is it that nourishes a meditative life, a contemplative life. So I want to talk about the five nourishments by thinking nourish this kind of life. And these five things are confidence, engagement, honesty, stability, and deep understanding. So, five things that nourish this life. Now, there's a lot of other things that nourish this kind of life. And, and when you look at the mind or the heart, that kind of inner spiritual life, it's kind of like an ecosystem. And there's lots and lots of different kind of life forms in this ecosystem, lots of different factors. And these are the only seven factors are mutually, they mutually influence each other. So if you add one nice thing to it, it changes the whole dynamics of everything else. So you could look at other things as being what nourish a spiritual life things young emphasized. But today I want to emphasize these five, and these in turn affect a lot of other things. So confidence, engagement, honesty, stability and deep understanding. So the first one, confidence, I love that word confidence, because then you're confident or you know, the idea of being confident. any endeavor that you want to do, you'll do it better with confidence. In fact, I was reading a book to my eight year old son but baseball today and the little teaching there was When you get up to bat, bat as if you're a great batter already. And, and so that is a story story. So the guy got up there, he took that position, I'm already great. And so he hit the ball. And certainly all the doubts that we have by ourselves can get in the way, if you have a lot of doubt, you hit the ball, you probably

won't hit the ball. doubts are a real drag on us and inhibit many, many activities when doubt is present. But to do something with confidence, change changes the ecosystem changes our hearts quite a bit. And to do it as if we already were capable as if it's worthwhile, as if it's, you know, the right time the right situation, to do the confidence in what we're going to do. Then we do it with a certain kind of energy, certain kind of inspiration, a certain kind of, I keep because it otology to say We do it with certain amount of confidence. We have confidence we do it with confidence. So to do to engage with confidence, and in terms of a meditative life, there's a lot of things you could have confidence in. One of the things that you do is have confidence in the meditation practice that's worthwhile. And, or the spiritual life or the religious tradition you're part of. that's worthwhile, it's beneficial. It's good, it's great. You've kept confidence in yourself. You have confidence that yes, it's a worthwhile practice. And, but I can't do it. It's for those great sages of the past, right? And then I'll just sit here and read the books that are kind of nice to read, but I'm never going to do it because I'm not up to us. Well, it's been said that meditation does not work if you don't do it. So if the doubts keep you from doing it, too Then, you know, it's not going to work. So you have to do it. And so if you can, if you're gonna do it, then can you do it with confidence? If you're gonna do it anyway, then why waste your energy waste your time doing it with lack of confidence, doubting yourself. And there's that kind of art, I think too, sometimes pretending. So I don't know if it's always good to pretend. But sometimes you pretend when the alternative is worse. So you pretend you can do it, okay, I can do this. And so then you sit down, which would love confidence and assurance, and inspiration, perhaps, and kind of in you know, to engage. So there's a lot of things that can bring confidence. And so people who need it sometimes need confidence sometimes could go out into the world and find ways to get confident. And indispensable indispensable element of my own confidence in my own kind of engagement in practice has been the confidence like Got from the practicing with other people. And whether it's fellows, students or teachers or different things, to actually been around other people to practice and see what they've done, see how it's affected them benefited them, gave me a lot of confidence in the practice, and really encouraged me. Sometimes I encountered people who were a total psychological mess, or emotional mess or something. And it just, they were just, you know, basket cases or whatever. And, and then I've seen them practice and engage in their life and practice in practice. And I've seen them over the years change in dramatic ways. And to see and to see this in my fellow practitioners is was really inspiring to me. Wow, that's the result I can that's what it is. That's what happens. Then, you know, this is something I can have confidence in. I've gotten confidence sometimes from reading spiritual books. Buddhist books and been so inspired by those teachings that I was just raring to put it into practice great, I was on fire. So there was a period of time where I read about two paragraphs a day, in a Buddhist book, there's all I could stand. Well, in the best, best senses of that word, that expression. That's all I can manage. Because I was so inspired. And it gave me so much to work on this, these two paragraphs is okay, why not have the rest of the day I'm really busy the rest of the day, I'm engaging in this doing this kind of practice. So, you know, reading really kind of gave me a boost. These short little spurts that I read every day. Something else has given me a lot of confidence in my practice, is seeing the results in myself. And I certainly have sat to meditate sometimes, without any confidence, in fact, with lack of confidence without Oh, you know, I can't do this or this is not the right time or maybe have the wrong practice or This is hard. Some kind of self defeating kind of attitudes in

my mind. But somehow I'm engaged in any way, just kept doing it kept doing it, even with those doubts, and then watching, in spite of my doubts, and watching, things start to change. And so watch myself started to become freer, and more present more concentrated, with a greater sense of joy and happiness. And to watch, there's a natural process in the practice, if you do the practice of mindfulness and show up and keep showing up, keep showing up. There's a transformation that happens. That is, I don't even feel responsible for. And this is one of the great things about this practice I've seen is the way in which I have to do my part, to show up with some quality showing up. But then something happens that I don't think I can be responsible for. There's a settling and letting go of concentrating and opening a revealing discovering, there's things that start happening that and it's been really important for me to realize that I can't be responsible for some of the more profound things That's going to happen to me in this practice. And that gives me actually a lot of confidence, rather than a lack of confidence. It means if I kind of engage in this process the process, it's almost like a lawful process. It's a natural kind of process that unfolds, if I put myself and give it my best. And it's been, you know, I've been doing living a Buddhist life since my early 20s, kind of really making that my central part of my life may be very different than most of you have other things. But one of the things that has given me a lot of confidence is that major turning points in my life, where I had to make some big decisions, what to do, like should I go to college, or go to graduate school or should I go to Buddhist monastery should I? When I was in Japan, I had to make a decision whether to go get a job. Cuz I haven't had like, I don't know, no, I don't remember how much I had, but it was less than \$200. So, you know, that's we have that little money in your, in your name, you know, the usual thing to do is try to get a job. So, should I get a job? Or should I go into monastery? Should I, you know, what should I do? And, and I keep making a decision that somehow follows the Dharma follows the practice. And somehow miraculously, that always seems to work out. And that's given me a lot of confidence in the practice and engagement in practice life to watch and see the benefits that come out worked out so well for me. I feel very lucky. That way, very fortunate. So confidence, to sit with confidence to practice with confidence, to have a confidence. I think part of the reason why I like the word, the concept of confidence is a confidence to me feels physical. It's not just an idea, but it's something that you can kind of separate the kind of strength That I feel in my chest and my heart and my torso, I feel when I'm coming off confidence is kind of like a vitality that's there available so I can availability of energy that's ready to go ready to do. So confidence is nourishes a spiritual life. The second thing that nourishes a spiritual life is engagement. You got to engage, you got to do it doesn't you don't do it doesn't work. So the engagement part, and I know that sometimes there can be a lot of confidence, a lot of great sense of purpose, and no follow through. There's all these other things that have to happen sometimes no follow through, because everything else seems so important. There's so many important things to do. You know, after all, you have to get the oil change in your car and the new tires and you have to go shopping and you have to, you know, call your relative who's sick and you have to do this and that and there's no and then some people have the attitude. Well, I'll just get all these things out of the way. And then Practice. And after a few months, you know, the list gets longer, or some people have made made that big that choice with big things in their life, or only, I'll get it, you know, I'll get a job, I'll get some savings. You know, Ira, I have all these things in place, and then I'll engaged in a meditation life or spiritual life, somehow, there's ways that we put it off. Maybe some

of the putting off isn't necessary and wise. But it could also be a tremendous delusion, to think that, you know, you'll get to it, you'll get to it, because then there'll be something else. Now there's nothing standing in the way. So at some point, there has to be some decision. I'm going to do it. I'm going to somehow make the time and engage in this practice. But I like the word engagement. Because engagement is stronger to me than doing engagement means you like you put yourself in it. A few months ago, I taught a retreat with you Passionate teacher who was also a Zen teacher in a previous incarnation as a teacher, and then what a Zen practice. And at one point during the retreat, we both we were both interviewing a man who was having a lot of difficulties with his home life. And he'd come for two weeks of the month long retreat. And a lot of the conversations were about his young child who's mixed five or six, who was somewhat autistic, very high need for high demand kid. And the same teacher who this teacher was teaching with. She was psychologists who work with kids. So at some point after this man left my home and he didn't live very far away, but 45 minutes away. I said to her, you know what? I think it'd be really good. If you know it's, it's way beyond the call of duty. You know, you're here to be meditation teacher on this retreat. But I think it'd be really good if you went and went to their home visit to him and see, you know, what his skin is like and how the family dynamics are, I think be really great, you really, this district is retreating really connected to you as a teacher, I think since you have these skills, I think I'd be really good. And the other teachers who were teaching the retreat, were a guest. That I would suggest that because being a teacher and retreat is very high demand job, and it takes a lot of time and energy and to drive 45 minutes someone's home to do this kind of assessment and enjoy 45 minutes back was a big chunk of time in this kind of very intense kind of environment. So she said something like, you know, I'll think about it. And that was maybe at eight o'clock in the morning. And I said, I thought to myself, Oh, you know, that I probably crossed some line asking her to do this, you know, and, and I shouldn't have done that. It's kind of putting pressure on her all that and, and I said, Well, I don't know when she's going to, you know, thought about the schedule for the next week. I don't know when she's gonna find time for this, you know. So I went to lunch, and she wasn't having lunch. And I saw I asked, where's Where is she? Oh, she went to see the sky. So when she came back, I said, What happened? And she said, you know, if I had to think about doing it, I probably never would have done it. So I just did it. Next first chance I had I just call them and went in at lunchtime. You know, a few hours later, I went and did it. And she did it and did it and came back. It was kind of clean. She kind of didn't spend all this time wondering and thinking what she should do. She was just as clean way of engaging and doing it. And she came back. And I don't know if you know if he was tired or exhausted her but she then continued rescue retreat, and that was sort of Intel was even hiccup for her. And part of it My guess is that the fact that she get it so cleanly, she This is what she did. She's gotten her car went over and took care of it and came back. So this thing about just doing engagement to the Zen thing. When you do something you do it then I remember in the monasteries in Japan is a variety of things connected to this but remember once carrying the pata rice into the dining room for for the evening meal and you know so I was carrying pot in one hand somehow I got reprimanded by the monks, when you're carrying a pot of rice you carry both hands and because you will engage yourself you give yourself to this process of carrying the class you don't just kind of do it casually. Or when I was in the monastery, you know story I like to tell how much I learned from carrot cutting carrots carrots are my my great spiritual teachers. Because

when I was putting assigned to the kitchen to cut carrots, I didn't want to be there. And my posture showed that and I was kind of like not really they're kind of like, half my body was to the door. And in a Zen monastery I learned a lot about Being in my body and being present for is doing with my body. And so I turned my body around and engage those carrots with everything that I had. And after a while that Okay, let's do it again, it was a training to engaging myself in this thing with the carrots. Engagement, there's something really profoundly Well, a patient generalized based on myself, sorry, I was gonna say something deeply satisfying about full engagement. Maybe it's not true for everyone. But what's so great about but to engage, and kind of almost lose yourself and engagement where you kind of don't hold back. holding back is no fun. I can say that safely is a generalization isn't it? Generally holding back is no fun. But to not hold back and give yourself to something is really great. And so it gives a kind of the joy, the light, sometimes that activity into what you're doing. And so when you sit down to meditate, can you engage in that kind of wholehearted way? So it's more than just kind of like oh, you know, okay, I'm going to Just have a breath. Yes, here I am, I'm gonna engage in this breath meditation, I'm gonna engage in this practice with confidence, which is the first nourishing thing. But also with with energy with effort with yourself, put yourself in it. You don't want to be kind of lightweight or kind of, you know, there's one thing to put it off for later. It's another thing to only give half of yourself a part of yourself to what you're going to do. But okay, here I am. Some people you know, have some people. Maybe, almost everyone has trouble with meditation with their mind wandering away. Right? Sooner or later that happens. mind going is often thought sometimes what reason and wonder is often thought is because what you're deciding what you're doing, you're not doing it with. With effort with energy with engagement, you're only there kind of half heartedly. So of course, if you're not, if you're there half heartedly, of course, your mind is going to think about doing something else. Does that make sense? So trying to not only get Efforts you're doing but engagement with yourself here I am. And then the third nourishment is honesty. Honesty is such a deepening thing. Honesty feeds us. And what I'd like to recommend is you try it, try it and see how honest they can feed you. How can you be on in such a way that it's support you and feed you and nourishes you. Certainly, again, the lack of honesty, lying is draining, and tiring and stressful, to kind of engage in the world of deceit. But to live a world of honesty brings a lightness brings clarity brings a lack is just the proper use of honesty reduces the amount of conflict we have in our life. So to find out how to how to use honesty as a way of reducing conflict, I think is one of the great things that nerd As I've seen over and over again, the very act of speaking the truth saying this is what's going on, settle something clearly or settle something. And the practice of mindfulness to me is a practice of telling the truth, telling the truth to yourself. So, when you tell the truth, you kind of show up, you're here for something, you kind of recognizing really is like a, like a full acknowledgement. This is what's happening. Not avoiding that. So sometimes, what you have to be honest about is aspects of yourself. Yes, I am. scared. Yes, I am angry. Yes, I am. Yes, I have no confidence. And I'm going to say that with confidence. Yes, there's no confidence here. I could say that for sure. And that changes the ecosystem to say that like that Or I'm in pain. I'm in psychological pain. How many times in my life have I not been honest about my own pain? You know, see it in an archive of notes, they're kind of in the background, but I'm not gonna really I'm not gonna really notice it or pay attention to it. And then to turn around and say yes. Or, you know, I'm in pain, that's what's really going on, or to be in interpersonal situations. And now to really

acknowledge to myself what's really going on. You know, I'm trying to impress this person, that's what's really going on. I'm trying to contort myself into some ways so this person will like me. That's what's going on. So to kind of name for yourself, be honest, really honest, what's really going on here? And what does it take to be honest? What kind of self reflection what kind of stopping what kind of paying attention you need, so you can be really honest about what's going on with you. So I don't know if anybody's seen the newsletter that just came out, but in their the opening sentences, something like there is no Buddhist path without truth. So if you want to kind of deepen your Buddhist life, you do it through being honest. Being honest, is sometimes difficult, sometimes often difficult, so often difficult to interpersonal situations. So part of the engagement, the learning process is to learn how to be honest in a way that is helpful. I'll be honest in a way that works for everybody concerned. So then the third element is stability. stability is very nourishing for meditation practice, and stability has many different forms. Some of them may be are not doable by everybody. But if I think having a regular life, a stable regular pattern to your life is very helpful for us for a regular meditation practice. That's why monasteries, they have a set schedule. You know, you kind of you know, by the minute where you're going to be sometimes in some monasteries, everything set up every day you get up. It's a same routine, same routine that repetition, offers, it has stability through the day. retreats are like that, that we offer. There's very little variation in the course of the day. In terms of the schedule, you sit, is you sitting meditation, you do walking meditation, you do sitting meditation, you do walking meditation, you do sitting meditation, and then you have your meal. And then after a meal, you have a break, and then guess what? You're sitting meditation and walking, meditation, walking meditation, and so there's a regularity there. And that regularity, helps stabilize the mind you have to think what you're going to do you have to kind of be agitated about questions about what's next. You know what's next. So having stability is very helpful regularity. Some of you who raise kids know how important that can be, to have a regular routine for the kids for young kids so they can kind of kind of get settled He settled, then there's a stability that comes from regularity of practice, to practice every day, I think I think if a person can, if their schedule allows it to practice the same time, every day. So there's that sense that to the psyche of the mind, the body, kind of expects, it knows it. It feels familiar. And so when you come to sit, there's stability there, there's a subtleness that can happen because, you know, this is what you're doing. And then there's stability in the practice itself. So sitting with some kind of stability. So each of us, I think, anybody who meditates should spend some serious amount of time developing a good meditation posture, so that there's a physical stability when you sit. If you can certainly meditate. slouched in the couch. It's possible, but the chances are, it's not going to be very deepening or very nourishing. It might be relieving, it might help if you're stressed a little bit, but it's only going to take you so far. But it takes some time developing a good meditation posture. And sometimes it takes a while to learn that and sometimes develop that. And it's so you have to sometimes work through a certain kind of discomfort. But just see, can you develop a place of being kind of like this idea of being a tripod, three points as affirms base to hold us up. Even in a chair, you can get a firm foundation for your posture as you sit here, and then develop in such a way that your posture feels like your torso, your spine even feels like it's balanced on top of itself a little bit. So you know, it's kind of slouched over or bent over. Now, it's certainly possible to get enlightened, bent over like this. People do it in Burma. Most men meditate like this, but I saw an environment like this. Now

it's possible so you know, If you want to do that way it's okay. But then you're not benefiting from the food and nourishment of stability. It's not very inspiring, even for yourself in Burma, maybe I've told you this before, but in Burma, women, when they meditate, generally meditate like this. So one foot behind them. Actually, when you listen to Dharma talk in Burma, everyone's supposed to sit this way, because we're more respectful. So anyway, you don't have to. But you said this way. But with us, it's very hard to slouch when you sit this way. So the women when they meditate in Burma, they all sit up like this. And it's such a contrast between these guys and the women. The women sit with us dignity and the ability and one of the great work great sites in my life. Which still nourish, nourish, do when I think about it, was in the when I was in the monastery in Burma, I would walk by the women's meditation hall. And literally, there were 500 women meditating in there. That's a lot of women, women, right? And, and they're all in rows. And because it's a warm climate, two sides of the building, were all open, completely open. So I can see the women from the side as rows. And this was a powerhouse. It was a spiritual powerhouse to see all these women sitting there straight and upright and very still in presence. It was, you know, awesome. And then I walked by the men's meditation hall. So I think it's really good to have physical stability, and then to develop inner stability, stability of the mind. to cultivate a mind which doesn't waver, it's not agitated, to have in mind that starts becoming still. So there are a lot of things that cultivate mental stability. One of them is To figure out how to overcome some of the regular ongoing conflicts in our life, or the conflicts with ourselves, some of that has some of that has to do with doubting ourselves. That's why confidence is so important. It creates some stability. Some of that inner stability comes from regularity of practice in the more in, you know, in the meditation to have one practice you do, I just do it. I know some people will change their practices regularly. they'll follow their breath for a few minutes. And so that's not quite working. So well. Maybe I'll do loving kindness meditation for a while. And they do that for a little while. That didn't work. So well. If I count my breath, maybe for a while, and, well, maybe I'm following the breath in the wrong place. Maybe it should be in my nose rather than my belly. They'll do that for a while and they say, Well, you know, this is not working. I've heard that doing nothing's really good practice. choiceless awareness. I'll just sit here and kind of be broad and spacious and economists and like a saint, that'd be really great. And they supers try that for five minutes. And then you know, then they say this is tiring. Maybe fantasy is good for a while, get the rest. So sometimes jumping around is not so good. So choosing one practice to do. It could eat no, not just for one period of meditation, but to over a few few months or a year is really good advice I give to people when they come to me who are just in beginning beginning to come interested in a spiritual practice, like a Buddhist practice, meditation practice, and they may be interested in zen, they might be interested in Vipassana, they might be interested in different kinds of Buddhism and they can't decide between them. I'll tell them, well, if you can't decide, then flip a coin. Just doesn't really matter. Just choose one on some criteria, whatever makes it some criteria allows you to make a choice. Maybe meditation community is close by or maybe one that can value affinity towards or a friend of yours dies or something. Just choose one if you can't use a clip to flip a coin if you can't do it or do anything else. And then do that one practice for a year. Because the basic work, inner development and change that has to happen when you do meditation, it's really the same in the first year. Regardless of what practice you do, if you do a mantra, your breath, your loving kindness, you do visualization, you're still having to do with your hindrances,

your wandering mind, your inner conflicts, that kind of stuff. That kind of stuff of your life has to be sorted through doesn't really matter what practice you choose at first, because you have to sort through this stuff. And then once you've sorted through it after a year or so, then you have a different kind of perception, different understanding. And then you can kind of look at the different traditions you're interested in. And through a deepening was deep deepening and deepening deeper understanding. You can decide which one you want to do Which one suits you better in skills right? make sense. So it doesn't matter no matter what you choose choose one and then end it by choosing one and staying with one, developing stability and working, stabilize yourself calming yourself. settling the mind settling the heart. So it cultivates stability. And then the last one is deep understanding and all the other four allows deep understanding to surface. So confidence, engagement, honesty, stability, all make it possible for us to see deeply to be able to kind of penetrate what's really going on here. It's kind of like having a question I know what's happening on the surface what's really happening here. If I can still buy listen deeply penetrated by by poke a little bit what's really happening here in my life. You know, to look at the wandering mind, look at the mind that wanders off into thoughts all the time. What's that mind really about? Try to really understand that mind, don't be in contact with it, don't keep pushing it away, pushing it away running away from it, letting go of it. But if it keeps coming up over and over again, the mind wanders off what's really going on there, which really understand that. So it might be, for example, that it keeps wandering off all the time, because you're worried about something. And unless you really understand that you're worried and really engage in it, really look at it that worry, the worry is going to keep prompting you to wander off into that kind of concern. Or perhaps it's the issue of lack of confidence, or lack of real engagement. You're kind of half hearted about it, to really understand that. What is it that needs to be understood here? is a great question. Right now, now that I'm here to some degree, what is it about me? What is it about this present moment situation that really needs to be understood? I might not understand I might not understand it yet. But what needs understanding and then to begin understanding to begin penetrating and discerning having insight into our life is a self reinforcing or is it really reinforces a spiritual life supports it encourages it, we get our rewards then so Oh, yeah, it's really good to have insight it's good to understand. The more confidence we have, the more useful the insight is. The more insight we have, the more confidence we'll have. So five ways of nourishing your practice. So if nourishing your practice is something which is relevant For you, you might choose one of these five, for a week, or for a month, and explore it and develop it. Look at confidence, understand confidence, understand how it works or doesn't work for you understand how it's about how it can be strengthened. What are the resources you have for tapping into confidence in yourself? What's your relationship to engagement? People are very different and get relationships to it. What's your relationship to engagement? And given who you are, what are the appropriate ways that you can be more fully engaged more wholeheartedly engaged? What's your relationship to honesty? Later, please. What's your relation to honesty? What does it take for you to be really honest? One of the interesting ways of practicing honesty is to say something about yourself. To someone else that you'd rather not want to say something true. And it could be a stranger. It could be similar, isn't it? But what is it like to say something, to admit something to someone else, that you kind of, you know, you know what, you know, it's true for yourself. But I think sometimes when you say to someone else, it's a fuller acknowledgement to kind of the psyche summit

takes it in or is changed by it more fully. It's like no longer like, then you have to Dennis really owned up to they owned it, when you share it with someone else. And the bigger your personal challenge is, perhaps the more helpful it is to try to say to someone else, this is my challenge. Don't keep it to yourself, might help free you from it in some way. So what's your relationship to honesty? How can you practice it some more? What's your relationship to stability? how stable is your life? how stable is your mind? how stable is your heart? how stable is your body? What can you do to cultivate greater stability? And then what's your relationship to understanding? Are you interested in it? Do you have a questioning mind? Are you willing to question be willing to kind of look and see what are the assumptions that are operating here? What are the emotions that are fueling how I behave? what is really happening here? to just ask that question, what's really happening here? And don't take the first answer as the answer? What's really happening and get and given this answer, then what's really happening? What's behind that? Develop understanding. So five nourishments, the Buddha called these five nourishments, five capacities, or five faculties that we each have, meaning that these aren't things which are foreign to us. In something you have to take from outside and bring in. These are all faculties potentials that we all have. They're here And it's possible to develop these faculties of ours ours to the point where they become strengths. So they are just potentials for the become something which subsiding with us carrying with us and becomes our personal strengths. And when they become our personal strengths, then they're they're nourishing us like wellsprings bubbling up feeding the spiritual life and spiritual engagement. So five nourishments did you get them all? Anybody not number all five. We got them. So we have a couple of minutes if anyone has any questions about that Please, ages are the difference between engagement and clinging? Well, the difference Well, there doesn't have to be a difference. But I guess anyway I'm talking about engagement is that it's a healthy thing, skillful thing. wholesome. So wouldn't be No, no, no clinging as part of it. Well, I think of clinging as being a contraction. There's tension. When there's clinging. When there's an engagement, engagement is clean, and there's effort. You know, that has to happen. But effort and tension are two different things. And it's possible to apply tremendous amount of effort in something without having any tension as part of it. You can learn a contraction or tightness. So even if the if if a person can put a lot of effort into something sometimes people give more effort into something because there's clinging You know, it looks on the outside, like there's even more engagement because there's so much desire there's much clinging desire or ambition or something. But I think if you pay attention inside what feels like to engage that way, there's a there's a, you'll see very quickly, that there's tension, contraction suffering as part of that. That's my thought. What do you think? Or so sometimes our our engagement has something unhealthy as part of it. They might be in tension. Which are unhealthy. or there might be expectations or clinging to results or something. And one of the great things is if you do mindfulness practice, so you're paying attention to what's going on what's happening. Or as you say differently, some things you only learned by engaging in it. If you think oh, I don't think I should use GRE, I think there's some clinging here. So I don't think I'll try. You might never really find out. But some things you if you engage in it really fully, then the weak links will show themselves sooner or later. So I've seen that for my own meditation practice. When I was kind of relatively new to all this, that I had certain intentions, certain motivations or ways of practicing, which weren't very healthy, like I was attached to getting concentrated, that that's really what's important. Like I get concentrated and

so practice everyday at home that intentionally had concentrated attachment to concentration wasn't a problem, because I was so proud of my daily life, that in fact, I did get a little more concentrated. It wasn't dramatic, it just I was little, it can't, you know, wasn't even by doing I just unwind a little bit, and then I take credit for it. Now look, I'm getting concentrated isn't good. And then I go and retreat with that same intention, or it's up to me, I got to do this. And I'm going to get concentrated. And I would make my unwind of the first day or so take credit for it. And then, and then the second or third day, you know, I was this attachment getting concentrated, and it just wouldn't work. It wouldn't work. I couldn't do it. That was kind of self defeating. approach to practice. And, and so that I saw it, it was very painful. And eventually I realized I'm attached here I have to let go of it. So as long as I kind of engaged only a little Back 25 minutes a day, I couldn't see the attachment, but by engaging more fully than the weak link showed itself. So I'm trying to say as sometimes don't worry about the attachment, engage, and then learn from what happens learn from the engagement. Sometimes I've worked really well if you're unsure. So I know most people, I think, have some kind of strange intention or motivation, connected to meditation practice when they first start. I wouldn't worry about it's fine. And it all worked itself out over time. So thank you, and giving this talk my hope was to give you a little bit of nourishment and if this talk to nourish you, then this I told you how Begin the rest. Thank you