

2008-01-25 Anapanasati 5 of 8

Sat, 8/1 9:52PM • 14:26

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

joy, sense, happiness, meditation, absorbed, happening, condition, sail, work, mind, stages, wind, pleasure, experience, arrived, meditate, engage, feel, relax, mental formations

SPEAKERS

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If we compare meditation, with sailing, then in sailing, one of the things that good sailor learns to do is to work with whatever the wind and wave conditions might be. And so depending on the direction you're going the wind strength of the wind, you make all these adjustments in order to keep the sails full, just the right way. And, and you let out the sail you pull the sail in you lower the sail if the wind is too strong and you kind of, you can't go sometimes if you can't go directly against the wind, if you're sailing if you want to go someplace, you have to kind of take it at an angle and talk back and forth. But you kind of working with the forces of nature. And and, and, you know, in a sense, you don't complain perhaps, you know, if suddenly a bigger when it comes along us part of your sale or make adjustments accordingly and then work with that. And some days the wind is conditions are really placid or pleasant. In some days, they're rough and, and good sailor just kind of works with it. So in the same way with if you're meditating, as you're working with the force of nature, or forces of nature, which is all in you, you right? And it's kind of sometimes it's good to think of what's all the stuff inside of you is just the forces of nature. So you don't take it too personally. And your job, your job is to sail. So sometimes you you know, you learn how to handle it differently, you know, you kind of work with what's there, rather than work against it. And so you'll lower your sail, you'll lift your sail, you let out your sail, you pull it in your sail and you do all these different things or if you want to go someplace, sometimes it's the wisest thing when the direct approach is not Going to work today. And so you have to kind of go at an angle of attack back and forth and get closer. So I'm trying to say as part of meditation wise meditation is learning to work with causes and conditions. And so rather than feeling that anything happens when you meditate or anything you bring to your meditation is the wrong thing or shouldn't be happening. A wise meditator just takes it all in the condition isn't the causes, those are the conditions of a time, and then has a variety of skills, variety of different approaches or ways of being to handle all that. So, that sense meditation also hopefully, mindfulness meditation is very sense very allowing or very forgiving or very inclusive, not in conflict with anything. It's learning how to work with everything. Sailor does, it doesn't work very well for the sailor to be in conflict with the wind. You know, you can't punch the wind and expect to get any, you know, anything to happen, right. So you're working with you know, with working with at all Doesn't mean that you don't, you're not cautious with the wind, it was a dangerous way and you take care of that maybe go back to the harbor, dangerous. But you went to work with all these things. So. So one of the first steps when it first aspects of sitting down to meditate is a feeling of some attitude of an approach of inclusivity, including at all allowing you to be there not being in conflict with anything. And for some people, that's a huge learning is to learn how not to be at conflict with what goes on when you sit down to meditate, not be in conflict with the distracting mind, strong emotions that can come up the memories, the body sensations and feelings, you know, energy What's going on? Not to be in conflict with it. But then, okay, given that's what's happening this with the weather's offering today, and how do I work with that? How do I include that? So one of the reasons is to start the afternoon this way, is that you know, most people who sail Do it because they love it. They enjoy it. It's

kind of fun to be out there with the elements and working with at all. And my hope is that sooner or later people who engage in mindfulness meditation, sooner or later get enough sense of the terrain, get enough sense of what's happening enough skills of mindfulness, what's about that they also start enjoying the effort, the engagement, the effort to try to meet the experience. And it might take a while to learn that because we're often slave to what is happening, something's something's unpleasant or difficult, then we feel difficult, we feel unpleasant. And it's tapes, you know, how we are. But if you have a sense of the confidence and the confidence and the courage and the sense that, oh, I can engage this difficulty, then you are not the difficulty. And then you can kind of then it can feel kind of sense of delight or encouragement or satisfaction. Oh, I can do this. I can engage. I have something to do here. And that's delights of engagement is hoping that something is eventually that people meditate will cultivate and develop

And then as we engage more fully, and then there's this process of being absorbed, being so engaged in what's happening, that you're not thinking about it so much, you're not pushing it away you're holding on or, but you're still kind of here and you've arrived, you're present for this experience, and that there's something engaging in that presence, that involvement. And we call that meditation being absorbed. And it's not a strange idea, I think to a lot of people. Because you can be absorbed in a lot of different things you can be absorbed in a good book, you can be absorbed in the craft of music, you can be absorbed in a good movie, you can be absorbed in your neurosis and maybe that's not so pleasant, but but you can be absorbed. And, and so the idea is to get so and so involved in the here and now experience that You're not so interested in other things, this becomes so interesting. It's so engaged here. And what happened yesterday, or what's gonna happen tomorrow, pales in pails towards just the vividness or the fullness of what's happening here now. And so that process of being absorbed here to really having arrived, you've released the volume here. Finally, we talked about feeling arrived. And it takes a long time. In addition to really feel like you're you've arrived in the present moment arrived means you don't feel like you're wandering off this way in that way anymore. But you're here and you're not so easily going to slip away from here you've arrived. And then you absorbed in this experience here. And with that can come a feeling of delight again, that in itself can be feel delightful or joyful. The fact that you're here and arrived, the mind is not taking you this way in that and you so satisfying to finally be not at the whims of the distraction forces of the mind and then To be absorbed, and this here tends to produce a lot of joy. Bring a kind of a kind of condition for delight or contentment, satisfaction, happiness well being. And I like to say that this kind of well being comes from meditation being absorbed, it has a condition just being absorbed and connected being fully present for something. But it's not contingent upon what it is you're absorbed in. So what most people think that aren't to be happy or feel joy, something in the world has some condition the world has to be the cause for that. You know, you go to a nice movie and the movie makes you feel happy in your life for something the movies the cause for your happiness or you go to spend time with a friend and the friend is so engaging that you kind of lose your fruit, forget about your difficulties, and you know, you're happy for that time, and the friend was kind of the cause or you win California Lottery. And that makes you very, very happy for a few days and ends so that, you know, so that's the condition for it. So within meditation, you can realize that this sense of happiness can have arise that's partly conditioned by the meditation. But it doesn't have a cause not triggered by some external thing. And that's a very valuable sense of well being to cultivate and develop, because then you have something that is not dependent on the things in the world going the way you want them to go. And you start discovering somebody's inner peace and well being. So in talking about these stages of breath meditation, the we can review a little bit from what we did last time. The fifth stage is experiences experiencing joy. So the first four stages have to do with getting into the breath, and begin to relax the body a lot. So the body's not tense, more relaxed, we really prefer to want to be present. And then once you're present, you want also to feel any tension in your body. You want to kind of relax it Calm the body, the way the body is held tense. As you get more

present, and relaxed, that tends to bring a sense of well being, sense of joy, delight. And that joy is a good thing to experience. And so the instructions are when you experience that joy, when there's joy happens, experience it, take it in, and there's an art to taking in the meditative joy. So that actually enhances or deepens the meditation practice. And lets the joy actually spread and become more more full. That joy, when we get really concentrated, deeply concentrated, and absorbed, is sometimes called rapture, because be so intense. Pity is the word in Pali. Then at some point, the next stage here is then when experiences suka, happiness or pleasure. And here the idea being that at some point after you've experienced enough raptured Joy,

you the mind, either naturally or because you move away from you somehow you really move away from the joy, or, and you settle into something that's more sublime or satisfying, which is happiness or this kind of deep sublime kind of physical pleasure, which is not sensual pleasure, it's a whole different spiritual pleasure to sense the inner pleasure, the subtle physical and, and so the process of deep absorption goes through the stages of joy, which is kind of energetic to happiness, sort of deep sublime pleasure, which is much more satisfying than the joy. But, and those two, the joy and the joy and the pleasure are considered to be feeling tones. Probably the word is better now. So the feeling of that is pleasant, both of them and so the mind is somehow engaged and feel the sense of pleasure in order to go further in the deep absorption, then you need to be able to settle, relax the mental formations, the mental activity that's involved in taking pleasure from it. Or interpreting its pleasure, or registering it as pleasure or happiness, the feeling tone, and so there's a calming of the mental formations. So first first, and it's called mental formations, which is the mental activities that is somehow associated with producing all this joy and happiness. And then there's a falling away of pleasure and, and pain, or this happiness and also discomfort, and then it person drops into a deeper state of peace, which is much more satisfying than the happiness which was more more satisfying than the joy. So it's a lot if you haven't ever heard these ideas before, but this is kind of the process. This is one way of interpreting these next four stages. The first one says experience experiencing joy when experiences joy and enjoyment. experience, everyone knows when is joy. Having happiness when knows when x is happiness? Then the next seven is, after that get to know the mental conditioning, what's going on in the mind? What's the flavor, texture, what's the impact on the mental activity to have all this joy and happiness, and then allow that in the eight stages to calm that down. So that's one classic way of describing this. But if you're not to follow the classic pattern, and this way you did this morning was another kind of approach to it. I don't think you know that we weren't I wasn't encouraging you to feel a lot of joy and happiness. I was just telling you directly go experience that you're those two aspects of the mental mental formations the mental activity, which may be very important for meditators to address which is thinking and preferences, likes and dislikes. And then, having identified it and experienced it, then learning to relax it To settle it. So in one to four, you're relaxing the body in five to eight, you're relaxing the mental activity in the two arms, so separate, but there seems distinct here. Makes sense. So, little bit, my, my hope in giving a little introduction was to make you feel happy. That somehow that this whole, you know, it's so good to have a practice It's so good to be engaged and be sailing along with all your struggles. And it's so good to have a practice. And if you can get really get into the practice is that you know, there's a kind of absorption being involved, that itself produces a sense of sense of well being or rightness or satisfaction or contentment. Here I am. And this is a beautiful important part of meditation practice. And from that as a foundation, then we go further and from that foundation and we go further and begin relaxing the mind and I love this that Relaxing of the mind is built on first feeling happy. And so you know you feeling good, you know you and asked us to relax, relax the mind when you're still anxious. But so a little bit of hope this made you a little happy. And because it'd be nice if you could be happy for the next meditation