to focus more on developing concentration. Now when the hindrance is strong, that's the hint. That's the hindrance to concentration. So maybe it doesn't work. But sometimes it works just to redouble your efforts to be focused, be committed to your breathing, committed to the object of meditation. And then the hindrance gets no support from your attention from your mind. And if it doesn't get any support, because you're not interested in or involved in it, it tends to fall away. As you get more concentrated. In different circumstances, different one of these approaches is relevant and useful. And sometimes they might be inappropriate, especially the huge kind of ignore it and focus on developing concentration directly. Sometimes it's not possible and sometimes it becomes kind of a spiritual bypass you can, not really ignoring something and really needs to be addressed. Sometimes if you focus too much on hindrance itself, there can be a variety of problems without one might that you might think you're trying to deal with it and resolve it to make it go away. But in some subtle way, you're, you're feeding it, you're engaged in it, you're indulging it, by very looking at it and thinking about it, then try to work with it and, and so you actually feed along. So, there are these two approaches, and both are valid in their own time in place. Along that line, then I want to say that we're looking at sensual desire, sometimes expanded out to include all desire that if you get caught up in limits your capacity to be present and concentrated. that want to say that not all desire is considered bad. In Buddhism. This is very important to realize. Sometimes desire gets a bad rap in Buddhist circles. And sometimes if people who don't know really what the Buddha was teaching, will say sometimes in popular media popular places, will say, Oh, the Buddha taught life is suffering. The cause of suffering is desire. And the way to end the suffering is desire. And the way to end the suffering is to end desire. That's a pretty depressing message, on many fronts. It's not what the Buddha said. What is the way we're trying to overcome his compulsion more than desire. So when you're when you're acting under compulsion, you're not free, when you're compelled to act in a certain way. So the kind of desire where you are driven to follow that desire, that is a kind of desire that becomes more problematic. And that's, you know, what we're trying to overcome. If you're not driven or compelled by your desire, that that would mean that you can leave it alone. If it's not healthy or useful to do, you're free of it. So if it's useful and healthy, then you can embrace it. If it's not you'd like to put it down. If you can't put it down. Then, then you're caught. The reason I'm saying this is that is that the desire to practice the desire to be present and mindful, desire to be concentrated, can be neurotic. And, and therefore get in the way of your practice, it can also be a tremendous help and support of your practice. And it's, it's very appropriate to have a, you know, grounded commitment to practice or desire This is important, this is what I'm going to apply myself to do. And, and that with that kind of sense of, you know, this is really a desirable thing to do to sit here and clustering in practice. It's, it's harder for central desire to get in. But if you think that all your desires are bad, and you're supposed to just kind of sit there and kind of just be Present, then there's no balance. There's no counteraction to the mind kind of
going this way in that, but to have a strong intention. This is what I want to do. I want to sit here and practice. Then there’s a counter healthy counter force to the mind just drifting off whatever it wants to make some sense. So we’re not criticizing all all desire. So with that as a background, let's do a little sitting

and it being After lunch, you might want to emphasize the alert part of the posture, sit up a little bit straighter.

And as you feel your body feel your way into your body, you might feel your way into the parts of the body. That feel more energized. energetic.

Perhaps bringing a little bit of more love more energy to your spine.

And feel yourself for rooted mistakes stable way on your chair your cushion on the floor.

Somehow the physical locality physical grounding in this chair or the cushion reminds remind you that for the next little while you’re going to be present here and now

and then see if you can arouse a healthy, balanced, relaxed desire for being present, being present with your breathing. So there’s a sense of maybe commitment or value. Yes, this is something you really want to do. You really want to stay here. Stay present.

See if there’s some way that having desire for the present moment for paying attention supports your ability to be mindful as you enter into the experience of the body breathing

As we continue sitting here in silence. I'd like to give you some questions for reflection on continuing with your eyes closed and being quiet, you can let go of your meditation and whatever quiet way you want, it goes right to you think about these topics could be that to stay very quiet. And then as you just repeat the question and see what bubble up in your mind without actively thinking about it. Or perhaps you actively Think about it, whatever, whatever works for you. And the first question is when you are in the grip, of compelling desire. What does that feel like? What are some of different ways that feels like in your body, in your mind? What's the actual experience like to be in the grip of desire

And then in the case of sensual pleasure what is it that makes the desire for sensual pleasure? What is it that can make it so compelling? That's a very broad question. So, explore it in whatever way your mind takes it. But what makes the desire for sensual pleasure compelling

What might some of the beliefs be? worse but what might some of your beliefs be? That gives ads the compelling nature of sensual desire.

And then another question is what are some of the disadvantages

in pursuing sensual pleasure

in meditation I think of that I think that the pursuit of sensual desire, sexual desire usually is of two forms. There's desires that have nothing to do with meditation itself. And desires have to do with meditation. So, the forms of sensual desire, that have nothing to do with meditation usually take the form of fantasy, you know, ideas about something somewhere else. And so the mind gets pulled into

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the, into the world of fantasy and thoughts, but how wonderful that vacation will be or that dish will be or that partner will be or whatever. And, and so then the mind engages net fantasy in a variety of different ways. Sometimes it's actively thinking about how to get it kind of grabbing on. And sometimes it's a fantasy, that's delusion of it actually happening. So you kind of imagining it happening, how pleasant it is, and being pulled into this world of fantasy. And fantasy can be very compelling. Because partly because it can be so pleasant. And sometimes it's not necessarily just the pleasure of the fantasy, the vacation, that's the hook. But rather, it's the pleasant feelings that come with imagining yourself on the beach in Hawaii. And you start feeling so good, it's so nice. So that hook is that the immediate pleasure that comes here from fantasizing. Then the other kind of sensual pleasure, desire for sensual pleasure and is that that happens in meditation itself. And that can happen anytime in meditation when Our senses are operating. And rarely see it that way. Sometimes, in very, very deep meditation, the senses just seem to kind of fall away or stop operating. And so but you're sitting here and it can, in meditation itself, it can take two general forms, it can be that kind of Central desire about pleasure, which is not yet happening. If I just move a little bit by shift, if I know the last time I really was able to stay on that breath really well, and then all this nice feelings given my body. So if I just kind of, you know, do the right thing. Try to concentrate have that pleasure again. Or if I get the right soft food, the right cushion, the right meditation blanket, cozy and nice if I if I if only so pursuing something that you want here. So something that you that is not happening, but it has to do with meditation a little bit has to do with fantasy there as well. And then the other kind of desire for sensual pleasure in meditation itself is holding on or trying to increase the pleasure that might be happening during meditation. So there might be some pleasure somewhere going on. And so then you kind of hold on to that you don't want to change, you just want to hang, you know, you're attached to it. And so that's kind of the range in meditation that I know of. And it seems to me that then, in my experience, the fantasy has some of the most compelling quality to it, because it really takes you away and it's possible to go spend you know, you know, a long period have time in fantasy and sometimes the fantasy just you're lost in it don't even know you're in it until you wake up. And I've known a few people who have come to me when I was a meditation teacher on retreat. And they said to me, oh, I had a really hard day. So when this fantasy came along, I felt you know, it was really good break. Or I deserve to have I deserved that. I deserve to have this you know, period of good, you know, good, some good time because mostly it's been a bad time or something. So it's kind of competence story. It's wanting something you know, because it's, you know, they they hold on to it.

One of the interesting aspects of all desire, gripping desire, compelling desire, is the way in which it's true for all the hindrances but the way in which the operation of desire this desire, desire can act as a camouflage at the cost, the disadvantages of having that desire. So, for example, fantasizing about some wonderful thing you said, I can be so caught up in the desire, they don't realize that part of my mind is tense. Thinking about it, and always kind of was disconnected or a little bit part of me it's kind of, kind of it's kind of rich in a certain kind of mental way. But that it's really tiring. exhausting to kind of be involved in this kind of creation as a whole inner world that that I'm making up and I don't see the weariness of the tiredness, the exhaustion that setting in. Sometimes when people go on retreats, and you have day after day after day of this kind of stuff, then people start seeing the cost Oh, I'm so tired of it. It's so exhausting. It's so, you know, I'm so you know, please stop. But if you don't if you don't have the you don't have you know full dosage of it that way it can seem pretty alluring. You know, five minutes. Wow, you know, it's great. So and what so what are the forms of sexual desire people pursue and I think you can come up with a list as well as I can. But any of the sense doors can be you know, nice, nice sounds nice. Nice smells nice touches, with all kinds, nice, tastes, nice sights. And also nice mental thinking. So people like to work on puzzles, you know, mental problems. And I think sometimes what, it's not so much the puzzles they like, they like the kind of nice As a pleasure that can come through solving puzzles, it's a pleasure that they're attached to, rather than actually the, you
know, the problem. And part of sensual pleasure or desire for it is comfort, wanting to be comfortable. And that can be a very strong belief that it's important to be comfortable, that something is fundamentally wrong. If we're uncomfortable and something needs to be fixed, because you're supposed to always be comfortable. As I like to say, if you're only free when you're comfortable, you're not really free. So that's kind of a little bit of a general introduction to the whole the field of sensual desire. And hope that suffices because I want to turn it over to you to have some more discussion around this. And to see what wisdom comes out have you with us? So what I'd like to do is have you break into groups of five. And I think it'll work just about right. Thanks 50 people I think, and then I'd like to discuss a series of questions kind of like we did the reflective questions during the meditation. So once you're in your group, and once you've succeeded in getting gotten into group and gotten quiet, which means silence. Then I will give you the first question. So I went to and some of you can go to the outer Hall as well the speaker works out there. The speakers also work in the conference room there, if you'd like to go there.

Okay, so the first Question is, what are the various ways? What are the various ways that desire can feel like in your mind body? What are the How is how is desire experienced physically, mentally, when you're when you're under the compulsion of desire when there's a compelling desire. So why don't you explore that a little bit as a group and come up with a whole this variety of ways that might feel and that you can go around the circle you can whatever way feels right to you. And then, at some point in about four minutes or so I'll offer you the next question.

It does seem to be seems to me a bit of a pity to interrupt you and it's going so strongly. But let me ask you the next question for you to discuss. What are the disadvantages of pursuing sensual pleasure? Same central desire such a place okay.

You have that many desires.

So, one work one more question. And this may be, could be doesn't have might be brief we'll see what what it how it goes here. But so there's a question then instruction of how to do the question. The question is to offer Some of the things you've learned over your lifetime, that are effective ways of overcoming the seduction of sensual, the lure of sensual pleasure, what have you, what have you found it's useful to become free of you in a compulsion to pursue sensual pleasure. And what I like to ask you to do is to go around doing a circle and offer one thing, you know, just offer one thing, and then relatively briefly, you don't get the whole story of why you learned it. And, and just offer one thing, and then as the time allows, maybe you can go around again and maybe offer other things if you know, we'll see how, you know, that's way okay.

Okay, so you can just stay where you are, and we're going to stop, but stay where you are first. And let's take a about a 15 minute break and start again in 10 to three. And then before we take a break, we
mentioned that norodha support you exploring and working and becoming free, totally free of the hindrances in as Friedman is happy to have interview with you talk about to talk with talk about some issue or some questions or something you have about practicing with him. And if you're interested in having interview with her, you know, you have to work with her schedule. It might be some of them she might do before and after this This class this this day Long's, you know, come in at 830, rather than 930 or something. And if there's enough interest, you might set up some other day, like a Tuesday, some once a month or something, and be here and be available for interviews. So but if you're interested in doing being part of that, there's a clipboard at the edge of the end of the stage there. And during this break, it might be a good time to sign up for that. And then we'll start again in 15 minutes. Oh, also, I have three handouts today. There's one is a set of reflections that you can do hopefully at home for the next month on this, these topics. And then another is a set of practices to do over the next month. And the third is a double handout two pages, which has quotes from the Buddha around this these topics. And so you can help yourself during a break too.