

# 2009-02-27 The Five Hindrances Sloth And Torpor 2 of 3

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

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## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So, for this next hour, I have in mind to do two things. The second thing to do is, is you do a little bit glad to be a little bit. I'm hearing myself too much echoey that's, can you hear me now? Okay. So that, I'll tell you the second thing and then the first thing to do. The second thing is to break up into smaller groups and do a similar thing around sloth, torpor, dullness, lethargy, whatever your way manifests. And describe it with your experience of it the same way we described being energized so that balanced energy that we saw earlier, to get a wide range of kind of descriptions of how people experience it for themselves. And but to do it in smaller groups. So everyone has a chance to speak a little bit. And I'll say more about how that's done before we break up. And then the first thing before doing that, I would like to spend more time on the topic of energy. And that have you break up into pairs, and then spend about maybe seven minutes or so for each one, each one each person could speak for about seven minutes, the other person mostly just listens and takes it in. And, and as you speak for seven minutes, it's mostly a chance for you to be personally reflective, you're not really trying to explain something to the other person. So like the other person has the needs, needs to be the recipient for you know, and it's not for their sake, it's for your own sake that you're talking so it's, it's good if these kinds of is kind of your own personal exploration. And so meaning that if you find yourself saying something, that you know, the conclusion really well or a story That you've said 10 times before and you know the story really well. You know, try to speed it up a little bit or, you know, jump ahead or, you know, try to credit find someplace where you're kind of close a little bit you have to kind of, say what you know, it's kind of get the ball going in your mind and your heart, but also see is to kind of see, can you bring yourself to new understanding new exploration by exploring this? And so the topic is, is just is what is your relationship to energy being energized by vitality? So, for example, it could be that you say, Oh, it's never never thought about as much. You know, sometimes it seems like I have energy well enough, sometimes I'm tired, sometimes or energized. There's not really there are other issues which are much bigger in my life. Or someone else might say, this is the number one issue, you know, that having enough energy and it just I struggle with this all the time. Or, you know, it's a whole range of things you might say, but what what is your personal relationship given Your history your life with this idea, this topic of being energized or having vitality, for engaging in life. And, and, and the reason I said the second thing first was, I didn't want you to get bogged down. In the first conversation around sloth sloth and torpor with dullness side, you might have talked a little bit about that. You might say, Oh, I'm really tired a lot. But later to be a chance to explore more talk more of a description of what happens to you when you're dull or lethargic or something. And so I just want to kind of an exploration of your relationship to being energized. I realized maybe for some of you, it's a little bit vague way to begin to begin the exploration but hopefully you can kind of the vagueness actually helps you to find your own way in it. There's no should here there's no right way of doing this, you know, no route, there's no right

answer. So it unless you want one. And so you just kind of know so when you do this kind of exploration With someone who's listening, don't worry too much about being right. You know, like, it's actually sometimes you might actually take the risk a little bit and say things which maybe you're not quite sure of this really represents you so well as a way of exploring you'll find out in retrospect Oh, that didn't quite work or Yes, that did work. And so it's a little bit you're trying to explore yourself reflect more deeply. This Okay, enough. You guys game. So why don't you find a partner and then I'll ring a bell when you start time the seven minutes, don't ring a bell to end it, and then you switch roles.

You're next to go ahead. Go ahead.

I purse would appreciate a clear understanding or definition of energy. Because my partner and I both talked about

feeling energized by physical activities like swimming or hiking and

but we also understand that there's a mental energy when things are going on. And then so I'm so I'm not clear what energy is. And I feel like everybody is clear.

As I tried to say earlier that was to keep it. There's a virtue in being vague, because I hope the hope wasn't picking a vague you'll find yourself in it, rather than trying to fit the you know, find your own way because it's I don't want to be too specific. And it's going to miss some people everyone has this is such a personal thing, the idea of energy and being energized and vitality and how it manifests and how it's expressed and how it's tapped into that. I'd rather They'll leave it to kind of that was the hope without leaving it vague you could find yourself but realize Thank you can you pass it to sue Kim Sue has been trying up there on the stage.

It's on now.

So, so we talked about three stages, you know, vitality stage and three of them the vitality stage, you know, I said

it's more

a lot of ideas comes a lot of energy codes going on and

and want to do something, you know, almost like a getting up to do. Em, and among the three stages, what I found is the shift, the seconds, the middle stage and the sloppy stage when I When I go into this stage, I cannot I cannot recognize the shift of the point at the time the shift. So if I can catch the shift, I can stay, you know, stay awake and be in a middle stage. Great. Great. Thank

you. Another mic

is this.

The green light is on by Can you hear me?

Okay, I'm not being recorded.

Okay.

I don't want to be on the internet.

What have you noticed? I guess it's a comment on the question. Actually, the comment is that I've noticed I mean, not just today, but I mean today I noticed that even more but in general, I've noticed about myself that

Lately,

where I guess energy has been a more important topic for me, but I've been kind of struggling with it seems to be more dependent on external factors. Such as, as I was sharing with my partner, you know, seeing a little happy kids smile, you know, boosts my energy or receiving a kind voicemail from someone I know on my answering machine boosts my energy or high energy music. It's all external factors that kind of give me a, it may be a temporary boost, but still it's a boost. So that's the observation and then I guess the question is, those external factors or external factors, they're out there, they're out of my control, and they are not consistently in my life. You know, the little kids I literally have to be on the lookout for them in the grocery store to find them, just to give me the energy

or You know, or

someone you know,

or someone deciding to leave me a kind message on my machine again, it's all out of my control, which is not a good place to be. So the question is, how can I make it less dependent? My energy less dependent on external factors? Or under my own internal control? I wish I could do that.

I think it's a great, it's a great question. And I don't have a, you know, a, you know, maybe a good answer for you, but it might want to look at, it isn't just external. There's something going on internally in you as well. There's some value, some evaluation, some sense of self, some, some some inside of you some searching out there. So the question is, what's, what's happening? What's inside of you, that responds to the external stimulus? What's there even before you get the good email before you see the child what's up already in place inside of you. Is there that? Is there a searching? Is there emptiness? Is there. Know what's going on inside of you that something external energizes you. So I think that's what the investigation should be.

From the, I just would like to say I'm confused also about the whole concept of energy. So you're not the only one. Based on what my partner she went first talked about, what it said with in my mind is the sheets they talk about in yoga. So there's the mental sheet, the physical sheet, and suddenly it occurred to me they talk about an energetic sheet. And I realized that I'm not in touch at all with that energetic sheath. What I think of is the manifestation of it. So like if I have energy to go to the gym and I have energy But it's not in tune with, like what I am with my physical sheets. So I'm really at a loss really at a loss have to a recognize or become aware of or, you know, whatever the words would be of that. I'll keep using the word the body sheets of that level within me that is the energetic component of my physical of me.

Great. So great. Okay. Well, you know, the word energy is extremely vague word and lends itself to a lot of strange ideas around energy and, and people use the word almost too easily the energies going this way in that way in median. You know, it was good energy between us. It's a very vague word, so I

apologize for the vagueness of it. So that's why I try to use some synonyms like vitality. Or being energetically engaged or something. So. So I think it's well worth exploring some more. But I wouldn't get I wouldn't get you you weren't but I wouldn't get missed it would not get mystical about that this idea of energy. It's not such a strange idea. It's more like, the vitality, the effort, the strength that's there in order to engage in life and activity. And so,

but that seems as you say, that seems to preface a mental concept

unnecessarily, unnecessarily. So, I mean, it could be so simple as you know, some people work out in the gym and you come out of the gym, you feel a lot of kind of vitality or energy or engagement or live in this kind of coursing through the some of the muscles in the body. And you feel kind of you walk down the street a bit more bouncy because you feel all this and then other times If someone feels, you know, they really really just been dragging, they've been working a lot and haven't had enough sleep or enough to eat. Yesterday For example, I came home at five o'clock I was really hungry, but there was no dinner. And so and so I started making dinner and, and I got a little bit you know, my kids have been expecting homemade pasta which I've never made before. So I hear I was tired, hungry, trying to figure out with a six year old who thought he knew how to do it, how to make homemade pasta, and I and I could, you know, I could feel myself dragging. And so their their you know, their energy or the vitality there was to engage Wasn't there. So. So anyway,

in having the opportunity to share

with my partner, I was very familiar with energy. And it's I was I became aware that it's really been sort of a part of my life and it also could translate to anxiety. And that I started because you gave us so much time to fill. I started

to

I started

being very energetic in my reflection and found that it was actually it's also been a huge negative for me over my lifetime because

there's energetic way that comes with anxiety

that and I've attracted as many people as I've repelled, I just the energy makes, I think it makes me feel bigger and I'm somewhat addicted to it. And you helped me with that. You helped me recognize that,

but we've talked about this. But,

I mean, it's I,

I need to be more compassionate with myself about both extremes. And that this is sort of a time in my life, I figured now's a good time. I mean, why not?

That I have to have a different relationship with

it. Great. You and I've talked about it a bit, you know, it just it sort of has manifested physically and I just, it's a good time to sort of not necessarily be the most energetic person in the place.

He says Great. So some people have a relationship with they're addicted to it. And they kind of they kind of get the adrenaline and all that that comes with it. And some people can be afraid of their being energized or being really active. So there's this fear is connected to this issue as well for some people. Please, I'm sorry

to take it back. But But

Yeah,

what occurred to me I thought

of the Dalai Lama. Now this is a man who I've never

met, obviously, but his energy level,

from what people report in the lifestyle he's is, is fairly stable, what we're talking about here today seems to be very much based on some external, you know, I have the energy to do the activity, I'm trying to find that place where there that just like the mind where there's a stability of the energy and that you're prepared to either go to the gym or you're prepared to make vipassana,

but it's not this.

So what you're interested in is having a stable so it doesn't jump up and down, which is your, your experience

and how to how to claim that, you know, I mean, I mean, you know how I mean had, you know, have you had a claim that hadn't even create that, you know, I'm a little bit better off with a body with a mind of how to get that kind of concentrate, but how to do that on the That level. So it's not that you go to the gym and you feel pumped up that you get

to do, okay. And I think I think I think the first thing to do is to recognize anybody recognize the pattern they have with this. And some people have a pattern of being up and down and up and down and take another caffeine and take another horror movie, take something to get up. And, and then, and then they crash and up and down. And at some point, they realize this is not a useful way to live, and it's another way and so then they explore something, maybe it's more balanced or something, it's more sustainable over time. We're healthy. So just realizing this and being interested in alternatives, huge first step. Okay, maybe a couple more and then I want to switch here.

I'm particularly concerned about when I get in a low energy state. It translate, I don't know which comes first of course in this probably

Both but I get

I tend to get more crabby. And in my and I just yesterday morning ended up saying something to my husband. I just never went in a different energy state. It wasn't catastrophic, thank goodness but and I

apologize later but and I looked back and I it was partly that I had awakened feeling kind of Draggy that I told myself, I had gotten enough hours of sleep, and that wasn't a good excuse. And I think in retrospect, I just didn't acknowledge and I think you're right, it's so important to acknowledge

might have been some judgment also, that I should I should have been different. I shouldn't be this way. It's not okay. Right.

Yeah. Right. And, and that it just seems so important because it has to do with how I treat other people. Yeah, I agree. And so I went To be able to work with it more skillfully, I guess.

Thank you. Maybe one more Sonia there.

Yeah, I had a group with my dog. And we figured that we both are kind of very high energy. And for me personally, it's a question of how do I channel it. And I really in light in light, I really like my energy level. And I've come to accept that if that is high, and also, I find being tired or excited, is just natural. It doesn't have anything to do with my energy level, though my energy is pretty much kind of always the same. There's ups and downs, sure. But even if I'm tired, I'm compassionate about my being tired. And that's it. That's how I channeled my energy into being tired. I'm not perfectly good at it yet, but I realized that as soon as I use my skill to channel my energy, no matter which kind, it's okay, if I don't do it, it can get destructive, destructive, destructive. And so that's the way I handled or deal with this, it's important that the more I learn to accept it, that this is an option, then I feel extremely comfortable with the way I'm great.

So one of the things that's important here as we explore this whole thing of energy or being a vitality or being dull or hyped up or whatever, that each individual person is going to have their own level, which is their kind of natural level, so called natural level. And so some people have a much more strongly energetic people by nature, some people are much more settled or calm or low energy kind of people by nature. So it's very important not to expect that you're supposed to look If someone else, but to find what's right for each individual, then how to work with that appropriately. Along that line, the there are so many new individual variations between people and we have to respect that. One of the interesting variations is what is it that brings energy to people? When do I know how do people get filled, rejuvenated or feel rejuvenated or enlivened or, you know, engaged. And there There seems to be, in very general terms, two major categories of people, those people who get energized from being with people, and those people who get tired from that, and, and, and get energized more from time alone. And I was wondering, maybe, if you're willing enough to raise your hand if you don't want to, but show of hands, how many here feel like they are more likely to get energized from being with people socializing. Both and now how many how many get energized more more from being alone? So but certainly both can happen as well. But there is difference. I mean, I think they're the decamps individuals can find a difference. And there are some people who, you know, find they get drained by being around people too much, they need a time alone. Some people find they get drained from being alone too much, that somehow that's what lowers their energy, and they actually need to have that contact. And so knowing where you are in that spectrum, helps us know how to live wisely in the world. And unless we must be respectful of how we're different from each other than this way, then any kind of advice you're given about how to practice with energy or vitality, you know, might not take into account these differences that are there. Okay, so do we feel ready to switch down to the second thing, exercise So, what I like to do suggest is that you break into groups of eight, seven or eight. And that you go around the circle. And, and you talk about your own experience with this this thing with sloth and torpor, the felt sense of it. I don't even know this is not a seven minute monologue. So you know, because you don't have that much time but you're going to go around. But what it what you say something succinct,

about what you know about your experience of what could fit under the category of sloth and torpor, and everyone's been might have very different take on what that is. But dullness lethargy, resistance, tiredness, swamp, Enos, drag Enos draining, drained, draining, neat graininess. You know, so what, what's that experience like for you? What's your relationship to students very succinct. Just go on. Run the circles with your each group you can hear different variations on this. Okay? And then when you finish going around the circle once and you can go around a circle twice depending how much time there is just kind of go around and massage this topic as a group. Okay so groups of seven or eight