

2009-06-07 Three Paths of Buddhist Practice

Fri, 8/14 4:12PM • 44:00

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

path, people, develop, mindfulness, religion, letting, buddhism, practice, buddhist path, understanding, greater, life, comparing, qualities, clinging, buddhist practice, teachers, important, idea, matures

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

I thought I would talk on the same topic. As I talked on last night, I gave a talk here last night. And so if some of you were here last night, I apologize for repeating myself. It's part of the occupational hazard of being a Dharma teachers get to repeat yourself a lot.

So Buddhism, traditionally has not called itself a religion, but rather it's called itself a path. And a path is something that you don't this you're not meant to admire from a distance, but rather something you're meant to walk to enter into and engage in. And so what does it mean for Buddhism to be a path? What does it mean to be for there to be a path? And in the history of Buddhism, there are different answers to that question. There are different Just to the path. And I'd like to offer about three approaches that people take. They're not exclusive of each other, but there are times where sometimes teachers or different traditions even will choose one over the others to be the primary emphasis. And the three approaches to the path is the first one is the idea of a develop developmental path. The second is a path of letting go and the third is a path of no path that there is no path. So, developmental model of the path is utilizes kind of our ordinary experience of many things in life and human life or developmental our children grow developmentally and our school systems is built around helping the children to develop and learn. And there are stages in human growth that don't end at 18 but also continue into old age. And people develop it's kind of very obvious, we develop skills, capacities we develop. So, if you learn a musical instrument, you start off perhaps with no ability at all. And then through regular practice, you develop that capacity or in sports, you develop a capacity there. You learn a language you start not knowing it at all, but do a lot of practice develops more and more. So, the same thing with our inner life, our so called spiritual life or psychological life, things can be developed there and you can develop we can develop our capacity for patience, we can develop our capacity for the coming concentrated time A lot of skills requires some degree of concentration. So sometimes we develop concentration with a skill. We can develop our capacity for integrity, and honesty. We can develop our capacity for greater mindfulness, for compassion, for joy, for happiness, or equanimity, for calm, a lot of these things can be developed. And so we're not just left with how we just happened to be given how we're born or whatever caused the conditions. But we can actually choose to develop certain qualities that we have, because we feel it's beneficial to do that. If you find yourself being miser miserly all the time and you feel this is not a good way of living. Maybe I'll cultivate not just the act of being generous, but a greater spirit of generosity. And see what I can do to develop that and cultivate that. Greater listening skills. Some people realize that they don't listen very much to their friends or to their loved ones or something. And after being told that 100 times, maybe I better learn to listen better and so we develop our capacity to listen. And maybe it takes a while to learn that we develop our capacity at discernment, or to use to reflect to think, to think critically to think wisely about things. And so all these things can be learned and developed and it's quite beautiful to meet someone who you feel is has developed some some of these qualities we see an athlete to is proficient in wonderful ino has mastered certain kind of sports, and is

often quite beautiful to see that or an artist or musician. And same way with some some people who develop some of these beautiful inner qualities. And we can meet people who have a very high degree of integrity or very strong sense of inner discipline or have a strong sense of calm or loving kindness, a variety of things. And it can be inspiring to meet someone not because they not only because they have those qualities, it can be inspiring because you've seen them develop those qualities. We can feel the how that's been built over time. And as a teacher,

I've been teacher long enough now to have watched the students start off by being new students, and then practicing and practicing and practicing over the years, and then to see how much they grow and develop over time and it's quite inspiring to me to see the change, especially given where some of you started.

Speak nothing about myself. I was a mess and so so classically, Buddhism has taken this developmental model to heart for understanding the path. someone, someone who's interested in the path that the Buddha taught, would then engage in developing some of these inner qualities. Because some qualities that we can develop, are supportive of a path to liberation to freedom are supportive for the path that the Buddha was talking to talk talk teaching. There are certainly qualities which are not helpful for the path. You know, you know, in, in, I guess in poker, it's really good to develop a skill to have a, you know, do they lie in poker, so what they do, or they kind of bluff Bluff, you know, and some people have great capacity and they can be trained and develop that capacity and it's a really great skill if you want to play poker. It's not I never heard it ever had any role. demo practice. So that's not a skill to be developed, you know, it's not emphasized. So there's skills to be developed and skills to be avoided. And so there's a whole set of skills which then the traditions and emphasizes, and somebody, a lot of these skills are there to help us learn how to meditate or help us have a calm and stable mind. So that we feel good about ourselves. So that it's possible to have a stable mind so we can have deeper insight into our life. So practices like ethics is very, very important practice of generosity, practices of loving kindness, compassion are these are all important qualities because they develop ourselves they develop good qualities, these skills inside of us, and also the foundation for feeling good about ourselves. And both the skills that come with doing those practices and feeling good about ourselves are very helpful then, for engaging on the further steps of the path like many Practice, for example. And then as at some point when the mind heart is well developed, it's become very strong and stable and calm and centered, not agitated by the things. So the world has kind of like great stability, then it's sometimes it's possible to see into the nature of our life in a way that's not possible if the mind is agitated. So now the disadvantage of or the shadow side of this path of development is that the goal is sometimes put far into the future. And the goal is held up also as kind of as something to attain and as soon as we have something to attain, there are a number of people who will tie themselves in knots and trying to attain it, or tie themselves in knots and comparing themselves Well, I'm not good enough for that it's too lofty for me, I could never do that. Or I've been trying this for a long time, and I've only made a smidgen of progress, or, in fact, I've gone backwards. And so the very disk can be very discouraging. There's a fortunate thing of people comparing themselves to others. You know, I'm so much better than everyone else. Thank you, you know, you know, I've I've preached something or, you know, everyone else seems to be on the verge of Buddhahood. And why am I so far behind? Sometimes in putting off the idea of a goal is in the future. Sometimes people don't appreciate the present very much the present becomes something that's not very desirable or important or valuable, because in the present is not the goal. And so we have to kind of figure out how to work with a present just enough to get beyond it. Sometimes teachings of transcendence or avoidance or dismissive or world renouncing kind of qualities come up When there's a kind of an emphasis of a goal that's far into the future, then there is a second approach, which I'm calling the path of letting go. And there are some teachers who will emphasize just let go, let go, let go just do whatever you can to let go.

And often supporting the this idea of this path of letting go is that it's the there. There are clouds in front of this in front of the sun. And if we can just clear the clouds will see the sun. So if we can just clear away our

you know our attachments or greed or hate and clear away our things we hold on to our distracted mind preoccupations of our mind. If we can clear away things, then something beautiful within us simply radiant will shine forth. So it's not a matter of developing something that's radiant. But rather clearing the clearing the field to clearing the space to realize that the radiance is always here, it tends to be a very positive message because it has idea that's inherent in us to some very good qualities, inherent goodness or something. It's just a matter of clearing, clearing away to experience it. So we let go of a lot of doing and meditation that in this case, it's not a matter of doing something getting concentrated, but letting go of the distractions, letting go of the preoccupations that maybe would keep us from getting concentrated, the results might be the same, but in developmental path, it would be a little bit more like, I'm going to hold my mind active, strong will and be concentrated. The letting go path would be I'm not going to do anything to get concentrated. I'm just going to let go of all the distractions and then you find your Self settling into a kind of more concentrated space. The

idea of letting go lends itself sometimes to the unfortunate circumstance of people letting go of things they shouldn't let go of people who will be over enthusiastic about letting go. And, and so that sometimes, you know, sometimes it's very nice to simplify one's life radically. But sometimes the letting go happens with a kind of dismissive quality like these things are bad that I have. So there are people who I've known who've given away all their money think money was evil, or, you know, given up their sexuality or given up all kinds of things, thinking that made them more spiritual. The I believe the idea in Buddhism isn't the path is not made up of letting go have things but rather letting go of our clinging to things. And if there's no clinging to things, whether we useful to keep the things, that's the second best, that's another question. But it's a core issue is our clinging to things, not the things themselves. So in letting go of clinging, the also when the path is the path of letting go, sometimes the emphasis is on precludes really understanding what it is we're letting go of. The path of development often has a very important part of seeing clearly learning to be discerning and understanding of what goes on the path of letting go. Sometimes you can let go of things too quickly. And you haven't really learned the lessons of that you haven't really seen understood what it is you're letting go of. Part of the danger of that is that if you don't understand what you let go of, often it comes back. But if you really understand something, well, then it's less likely to come back and bother us. Or comes back in a different roundabout way. So

now these two paths, the path the development path of letting go can also be seen as mutually supportive. If you want to learn how to hang from the edge of the diving board and like go, which is a nice thing to do as a kid, it's fun. But first you want to learn how to swim. So, certain kinds of letting go maybe it's better to develop yourself, develop some inner strength, some inner stability, develop some greater self understanding or develop greater street smarts about how to be in the world, before we let go of certain things, so they can be supportive that way those two paths also, it's easier to develop our selves if we let go, there are things which we hold on to, it's hard to develop good qualities. So we have to also learn how to let go. Now the path of no path is a little bit hard to discuss partly because there may be different approaches within that tab two sub sub tasks within that are sub understandings. The path of note path is that says that there is no path there's no ultimate, there's no place to go, nothing to get that ultimate reality is right here now. And the very idea that there's progress and something to attain is a kind of delusion and delusion or an illusion. And, and what we have to do is we have to wake up out of that dream of progress to wake up out of the dream of separation from the reality through reality. And, and, in fact, the very idea that there's a path and progress to be made, belongs to the

realm of delusion, and actually keeps you in the realm of delusion. And so rather than helping you become free, it actually maybe keeps you from being free. And what we have to do is to, you know, just wake up directly into the true nature of ultimate reality, which is here, right, right now. The problem with that is how you do that? How are you supposed to do that, you know, wake up like that, you know, it's nice for you to tell me, thank you. But, you know, now what? I'm not supposed to have a path and that's what's a practice, but, you know, I don't see it the way you see it. So what am I supposed to do? It's a little bit ironic, I think that sometimes the paths of note paths, sometimes will put a tremendous emphasis on teachers. Teachers become very important, because the teacher it's either you have it or you don't have it. And, and the teacher has it, and the teacher points at he points it out. And then if somehow the charisma or the power of the teacher kind of wakes you up or shows it to you or something. And sometimes works great, I know people who go further hit and then they have to wears off they come back again for another hit, ultimate reality and so of course ultimate reality has no path. And however, you know, they're, they're the road to the teachers well worn

the but it's a another reason why then no path is very, very compelling is that it's a little bit has the perspective of life from the point of view of someone who has some degree of spiritual maturity of awakening when there's some degree of awakening often Present Moment is seen as being complete or certain some people talk about it feels perfect just the way things are perfect just the way they are. And little bit that happens because with awakening, there is dropping away, of comparative thinking, neurotically comparing, and most suffering that human beings have around self, I think happens because of some kind of comparative thinking. We compare ourselves to others. I'm better, I'm worse. I compare myself to ideals. I'm better and worse than that ideal. They're supposed to live by the shoulds. We compare ourselves to past and future. We have ideas about the future and how it should be. We have ideas about the past what happened and we can look at it we measure ourselves, and there's a constant measuring of things. And the measuring of our life measuring of ourselves often has, it involves degree of virtual reality in that it has to do with ideas and concepts that have very little to do with what's actually happening here now. So, I mean, if I told you all that I suffer horribly, because I just, you know, I don't speak Uyghur. You don't even know what we guys do. Uyghur is a dead language that they spoke in parts of Turkey. So, you know, we wonder what's going on with Gil and suffering because of thinking weaker. You know, that's kind of silly but, but there's a lot of things that a lot of reasons we suffer because we hold on to ideas and memories. We hold on to projections into the future, I think should be where there's a lot of anxiety. A lot of anxiety that people have is about maybe all anxiety as opposed to fear. All anxiety is about Things that are imaginary fears, more real to something, it's more concrete, you know, the mountain lion is walking down birch Street and so you see it. But to be anxious that there's a mountain lion walking down the street that's imaginary. You know, you see it that's not so. So to be awake is to stop, to wake up partly to wake up from the way our thinking and our measuring and comparing is constantly engaged in understanding our life. And if we stop that comparative thinking, you just see life as it actually is in the immediacy here. And now. More often than not, it tends to be to be experienced as being beautiful. I've known people who have walked out of a retreat center, that they're meditating for some days and seen trash on the side of the road. And they'll stand there and all looking at that trash. Wow. Isn't that beautiful? Wow. Look how the glistening that candy wrapper the silver nets is. It's amazing. And as opposed to, you know, some other, you know, just because somebody thinks glisten standout The first time I had some experience like this you know, not only the world around me seemed so beautiful the way I had never seen before. It's like, Am I on drugs, it's so beautiful. I wasn't it was just two things stood out and highlight and clarity, but also my inner life stood out with great clarity. And, and, and it felt to have this tremendous intimacy with thoughts and feelings. Nothing was bad, nothing was good or just things happening, arising and happening. And so that path of note path is partly a path where we don't succumb to the temptations of comparing and measuring ourselves. And the very as I said earlier, the very idea of having a goal in the future below you know,

can lead To kind of neurotic preoccupation about something imaginary, the goal is imaginary if it's not attained here and now. And so too, so the path of note path emphasizes partly letting go of ideas of path, ideas of attainment, and just relaxing and just being fully present here and see how I'm going to insight into this experience of life right here.

So I talked about how the first two paths, the path of development and the path of letting go can work together. So all three can work together as well. We can develop ourselves to some degree so that we're strong enough to be able to let go of certain things. So you develop our mindfulness enough, so we see how much I'm clinging to to Security. So then I can see Oh, I think it'd be useful to let go of that clinging to security, because that's really, you know, preoccupying me a lot interfering with my life. So then you can let go of that insecurity, which allows us perhaps to focus more on developing more mindfulness and greater clarity. As the mindfulness gets stronger, we see how much we're caught up in ideas. And some think it's possible to drop the ideas. And then dropping ideas gives us an insight or a vision of life without always being mediated through concepts, ideas, measurements and comparisons. And that's can be quite a beautiful thing to see. Wow, look at that. It says, life is simpler than I realized. To be happy is simpler than I realized. And that happiness then supports me perhaps encourages us to develop more mindfulness. The greater mindfulness helps us to see deeper places more subtle places where we're still holding where we can let go. which in itself provides for greater insight greater understanding greater vision of what it's like to have a mind which is free. of is which is free. So three different ways of the path. Some people love to do and doesn't matter if they get anywhere they just like the activity being engaged. Some people don't like to do and unless they can do the better and, and so sometimes letting go is really good for people who don't want to do just let go let go because more relaxing let go. Sometimes the path of no path, people fool themselves. They think they've attained something. But mostly it's it's a path of no path I've seen so teachers would teach it. It's very conceptual, where they have beautiful kind of arguments of why there should be no path, how things are ultimate here now. And, and then people kind of get it, you get kind of a intuitive sense of it, or conceptual sense of it. And then people relate to that conceptual sense of it, rather than some deep, deep insight. Also, both the path of Nope, the path of letting go and the path of a note that tends to limit how much self understanding people develop. The path of development tends to come with much more understanding the causes and conditions, understanding our psychology and how we work. The path of note path, there's no need for a path, there's no need to learn anything. And so sometimes then there's not a greater understanding about our psychology, how we work, how we take how we operate. And, and so sometimes there's a kind of, I've seen in various Buddhist schools that have the note path approach certain kind of mythologies arising, and some mythology kind of kind of supernatural beliefs become important because they don't have the traditional Buddhist psychology to understand how we operate deep inside. So finally, what I would like to say about one or two more things,

the path a path can have two different functions. A path can be a path that takes you someplace. And a path can be a path that you work just because you enjoy the VISTA is doing the work. And so the Buddhist path can have both ways as well. They can take you someplace, but also each step along the way can be enjoyable and I think this is very important. believes very important to have both things in mind that the Buddhist path does take us someplace to greater freedom, greater compassion, but also that each step along the way, is satisfying and meaningful. And I'd encourage all of you who are engaged in mindfulness practice in Buddhist practice, to see if you can find an understanding of what you're doing. So that you understand that each moment of mindfulness each day of practice, was meaningful was SR satisfying was significant. Because to only measure the value of the path by where you get to where you're going to get led lends itself to discouragement and itself to disappointment, lends itself to striving and pushing too hard and lends itself to not appreciating a certain level of joy and satisfaction that's possible to have each step along the way. And the more each step along the way is

meaningful and satisfying, the more we're going to want to walk that path and be Supported by being nourished by it. I've known people who have huffed and puffed in their Buddhist practice, and felt they didn't attain anything. And then felt bitter. I put so much time and effort into this Buddhism stuff. And it's I felt, I failed, I failed or it failed or something and now I'm bitter. But if we really, truly understand that one moment of mindfulness to see clearly what's happening here, to let go of some kind of clinging we have right here now, that is satisfying. If you put your hand on a hot stove, it's satisfying to remove it. If you are clinging to something, hopefully you see that it's satisfying to let go of that clinging, the real relief that comes there

in a moment of mine For Mrs. meaningful, and I'd like to say that a moment of mindfulness is a moment of seeing something clearly for what it is. Without being for and against what we're mindful of. Awakening is to be fully presidency, this reality we're living in, without, with the mind not being for or against this experience, with consciousness, nothing for against. I said that because both mindfulness and awakening share very similar qualities. And as possible, understand that, that the goal of freedom is reflected in the means. And I think it's very useful to keep that as a kind of background approach to engaging in the path is that the goal should be reflected in the means. Meaning that if the goal is to be awake, and start paying attention, if the goal is to be Free of clinging, start letting go of your clinging Now, if the goal is to be generous, start practicing generosity. If the goal is to become compassionate, start practicing compassion. If the goal is to be peaceful, start being peaceful. Somehow, the goal and the means and the goal shouldn't be seen as being so separate from each other. But rather, they exist kind of together. And, and we and they, they, one grows into the other one matures. Our capacity for mindfulness grow. Our practice of mindfulness matures into awakening, our practice of letting go matures into freedom, our practice of peace matures into greater sense of peace, our practice of kindness matures into great loving kindness. So it's not an all or nothing kind of thing, which is one of the traps that some people have when they do Buddhist practice is they think, oh, there is a path. And, and it's just I'm gonna, you know, do something a little while, and then I'll discover the keys to enlightenment. And they'll be this bang, Big Bang, sudden, dramatic opening experience and that's it. Now I'm awake and just people sit there waiting for that big bang waiting for that to experience. And I don't know if our experiences there are momentary, very powerful experiences to be had. But I think a more mature approach to the path is that is that it's a slow growth it's a slow unfolding to slow development is slow slow manifestation of who we are of development. And as we go along the path, there are some times when the developmental side of it is most meaningful and significant. Sometimes we're still letting go side of it which is most significant and meaningful. And sometimes what's most significant is the idea That there is no path, but that it's what we're what to be attained, or what's to be experienced is right here. Now. Whichever one understanding of your path you have I would like to say that in Buddhism, there is no obligation for you to walk the path. There's no obligation. In some religions, there's some sense of some kind of divine obligation to live a certain kind of way. In Buddhism, there's no obligation so you don't become more worthy. You know, your inherent worthiness is not dependent on following the path. It's useful to think we're already inherently worthy people. And, and then on top of that, there's a path that you might want to walk. If you're interested in becoming happy and free in the way that Buddhism talks about. Then Buddhism does offer a path for that possibility. And so if you're interested You can volunteer. And if you're not interested, then there are certainly other things to do. So we have a couple of minutes here. If anyone wants to ask any questions. Yes, in the back there. This is one of those are good questions. It's been making me think for a while. You started off by saying Buddhism wasn't a religion. Rather it was a path. Can you clarify in what ways it is or which way it is a religion. It is a reason to religion. Well, I need to clarify that because we're public here is being recorded. We are definitely a religion. Because our nonprofit status depends on

we're just a religion that calls itself a path.

I've been told that is in the back in Soviet Union days, that the Buddhists in Russia and the Soviet Union, they would say we're not a religion. Because back in the Soviet times being a religion was not so, you know, communist times not so good. Religion is the opiate of the masses kind of thing, right? So to Buddhism quite flexible, you know, we're kind of, you know, you know, religion, not religion, you know, you know, play whatever game is useful. The word religion is a Western word. And they really got in Italian, they're likely to join together. And so you could do all kinds of beautiful things about it's a joining together people around certain common ideals. It's showing together with something it's ultimate you know, but what is religion? I have a degree in religious studies, and when the first things you do when you take classes in religious studies, the fascination Students will pull out their hair struggling to come up with a definition of what a religious religion is. and religious studies professors have a hard time with it. And one of the one of the reasons is that because of Buddhism, because a lot of the definitions of religion have God is, you know, some kind of God thing and, you know, God's kind of at the center of it, and then they say, well, the Buddhists you know, they don't have this God in the same way and but it's a religion, how do we fit it in now and so but it's a Western idea, concepts a word. And what's interesting is that, I think that when Western languages like English were translated into Japanese or Hindi, or different kind of things, they didn't have an easy word for the English word religion, because it wasn't a native word. And so I know in Japan, they invented a word. To to translate the English word, or the question word religion into Japanese. So now they have a perfectly good word, but they had to invent it about 120 years ago, I don't know when. So it raises the question, what does it mean to be religion? And how do we define it? And there are many definitions of religion. Some people, some people don't like the word religion at all, or they don't like being part of religion. And people will say, I'm not religious, I'm spiritual. And then so that works for some people, but then you have to, what does it mean to be no different people have different definitions of religion, you know, different people have different definitions of God or spirituality. So you almost have to ask, you know, how do you define these words for yourself? And, and so in contrasting Buddhism with you know, saying it's not a religion, it's a path. You know, if what a religion is, too many people in the West will associate religion With tenants of belief, and in Buddhism, there are kind of beliefs and kind of tenants. But that's not really the point. It's not so important to articles of faith that we this is what I believe in and not kill other people believe differently. But rather, what's important is the practice the proxy part. And so that's why path is a more useful label for Buddhism than, you know, maybe perhaps a religion. Or we could say we're a religious path. So I know I'm going on and on. But is that adequate? I'm wondering, is mindfulness enough? I mean, can I just focus on mindfulness as opposed to the as opposed to a path? For what purpose? What are you trying to accomplish? Freedom from the clinging and the suffering. Is my is mindfulness enough to become feeling free, become free of clinging and suffering? What do you think? for yourself? That's all I'm doing. That's all you're doing. It's helping. It's helping so you don't know if that's gonna run out of gas? Could you? Can you think of something else you might be able to do? Or maybe you're already doing that might be supportive of the goal of freedom from clinging. This is where I get confused. So I mean, a very simple thing is, you came here today. So listening to this in the Dharma, hopefully you think it's helpful, that's why you're here. So that's one thing.

There's a A discourse of the Buddha gave where he's in a dialogue with a, a some kind of deity. The deity says something like mindfulness is enough. And the Buddha says Nope. Is it said mindfulness and loving kindness together are enough? Sometimes you need to have loving kindness as well as part of it. So to have, so you might, for example, see it experiment and see if cultivating greater loving kindness supports both your mindfulness and your capacity to become free. So, you know, and you might look at, for example, practices like speech. Can you really take on looking at speech and working with speech working with some of the guidelines for non speech, will that help you To become mindful

and to help you in this process, we have developed certain qualities that support what you're doing. Classically in the mindfulness tradition, and we are, it's considered very, very helpful to couple concentration with mindfulness. So not just let mindfulness be there by itself, but also develop concentration, strong concentration. Some teachers say that concentration follows nicely in the wake of mindfulness practice. And some teachers say you should actually cultivate concentration separately, and then at some point when these two together so there's a variety of things. But you know, I would I really put it I would put it like I did put it back on you to use your mindfulness and then and then have a spirit of trial and error. It's a great question you asked and see if we go run late. You see we have all kinds of problems. The I think that one of the wonderful approaches to any notion of a Buddhist path to Buddhist practice is to approach it as a trial and error approach. And with a trial and error, it's useful to remember that's going to be a lot of air. And we learn from that so I mean, some people will say, occasionally people say, there actually is no path. The path is always trying to find your path is made up of looking for it. But another idea that path is that the path there's a path, but mostly you're not on it. Mostly you're swinging swinging back and forth. It's like you know, you don't usually we don't hold our car completely straight on the freeway. It's you know, mostly straight within our, our lane, but you notice little, you know, moving Back and forth little bit, you know, a little bit to the right, a little bit to the left. And we're making Carson, of course corrections. So the same thing with the Buddhist path. Maybe sometimes we're in the lanes, sometimes we're, but we experiment and we learn from that, oh, that was that didn't work, or, you know, I've been doing as mindfulness only thing for five years and seems good. But I wonder if I'm missing out on something. Maybe I'll try something. I mean, if I try this loving kindness, practice for a while, and then you do that for a while you realize that's really good. I'll do more of it. That's really helpful. I'll do even more of it. Oh, that was too much. I better go back to the mindfulness now. So we trial and error. And in that regard, I'm inspired by example of American baseball. Were really good players fail two thirds of the time. So don't be afraid of air failing. Then perhaps spiritual life is that way to batting averages. are pretty low. But enjoy the process. Enjoy each step along the way, and have each step along the way be meaningful. And so if anything I want to underscore about the talk today is that if you're interested in this practice of mindfulness in the Buddhist path, try to find a way that a personal way, some way of understanding what you're doing when you do practice, so that each moment of practice is meaningful, maybe not dramatically meaningful, but each moment is a found this is worthwhile to do, even when it's a struggle, even when it's a challenge. And, you know, even when you don't want to do it, even there's something about it, which is inherently valuable. And then you'll never be disappointed. You always look back at the practice you've done. So that was worthwhile. So thank you.