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SPEAKERS

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Good morning. So today's topic is going to be willpower. And it's a topic theme which Buddhist in the West often seldom pick up. I think maybe for good reasons. Western Buddhist teachers often just ignore this topic of the concept Western concept of willpower self control in favor of other terms, other ideas. But I would like to look a little bit at this issue. And, and I did some reading around it this last few days and came across I think, delightful quote. The quote was, if desiring, if having desires was an Olympic sport, we'd all qualify for the team.

So, you know, so desires are a huge part of human life. They've done experiments where they've had people carry with them around them little alarm, little buzzers or something that the researchers would periodically through the day, beep them. And then when they heard the beep, you're supposed to check in with your mind, find out what your mind is doing, you record it. And extremely high percentage of the time those particular people who did the experiment, were in the experiment, what their mind was doing was having desires for something. So desires are a huge part of life. And learning how to work with our desires deal with our desires, is a very important part of any human life. And it's a very important part of Buddhist spiritual life spiritual practice is to somehow understand come to terms with deal with the fact that We are human desire links with desire is such a big part of our life. And many people struggle with desire. Some people have desires, but there's inertia to follow through on them. People that have a lot of people would like to meditate. But to get around to meditating everyday is, was a big challenge and hurdle for some people. The inertia sometimes it's laziness. Sometimes we have desires for a variety of things that we want to do. And there's fear that inhibits us from following through. And sometimes we have desires for things we want to do, and the world is a better place because we don't act on those desires. Not all our desires are helpful for others. We can create havoc and tremendous pain in the world by acting too freely on our desires. In fact, It's been argued that the million or so people who are incarcerated in the United States were acted and acting on desires. And you know, and the issue of self control has become a huge issue and to understand criminality, people who have who are involved in criminal activities are been studied now and find it one of the factors that they seem to be represent them fairly across the board is a very low capacity for self control. And chances are that you're not in jail because your capacity for self control is a little bit higher.

And so you know, it's anyways people have desires which we should better not act on. And some of you I'm sure, you know, can go through a list of your top 10 desires that maybe are a little bit of a challenge for you. It could be as simple as How much time you spend on the internet. You realize, you know, it's not so good to stay in the internet surfing the web late at night, you know, you should go to bed but you know, just and, and so then you know, there's a desire to stay on, there's a certain kind of pleasure in fact, sometimes there's addiction, there's actually some people have huge problems in their

lives because they addiction to the internet. And, but even short of addiction, there's issues you know, and then there's the desires for food. You know, I have no shortage of desires for wonderful, tasty foods. If I every time I had a desire for food, that would be a problem for me. I'd be sick. But you know, so, you know, every time we have desire for certain kinds of pleasures, even innocent pleasures, to follow through and all the desires we have, it's not often so useful. It's not timely. So The issue of how to relate to desire how to act and desires which I had not tact and desires, how to make choices, desires, is a huge part of human life. And in western psychology, sometimes the ability to deal with it sometimes it's called self regulation. And, and one of the books I was reading recently is called self control. And they also use the word willpower. In fact, the title of the book is called willpower book by Roy Baumeister, a clinical psychologist in Florida. And he reported on a very interesting study, and apparently was done at Stanford. And the first part of the study, which was meant to be completed itself was done I think, in early 70s by a man named Walter Mischel. That's right thing pronunciation make sure number no one knows. So he did a kind of a very important study. foundational study for the idea of kind of willpower self control, where he took I guess there's a school at Stanford elementary school, so you're gonna get used to kids there. And anyway took a whole bunch of four year old kids. And one at a time he put them in a room. And there was a two way mirror, I guess. So they were filming them and tracking what the kids did. And the researchers had the kids sit in the chair and said, you know, and then on the front of it on the table in front of the kid right into kissing the chair with a table right in front was a plate on the plate was one marshmallow. And then the, the, the kids were given the instruction. You could eat that marshmallow if you're like, however, I'm going to leave the room and come back in 15 minutes, if you refrain from Meeting it. When I come back, I'll give you a second marshmallow you get to. So that's a dilemma. Which, you know, what do you do? Do you eat the marshmallow now and enjoy the pleasure of it? Or do you wait 15 whole minutes to get to even more pleasure, right? So what would you do? Anyway, so they watch these kids. And, and it was very interesting to watch the kids and you could actually watch if you go on YouTube, and search for marshmallow experiment. You can watch some of these little clips of these kids. And it's quite something to watch these kids deal with this, this challenge they have, you kind of feel for the kids like torture, you know, different facial expressions and their various strategies and some kids try to deal with it by looking at or you or playing with it or trying to just take little little, you know, no one noticed I take a little piece or variety of things. They had one there was one where there was, I guess a younger sister and an older brother. And the older brother had more self control than the younger girl, the girl but maybe not two or three and, and their communication with the other brother is trying to tell the sister but she hated hers before the researcher came back, so they watched and saw their different kids had different strategies and a lot of kids ate the marshmallow.

The most common strategy for avoiding dealing with eating the marshmallow if they try to hold that hold up, was to distract themselves from the marshmallow. That seems to be successful. And I read somewhere that one kid got off the chair and going into the table. Corporate is head for 15 minutes it's successfully avoided the marshmallow so the idea was that some kids had more self control, they were able to control themselves rather than just eating the marshmallow. So that was interesting. But coincidentally, this man's daughter went to the same school. And so I guess he spent many years together and they started he started noticing because the reports from his daughter or something, there were differences in the kids in terms of which kids got in trouble, which kids did well in school. And it seemed to be correlated to how well they did in this, this experiment. And so many years later, he went back back and tracked a lot of these kids who did the experiment and tested them for all kinds of personality factors. You know, there's some like dozens of personality factors qualities of you know, that, that researchers have. And he found that in terms of success in life, avoiding drug problems, happiness, salaries, success In school, a whole bunch of different criteria of when you correlate it with personality factors, all these different things, there was only one that correlated. And that was this early

experiment that they had about the kids who had the higher degree of self control did better in life. So that was a correlation. And so what is it about a self control the ability to regulate oneself to watch what when desires are, and not give in to some and and, and or to act on the ones you want to act? So this book then is builds on this and this guy who writes the book has done a lot of experiments over the last quite a while, up until the last couple of years on what he calls self control or self regulation or he calls it the title The book is willpower. And you He discovers a variety of interesting things about what he calls the ability to choose your willpower using your willpower. One thing he found was that they do experiments with people and if you have people have to use their willpower in a strong way. So for example, I think I don't know, for adults that think they would have things like put chocolate or chocolate chip cookies in front of them. And say, if you can refrain from eating these cookies for 15 minutes or some time, or whatever, then something I don't know why but you know, that he was there. So they could give give grownups a challenge, whether required refrain and self control, not to come and give into something. And so people had, you know, all kinds of success, their self control and wanting the cookies or something that was fine. But the real part of the experiment happened next with they would have them do it another kind of experiment that requires capacity for focus. Attention decision making. And what they found is that when people who are the people who had to do the like not eat the cookies, or do not have to do some kind of use of willpower to refrain from doing something for some time, then had a harder time using that at the next experiment. But those people who hadn't done the cookie experiment had more willpower and reserve for the second experiment with the idea being that and so this guy Baumeister wants to use the analogy or the metaphor of energy, that we that we have a certain amount of energy for using our brainpower, mind power, and if we spent a lot of time making decisions and self regulating ourselves or using willpower, then we exhaust some of that. And, and so then they did some experiments with or experiments but they studied It was a report a number of experiments. One was they studied Israeli judges. And what her parole judges in Israel, and when they tended to give the most parole to prisoners, and when they least, parole to prisoners that came for parole hearing. And what they found is that they would judges would give very few parole to prisoners, just before lunch. But after lunch, they gave them like 65% of the people who came up they would give parole to.

And so this idea of ever having energy for decisions is and then to have energy to you know, it takes energy to make decisions attract things into regulate oneself, and you can exhaust it, and if you exhaust it, then it's harder to make wise decisions. I was involved in Thursday someone asked me to get involved in very, very complicated for me discussions about pain choices. For our retreat center that's coming up, right? And I was late in the afternoon and I finally said to the person, I'm tired and hungry. I can't track this. There's too much to track all this and make decisions. Can we do it another time? And then they then they studied, I've studied, people have studied prisoners. And it seems like prisoners have a high as I said earlier, they self control seems to be something people in prisons tend to have very little love is part of the party, where are they in prison. But also they found that their glucose levels in their blood tends to be quite low as as a kind of, you know, as across the board kind of thing. And they found that they measure the glucose levels of prisoners, you know, kind of as they're going to be released. It seems to be a very strong correlation with how soon they're gonna be back in prison. So here this guy uses his energy analogy that we need energy to have self regulated energy to have willpower. And, and some people who don't process energy you don't have keeping the blood sugar up or something. It's harder to make wise decisions and more likely to have less self control to give in this interesting little bit, this review. And so then the other one more interesting thing that this book talks about, is that when people's ability to self regulate, to have willpower to make a lot of decisions have energy for that dissipates or is low, maybe because it's been used for some time. That they're also people are much more vulnerable to emotional extremes, to swings in their emotions. And so this is an argument for how important it is to not always be on not always be making decision that

always be Doing things that require self control, self regulation, willpower acting, but it's very important to spend time recovering from that getting lunch. So that then you can make wiser decisions in order to be more emotionally stable and more equipped, you know, equilibrium, whatever, through time. So I thought that these were kind of interesting things. And then I tried to reflect on how this relates to Buddhist practice and my experience of practice. And, and I think that a lot of it is maybe under appreciated by how many of us think and talk about Buddhist practice here in the West, how important self regulation, willpower. self control is, in practicing, partly especially in scenes where mindfulness is over emphasized like Canarsie. When mine promises overemphasize, sometimes it's as if just being mindful is enough. Or mindfulness is about just a relaxed acceptance of things, just to relax and just accept things Everything will be okay. Without often de emphasizing the role of willpower of choice of acting and doing of applying oneself, because partly because if we apply some, a lot of people in the West, if they apply themselves too much, if they make too much effort and practice, they get a headache. And they tie themselves in knots. And sometimes it's been, you know, looks quite ugly in meditation to people who's tried too much. But even so, I think a lot of minute mindfulness practice involves cultivating self control. So for example, if you sit down to meditate, and you have an itch, the instructions are don't scratch that takes self control. someone, someone walks into the room and makes a noise, the instinct might be to turn around, see what it is, you're sitting with your eyes closed meditating. And so you let go of that and stay present you let go of that desire to look and see what that was. Or, or if you know he gets more refined in the mind, you're trying to follow the breath, be focused on the breath. And, and then you have a really nice thought about something and you decide I'm not going to follow that thought, I'm gonna stay on the breath, I'm gonna come back to the breath.

That involves self regulation or self control involves what in the West i think is fair to say it involves a certain amount of willpower to will oneself now I'm not going to be thinking about what's for lunch. I'm going to come back to the present moment and be here. sitting upright in an upright posture, rather than slouching or just giving up you know, relaxing too deeply, requires a certain amount of willpower. a certain kind of self control. And that gets developed or going on retreat and showing up for every thing on the schedule, the bell rings, you go sit the bell rings, you go to walk meditation, whether you want to or not, you do it just you've tried to be mindful and stay present for sure. But at the same time, person is strengthening one's capacity for self control for willpower to have some kind of power over the choices you make, what desires to follow. And I don't think we should underestimate the tremendous value of this kind of training, developing our ability to self regulate developing ability to have willpower that happens slowly, slowly, bit by bit in the course of meditation practice. When I look back at my own practice, and the early years of Zen practice, it was very clear that there's a lot you know, looking there, there's really strict about having holding a certain posture and not moving For 40 minutes at a time, and, and there's a lot of self control a lot of willpower that's involved, even though the rhetoric sometimes was we're just sitting here and practicing unconditional acceptance of the present moment. So if you listen to the rhetoric, it sounds like, you know, there's no emphasis on self control, you know, emphasis on willpower, but in practice, there's a tremendous amount in Zen practice. That is that is there. And that then develops and strengthens slowly, slowly over time. And, and this is what this book called willpower says that, you know, that he doesn't just say you're stuck with the amount of self control, willpower that you're born with, and tough luck. But he says that you can actually develop it and strengthen it. And it's often strengthened in small things that you do in your life. And I haven't finished the book but I have the impression that one of the small things that he emphasizes valuable to develop willpower and self control his attention to your posture. Staying upright and straight, makes a big difference. And can you know to cultivate that, and that's one of the things also, we learned in the Zen monastery, you maintain a certain posture, and that posture, you know, some people will argue it seems like it's, you know, rigid or it's, you know, they're, you know, it's not enough freedom and spontaneity. But in fact, spontaneity is very important, but there's also spontaneity that arises out of or

after a foundation of having self control and self regulation that happens. And some people say there's actually greater freedom to be found. Once you've cultivated a strong degree of self control or self monitoring, self regulation that goes on. So then in our Buddhist practice, there are or look back at the time of the Buddha his teachings. There's a lot of teachings for the Buddha that fits under the web. category of willpower, or self control, even though Buddhists don't use that word, maybe for good reason, but it's and so for example, there's something called the five faculties. Usually it's called the five faculties in English, and Pali they're called indriya. And indriya refers to the Goddess, Indra and Indra was kind of one of the great greatest of the gods and Pantheon events in India. And so, Indra has a lot of power in Ria is that which belongs to Indra, or, and so we save five faculties or five potentials that we have, but that kind of kind of sidesteps or avoids, maybe Of course, because many of us are uncomfortable with this kind of language. That really means something like lordship, or some people have translated as controlling faculties. Those those faculties that control

Or, you know involves self control of ability to monitor to regulate ourselves that we need in order to find our way through this you know, great diversity of desires that come along and be able to track and follow a direction that we want to take. So we have things the five faculties are faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom or discernment. And faith is a very important quality in terms of deciding what to do in regulating what you do, because it's it overcomes a lot of doubt and certainty. Sometimes it you know, inability to make commitments so people have desires but they can't commit. Then effort is overcomes laziness overcomes inertia overcomes some plays in it, you know effort also is very important all these but stands out in my mind is something is very important for over both faith and effort, overcoming fear, or inhibitions or hesitancy to act because we're afraid and anxious. And then mindfulness is said to overcome heedlessness that, doing things without that we later regret because we're heedless. We're not really paying attention. We're kind of acting unconsciously. Concentration is said to overcome agitation. But it also overcomes in other things that overcomes fear, which is very powerful in people's lives. To develop a relaxed concentration focus can use a powerful way of dealing with or working through fear not letting fear get in the way and then discernment or wisdom tends to overcome ignorance or lack of understanding of what's going on and better understanding our is, the easier it is to act, the better understand ourselves the purpose of what we're doing, what the situation is we're in, the easier it is to act, what we want to do is act. So, rather than using one word like willpower, here in this list, we can say there's five different aspects of willpower that Buddhism emphasizes, requires faith. effort, requires mindfulness, concentration, and requires discernment. What's nice about having seeing them all together, is that you see they work together as a system. And if you only emphasize willpower, part of the problem with that, and this may be one of the reasons some of the reasons Buddhists in America don't use the word is that willpower tends to strengthen the idea of self kind of sometimes conceit arises out of it. And sometimes it focuses still but too much in striving in inappropriate ways. Whereas the when you have the whole system of these five, the effort that we make is meant to be balanced with concentration. And concentration is meant to be relaxing, concentration. And Buddhism is often associated, not with striving and pushing with relaxing and letting go. And so the effort is balanced with letting go with relaxation. And in fact, what I've seen in meditation practice is that, you know, at the beginning of meditation session, it there might be requires certain minor willpower here, but if you want Pali words, willpower here takes the form of vitakka and vicāra, applying oneself to the meditation object and sustaining one's attention there. It takes a certain kind of willpower to stay focused. And that's my take a certain amount of glucose to do that, and it might be that's all you did. It might be tiring after a while but as the Concentration kicks in or it gets more full as concentration to kind of comes strengthens and balances that willpower. At some point, the willpower becomes less and less willful, less and less effort is applied. Until at some point it's no longer needed. And or it's needed little bit. But it's there together with being the being relaxed. And rather than being draining, it's actually we can be energized from it. And this is something I think in the book that I read doesn't they don't seem to appreciate. They seem to only appreciate that willpower takes efforts and

you need to replenish it by eating more resting. But in fact, certain kind of approach of using willpower together with relaxation can make it sustainable for a long time. And then I hope I'm not talking too much these ideas you're still following okay. You know, listen also requires willpower. And I don't know how your glucose levels are, you know, it's enough now. You know, they, some people say that Sunday morning sermon should not be longer than 20 minutes. And you know, but the Buddhists do longer because you're relaxed.

So I think one of the strongest lists, or the kind of most that to be kind of more qualifies as the closer to what in English we say is willpower is something called the four roads to power, the four roads to success, the four factors of success, four factors of power. And this is a very interesting list for things. And these calls can be seen before different from a different angle for different aspects of what in the West we would call willpower. And these are and these I said to be needed for and like in Thailand this day, for any endeavor you're engaged in, you need to be you want to be successful in doing, you want to have all four involved, these are all four factors for success. But if a Buddha he was talking about mostly from the point of view, success or in doing the Buddhist practice. So the first is you need to have strong desire. So, you know, some people, you know will simplistically hear a simplistic teach teachings on what the Buddha had to teach, where it says, like, you know, desires are the problem, we're not supposed to have desires, like of your desires, and then you can be free and happy. That's too simplistic. The Buddha didn't say that certain kind of certain kind of desire, gets us in trouble, causes suffering. But there are desires that help us and there are healthy desires to have and those desires Really good to have them strong, to have really strong and powerful desires. And so if you want to have willpower, if you want to act as strong self regulation, self control, it helps if you have strong desire, if you have that think of desiring is like a muscle, it's good to have that muscle strong, so that you can choose wisely, which desires to act on and follow through on. If you don't have that strong, strong sense of desire or strength around, being able to choose your desires and act on them. There's a class of desires that human beings have, that if you're lazy, you can have a lot of energy to do these desires. sexual desires, you know, can be really powerful. And the easy, relaxed thing to do is to give in to them and you can be powerfully You know, a lot of energy can go into that and get into a lot of trouble. I remember when I was young, you know, I mean You know, I could have power to California, you know, you know, the energy that I had, you know, and the things I you know, and the amount of energy I put in, in pursuit of sex, you know, unsuccessfully usually was quite something, you know, as a teenager, and, you know, and you just kind of just the way just kind of, you know, okay you know, with the easy thing is to act on these impulses, the impulse for addiction, the easy thing to do is to act on them sometimes. Because the, this the healthy form of desire and ability to control and to act on it is not really developed. And so to develop this capacity is considered very important. So, to appreciate the power that cultivating a strong sense of capacity for desire for practice, for freedom, for concentration, for kindness, for equanimity, for generosity, there's a lot of healthy desires to have and to have developed it Considered one of these four roads to success roads to power. The second is effort itself. Very strength, exertion exerted exertion. There's a whole slew of words that are almost like synonyms in Buddhism, that are words like effort and strength and exertion and perseverance that are emphasized over and over again and teachings of the Buddha. The Buddha, as far as I could tell, never use the word acceptance, which is often in western Buddhism is in fact is emphasized a lot. In fact, I think the mindfulness, the secular mindfulness movement, uses the word acceptance, a lot accepting mindfulness. I don't know if there's a Buddhist word that, you know, you could take the English word acceptance and find a Buddhist equivalent in the Buddhist Buddhist language, to translate that word. The closest I think, would be probably equanimity. But I don't know if that's the same as acceptance But what you do find is a lot of words like effort and energy. And in fact, some translators even will translate some of these words with the word striving, which is like willpower.

A lot of vipassana teachers like myself kind of shy away from using the word striving. But there are people who like the word and will use it to translate the Buddha. So here again, the emphasis the importance of developing our capacity to make efforts to apply ourselves. And it's not like an all or nothing thing. It's a capacity that can grow over time. And it grows in small increments. I think it's much more we can have much more confidence and much more encouragement to do this if we realize it's done in small steps. And so we apply ourselves a little bit in certain areas of our life. And so it goes, it develops over time through meditation. You know, one of the things we're doing a meditation every time you come back from the mind wandering, and focus on your breath. you're applying energy and effort. And so you're strengthening that capacity for effort each time a certain kind of effort. The fourth road to power to success is the state or the quality of your mind. That how you quality that it's called citta, the quality of your mind, the state of your mind, is a very important thing to track and to monitor and to regulate, if you want to be successful and things you do. So, as I said, you know, if your glucose level is low, if you're tired and hungry, it's probably not the time to do certain things. And maybe it's more important to get rest and replenishment than it is to try to accomplish certain kinds of things because maybe either won't be able to do it very well. Or you might end up making you know, some mistakes if you're making important decisions at work or forcing things at work, and it's hard and challenging and people are making mistakes and you're hungry and tired, then you might snap at them. And get angry at them in the way you didn't if you weren't, and so that your general state of your being instead of your mind, your consciousness is something you can monitor, and take some responsibility for in the care of take for. If you're stressed out, that's not the time for certain kinds of decisions or certain kind of things to do. If you're tired, if you're angry, if you're having a lot of aversion going, that's what's happening. That's gonna have a different kind of outcome. So, are there ways of regulating monitoring ourselves? I think it is you can, that's what mindfulness is for. And as you notice your state of your mind, you can make decisions about what you can do based on that maybe avoid certain things, when you're certain states of mind, and choose certain things and other states of mind that you have. Or sometimes it's possible to, if you're, if the conditions just right, to help create inner conditions, to change the state of your mind, state of your consciousness. So you Have a state of consciousness which is more effective to accomplish certain things.

So for example, if what you want to do is be compassionate to have more compassion in the situation, it really helps if you feel safe. It's hard to have compassion if you're not feeling safe. So can you cultivate some sense of safety? Maybe you can do a little bit if it occurs to you to do so. Maybe have a little leeway to kind of relax, breathe deeply and look around and say, well, no one's threatening me at this moment. And maybe I can relax and go a little bit safer here right now, or, or maybe a certain kind of reflections to help us feel more safe to realize that the greatest danger is not what people can do to us, but what we can do to ourselves. And so if I can relax and monitor myself, then I will, I'll be safer. In fact, they found that self control goes down when people get lost In external world, like if you get lost in your desires and things out there and loose and not tracking yourself, then there's the can be very low self control because you're not following you and watching your desires, your thoughts, reactions at all. So part of this monitoring our ourselves is this third factor. I like to think that I'm trying all the time to be 50% of my attention to be on the world around me and people and with and 30% of my attention is on myself. So I'm monitoring both myself. So citta so far, one of the roads of success is to monitor the state of our mind that we have the mood the quality of reminder quality of who we are. And the fourth is, road to success is being in politics be mumps, which is usually translated into English as investigation. So To be discerning, to investigate, to be curious to be to inquire, to look more deeply, to not kind of just take, you know, the obvious or the, your first impressions or better look more deeply, look both more deeply into the situation look more deeply into yourself. Because without, and then to use it as a feedback system.

Look at the consequences of what you do. Learn from that. So this, maybe maybe this last one can simply be called Learning. Learn from what's going on. And if you learn, then you'll have more success. So your willpower will be more effective, your ability to follow those these these roads of success be more effective. If you are a learner, you're trying to learn as you do it. And it's quite impressive for me to meet a lot of people who don't seem to have a strong tendency to want to learn, especially when they want to teach me I get it. I listen, you know, and seems like you know, not really hoping to learn or to be part of a cooperatively learning thing. So I don't know how you feel about the word willpower or self control. Maybe you prefer not to live in a universe where those use those words are used. But I think that it's you know, it's interesting to look a little bit at look at it and, and reflect a little bit because something like willpower something like control, self control is a very important part of Buddhist practice. And if you protesting that, where's the spontaneity where's the freedom? I would argue spontaneity is also very important and cultivate our capacity for Puffin ad and is important, but it's really I think, what I've learned, is it really works well when that ability to spontaneity is built on a really strong foundation of self control of willpower, self monitoring, self regulation. And then then I think the spontaneity is quite beautiful. I'll end with one more story from the book. So there's a singer that I never heard of so many things I haven't heard of. I missed like, the I missed the 1980s. In terms of popular culture, the other day last week, I was downtown Redwood City. And they had a bit of kind of, what's it called a cover band. They call that replaying and other playing music of another band. And they're playing a band named Duran Duran. And I listened Duran Duran. And there were so many people there and people older than me was seeing the singing the lyrics. I said, What is this? You know, so I went back I went home and studied it and find out you know, and And it would be kind of equivalent to someone in 1972 or something. Think who would the Beatles? Yeah, you know, I didn't have no idea you know, I missed 80s properly I was in the monastery, meditating, developing my self control. And so there was a there's a singer by the name of Amanda Palmer's, some of you know her. But she apparently is more extreme than Lady Gaga and Madonna on and has a persona public persona of being kind of completely spontaneous and free and does whatever she wants to do. And you know that but, but before she became a popular singer, she spent six years in Boston, being a street artists kind of person who was one of these living statues, who stands there and doesn't move painted up a certain kind of way and just doesn't move unless someone drops money in her hat. And then she could take a picture of her or she would actually give people a flower And so, but otherwise, if people were in Boston, you know, try to get her to react. And so she had an itch she couldn't, she couldn't scratch, right? She had to be still, if she had an urge to move, she couldn't, you know, she couldn't move and people would try to get her to move. They would do jokes to her and they would do terrible things, they'd poker and all kinds of different difficult ways. And the art was to not move. And so for six years, she cultivated a bit hurt, or willpower, or self control that she wouldn't give in. And when I read about her, and then and then she, based on that, you know, you know, she that's what she's, she has this capacity for that. But her public persona doesn't show that and maybe there's some connection between the two. And when I read about her, you know, you know, she said she could do it 4090 minutes at a time and then she needed to break and, and in five years, she did it. I think Said she did it. She only had Tony broke it twice or something. And but the posture, but she said that I forgot what I was gonna say. So

Oh yes. So the last thing I'll say is that. So when I read about her standing still for 90 minutes, I thought back to all my time in the monastery of sitting still in meditation. And that was a training that was much more much more training that involved much more than a training to be mindful even though that was the rhetoric. So I hope this is encouraging. And I hope that you do something with it. Develop your willpower in a good way. Thank you