

2013-09-11 Dharmette Saying Yes No

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SPEAKERS

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So part of being a meditator is taking responsibility for your own mind, or what your mind does, how your mind is. And how we take responsibility for our minds, varies in different times. Sometimes the way that responsibility is taken is, we leave our minds alone. We don't get involved. We don't judge it or react. Let it be. Sometimes that responsibility is taken by not participating. With what the mind wants to do.

I suspect that some of you, a few of you, maybe have had the experience of having desires, wishes, impulses coming out of your mind that the whole world is a lot better for not that you didn't act on them, that you didn't do it. So you take responsibility, sit down to meditate, we learn the place of freedom, to have some choice about what we allow or don't allow our mind to do what our relationship to the mind is. And so there are three general attitudes or approaches to that responsibility, or attitudes or practice that I'd like to offer you and each of them has their own time in place. And they're kind of maybe Have strategic attitudes that you try on. And one is the attitude of Yes. saying yes to what's happening yes to your experience. The other is to say no. And the third is to do neither Yes, nor No. Each of those is useful sometimes. Sometimes when we meditate, it's useful to sit with an attitude of Yes. to whatever arises in the practice. That kind of Yes, that allows us to be receptive to the experience to really take it in to let it register to see it clearly. Rather than reacting or letting go of or resisting whatever, here, okay, yes. gonna open. Receive, allow, be with experience with more fully what this is make space for it. And a meditation where we're sitting quietly with the eyes closed Perhaps it's generally a very safe place to say yes to things. And daily life, it might not be appropriate to say yes. Or have that kind of attitude. But at least here, you know, yes, let me feel this. Yes. And for meditators, I think it's very useful to experiment with this, because some meditators have a very strong tendency to say no to easily some people have the attitude that something's wrong with them or when they meditate whatever there are, some people have whatever happens in their meditation river, they're aware of it, there's something wrong. And or some people you know, their thing about being mindful, or yourself is some people just it gives them more material to be self critical about. So they're already saying no, or some, you know, and so, to say yes kind of counters. These negative voices and negative tendencies are so I have, and it's a training to be open training to allow. And, and sometimes I find for myself that is just really nice just to sit quietly and just say yes. Sometimes my mind is distracted and wondering often the thoughts. I can think, you know, I'm not supposed to be doing that. And but something very different happens if I notice mind being distracted? And I say yes to it, not the Yes, that says yes, I'm just gonna do more of this. This is great. But rather than Yes, that says kind of like, yes. Let me be aware of this is something happening at present moment. Let me open. This is what's happening now. Yes. And so that yes, is a way of actually becoming free of the thoughts. It's a way of stepping back from them in a way that's receptive and open and, you know, and friendly or something to them as opposed to critical. So the

attitude of yes can be very helpful. Sometimes what's needed is the attitude of No. the approach of No. Sometimes, you know, some people's minds some of our minds, maybe none of you, but some of your minds behave is like a two year old. And sometimes the what's the only thing is going to work is to say no. I've had two year olds. And I had it because of my years of Buddhist training, I guess maybe it wasn't in my instinct to say no. In fact, in Zen training, you're actually trained Don't say no, and sort some sense is supposed to say yes to, like, if someone offers you food at a meal. You are never supposed to in the Zen monasteries, you were never supposed to say no. There was like, forbidden.

So people developed all these creative ways of saying very little, just really though, like, like, you know, because you couldn't say no, but you would And so with my children, I kind of had to set it. I didn't want to say no, I figured out some other way be created behind, redirect them whatever. And I learned that at some points, no was the right answer. No. And to be definitive about it actually helped my children because they were kind of sometimes the theory looked like that was the right interpretation was they were going to push against the edges to see how far they could go. So they can find out where they had to be where they can be safe. And you were they were waiting for the no good and actually actually saw that that sometimes. I would say, No, they'd look at me like I was, you know, some awful, awful dictator or something some awful person, could you for about a second or two and then They were so much happier than they were before. It's like they were safe. They knew where they were. So I don't mind sometimes it's two year olds and each stick really firm. No, no, you're not going to think. No, if you've been fantasizing and daydreaming but the same thing 10,000 times you've been that down route that route so many times, maybe what's needed is just know enough of that. They say it's the sort of wisdom to know. And or you have certain you get pulled into certain desires or certain versions or something and you've seen it you've practiced with it, you've said yes to it, you've been open to it, you've explored it, you've been mindful of it. And you know, enough, you know, sometimes just a no is better, it's more relaxing enough. I think people who go on retreats, long retreats, where you get to see the same tendency happening over and over and over again, and, and just get so tired of it. And finally, enough already enough so sometimes no is really useful. And sometimes these yes and no go together in a nice way because I think that the in meditation to say yes in an open way gives you access to deeper wellsprings of information of what's going on for you how you feel what's happening. So you have a better sense of when you should no say no what you say say no to. If it's maybe it's kind of like, if you have Lauren in your toe. And you're walking around but you're really distracted by whatever's going along on next to you. Maybe someone's having a tremendous argument with you about how horrible you are. or someone you know, they're the most attractive person in the world you could ever imagine, is flirting with you. You don't notice the thorn but then You know, when that person goes away, and you start noticing what's going on you Oh, there's a thorn. It's just digging deeper and deeper into my foot. I think I should take a shoe off and take a thorn out. So the same thing with with. If we're in our distracted mind, we might not really understand what's going on more deeply inside of us. But if we can say yes, and relax and open up, we might discover deeper wellsprings. Oh, equivalent of a thorn is going on in us that we didn't realize. And we might understand, not just thorns, we might understand wisdom, understanding. So we have that aren't accessible when we're kind of just distracted, caught up and not have that deeper connection to ourselves might come a clear understanding, not to say no to something to say no to something we're doing with some activity in the world. Say no to something we're doing in ourselves. One of the great nose that comes out of meditation Practice is the nose to unethical act action, the nose to doing activity that's going to hurt people. And we know that there are people in the world who live unethically. And as they begin transitioning from that maybe by something like meditation, at some point, they come to this juncture where they realize this is this doesn't make any sense anymore. I don't want to do this anymore. I think I need to say no. And sometimes it's not easy to say no. But sometimes has to be strengthened that no, no more of this.

And then there's the third attitude or approach, which is neither yes nor No. Not before something or against anything. And this idea of not being for or against, but just to be present. It's it's it has it maybe, sometimes it looks like the Yes. Sometimes it looks like the No, but it's neither yes or no. It's just being there. Just presence, just being here. And it's actually doorway to deeper peace, deeper ease than yes or no. Because yes or no is an activity to doing. And sometimes it's a doing which is helps us in our lives. And sometimes just more, just more, just more stuff, we're doing more activity of the mind. And to really be able to put down these all this extra activity of the mind. Just let everything be just be present in the most simple way, simplicity of being just here. Nothing to do and nothing to get nothing to be, except settling and opening to the depths of peace that's possible in the heart, for the heart to be addressed in itself. So yes, no. Neither yes or no. And maybe never maybe. So, thank you.