

2014-04-02 Panel of One To Two Month Retreat Experience

Sat, 9/12 12:25PM • 16:43

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

retreat, mind, month, continuity, practice, sat, long, days, relationship, intimacy, echo, weeks, share, dependent, oled panel, deep longing, flavor, support, opportunity, bone

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So I was kind of inspired to do something different here today than we usually do. A Judy's already nodding her head in agreement. I'm glad for this, to she agrees. Because the idea was that there's at least five of you here who've been on a month long retreat over the last two months. It's pretty special to do on a month long retreat, and I thought maybe they could make an OLED panel and come up here and visit it two or three minutes each as to what that experience was like, what they want to share it out to share the deepest secrets of it, but but again, some flavor flavor of it, those of you you're still shaking your head. And I wonder if any of you would be getting for sharing a little bit. Okay, so the people who've never been in one, get a little flavor what that's like, it doesn't have to be personal. It could just be like, you know, what, it's what it's like to be in these month long run. treats from a point of view of retreatants. Maybe your game? Yeah. And come up here and then maybe any other. Yeah. Yeah, you don't have to if you want. You can come up here. You can do from there.

There's more of you to sit in the chair. If you bring a chair, bring a chair over maybe anybody else like to there's more of you here so great. So far Pretty good. They couldn't get enough. So they came here today.

Looks like you're stuck. You're starting, Judy.

For me, it was a month of watching the mind and it was not always fun. And it's kind of appalling. It didn't really find anything new. But four weeks is a long time to watch this thing going on. I was paying attention in my own practice to both meditation practice and daily life practice. And I think the retreat for me strengthened my understanding of how I work and choices that I have and a little more freedom than I knew before. My favorite part was sometimes feeling really happy. And that was very cool. And then the last day of the retreat, I was in a car with two other retreatants. Then we dropped one off, and then I dropped another one off. And when I was in the car by myself, this little retreat joy came up again. And I thought, Oh, good, it's not over. And I'd recommend it highly. Sometimes it was boring and sometimes tedious, and I only wanted to leave twice, which is pretty good.

Thank you. I'm inspired by that.

I sat a month in February. So that's now four or five weeks ago, so I've had a little more reintegration than the other folks sitting up here. For me, what I appreciate on long retreat is the intimacy that we find with our own heart. I find That each retreat and particularly long retreats, my mind and heart are at a

different place. And we can see a little bit more of that when there's more time to settle. And it's almost a chance to get to know what's here now what's coming up now. And to have a wider range of things that we can be with because a wider range of things are going to come off when there's so much continuity of mindfulness over time. And on this retreat, in particular, I did quite a bit of brahma vihara practice that's offered every day on these retreats at spirit rock. And for me, it was quite meaningful this time to go through the four that are offered and notice how they interacted with the mindfulness practice that I was doing in other parts of the day. I saw more clearly the link between them and how those intentions in Skills talking about with our intention, how those feed into the way our mind begins to operate just all the time. It's a little hard to describe, but the continuity of such a long period of practice is really valuable for understanding how the mind works. Thank you.

I'm Sasha and I attended the

March we get to hold it close to closer and open horizontally, like that. Yeah.

I'm Sasha and

I just got back a few days ago from the marginal long and I would echo some of what was just said about the incredible value of that kind of continuity of practice. It's

It's extraordinary, to have that much time and to have the amount of time support that the retreat center and the Sangha and the teachers provide. It's really just one of the most extraordinary things I've ever experienced or learned about or been exposed to or learned that even was possible, you know that it's even possible to gather a group of people together like that for that long of a period of time for that beautiful of an intention. And just all the different things that happen in the support of that space. For me, I also spent a lot of time sitting with the neurotic sort of entertaining, mostly exhausting activity of my mind. And early on in the process, I was sort of lamenting to Gil this terrible thing that was happening on my precious month long retreat was that my mind was really doing In all of this annoying stuff, and could he please help me make this stop so that I could have a peaceful month long?

Isn't that funny?

said that.

So funny. But I was totally serious. And he said, you know, you are going to have to, I mean, he might have said it quite like this. Suppose the gist of it was, you've got an opportunity here to make friends with this mind of yours. And I was like,

and then I was like, oh, and then rest

and thank goodness, that conversation happened early on. Because the rest of the month what happened in that process for me of making friends with the erotic mind was that I got to both see through it, and also learn how to relate to it in a kinder, less reactive, more mind. For a way where I'm just not taking it all that seriously, but I'm also not at war with it. And for me that brought a lot of fruitful

insights and space inside myself. So I'm really grateful for the opportunity and I highly, highly recommend it. And if you think I could never get the time off, or I could never find the money, or I could never

do that.

Just trust me. If you start, if you start playing with the possibility of it, you'd be surprised the way things can come together to support you in in doing something like that, because I didn't think it was possible either.

And it was.

I'm Carrie and I sat there retreat in February and March 1 I have done two months, and one or two for a very long time. And I'd like to echo first of all what's been said, about intimacy, I was able to find, establish an intimacy with myself. Like I've never known. I saw the places inside of me, I saw the bodhisatta, as well as the Hitler. And so many things that, that were both humbling and ennobling. And just that in and of itself, at one point, made me

realize more deeply that

the one I'm looking for is the one who's looking.

And I also wanted to echo what's been said about the continuity of mindfulness which is an extremely powerful thing. And I think, in addition to allowing me to see so many profound things, really has increased my confidence, confidence to do and be in the world confidence to do and be the practice and confidence and faith to remember that everything that I do need is really here to be uncovered. It was not always easy. The first three weeks were incredibly challenging. But I kind of compare it to you know, fly to the clouds. It was pretty bumpy ride. But then the blue sky and the sun became visible and this happiness They speak up that is not dependent on external conditions. Reveal revealed itself so many times. And it's very, very beautiful.

I feel the deepest sense of gratitude

to myself to all my teachers, and I highly, highly recommend, if you have the opportunity of you could create the opportunity to do so because there's nothing more worthwhile. You can do this. It'll make you better, I think. Thank you.

Thank you. So I mean, he used to be in the old days, people would go off and explore the world and come back and tell the village you know what they found? And now we put they go off not so far away, to explore their minds and hearts. And so they come back to the village to tell us what they found. Thank you. And I think it's really a great thing to do these long retreats as I kind of think it's kind of like, you know, I don't know if it's a fair analogy, but it's kind of like you know, supposed to go to Mecca once a lifetime if you're Muslim. And I think if you're human, once a lifetime, you should go in a month long retreat. It's a pretty phenomenal thing to do. wonderful thing. Do you have any questions you want to ask our illustrious panel of explorers

I always wonder but being away from family has been significant others, you know, a month, two months. That's a long time. And I don't know, I guess I have compassion for the people that I would leave behind.

You're here. Yes, yes.

So I totally relate to that and struggled with that before I left I have a husband an animal who is bizarrely dependent upon me and will not be dependent upon anyone else. totally serious, like won't eat when I'm not around. So it was a very difficult decision to make. And I struggled so much with it during the first two weeks, so much like deep like bone wrenching longing. And what I discovered was that I know that sounds like something out of a book. But I discovered this was actually real inside my experience that there was a difference between my love and my attachment, and between their love and their attachment. And when I really got that difference, the whole thing changed and I spent the last two weeks loving them but not caught in that bone deep longing. And I couldn't have done anything better for all of our relationship than to leave

as evident or you know, just in the last five days, yeah.

Maybe one more question. If you have any, you'd like to ask them. here just about you said that proved your relationship from your side or both sides. For sure, from both sides, it's only

been five days.

I can't say much more than that. But I mean, there are very,

very,

very, there are very deep things that

happen when we take time. I mean, independent of what my unique configuration is like, and my relationship is like kind of separate than that. I think for all of us, there are really unique things that happen. When we nurture our intimacy with ourselves, like the way everyone's talking about that has a really big impact on our relationships with others when when our our intimacy and our confidence and our self and our practices really strong.

It

the implications for that. I can feel even though it's only been five days I can feel how far reaching that is.

Great. Thank you very much. panel is wonderful. And thank you for going on retreat and coming back and sharing it with us. And one of the things that we do at the retreat this we do dedication of merit. And part of the dedication of merit is made the benefit of the merit of the retreat that we just sat, be shared with many people and spread out. And so in a small way you you've shared a little bit your experience, and maybe it's been meaningful for you to hear it. So thank you and so now we have our time for cleaning