

# 2014-10-15 Being With The Unknown

Tue, 9/15 3:31PM • 11:52

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

awareness, meditation, light, supposed, unfold, unknown, darkness, dharma, life, grow, greenhouse, mind, existential angst, sprout, flower, born, arise, surface, hold, present

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Earlier I mentioned this little kind of poetic teaching that it's in the darkness, that things are born. It's in the light that they flower. And so it's like a seed, which kind of, in a certain sense, is sprouts up underground where it's supposed to lay dark. And then you don't know maybe even what's going to sprout but then you watch it grow and in the light, it needs to light to grow and mature into a flower.

So the same way in our life, some things are born, some things come to be out of the unknown, that of not knowing the darkness of not knowing and But then once they're born, we offer the light to them the light of awareness, and then they can flower they can move in the direction they're supposed to go. And some things their unfolding their growth you know, they look very different different things. Some things which are unskillful Well, if you hold them in the light of awareness, nonreactive awareness, non involved awareness, just select them to the surface and be there. They tend to move towards health to healthy states. And if they're already healthy states present, when the when the light of awareness shines on them, then they just grow and mature even further into greater health. It's kind of like a greenhouse where when imagine a warm, moist, humid greenhouse, where they have shades and the shades are covering the windows. So light comes in, and in that light the mold grows. But once you expose the light, then the plants grow in the mold weathers up dries up. So we, it's okay so we have all this stuff that gets revealed, it comes out and we hold it in a light and then what needs to happen will happen so periods of darkness sometimes it's just a very simple we don't know any situation and what we allow ourselves to not know we allow ourselves to be open to the unknown to what is going to surface and arise. And sometimes that's done period of meditation sometimes it's done in a moment walking down the street, but seeing a friend and meeting someone pleading them with it we know what's with a sense that what's going to be born now in the what's gonna come out of my not knowing if I could if I always knew know, there's very little space for something new to get to germinate and come forth. less space. And sometimes a period of darkness or the period of the unknown as the last four months, and sometimes years, you know, just kind of make ourselves open to step away from life. It just normally lives step away from the expectations demands parental ideas of what's supposed to do the responsible thing to do even, and just make lots of space and see what needs to come for it to see what what will come forth, if you gave yourself the space for it. When people live life, the customary life that they grew up, expecting to live and follow career and work and all the different things we're supposed to do and there's a long long list of things you're supposed to do. I don't know if you noticed this, but the list is really long. And if you listen to too many people and watch too much TV and way too much of it You know, advertisements and I don't know what, it less gets longer and longer. And it can be kind of frightening to stop. But sometimes you need to stop and give yourself an extended period of time in the unknown. To see what when you get really quiet, are they still are very, to see what wants to come forth what wants to bubble up. And so being willing to, to enter into the darkness, we're willing to enter into the unknown, into this fallow time is very important thing for the process for the heart, a hit or

life. See what wants to come. And meditation does that you know you've you come to meditation with a lot of ideas, what's supposed to be what meditation is, what's supposed to happen, your agenda for your meditation, who you are as a meditator, all kinds of things. You crowd the space but if you If you come with a sense of unknown and willingness to be open and let things come, then it gives a chance for something to surface and come you don't crowd out the shy, quiet voices within. And then you don't know what's supposed to happen sometimes. I'm very fond of this idea that that when you practice meditation or practice on retreats or practice Buddhism, that the Dharma knows what's supposed to happen better than you do.

The Dharma knows and what that means is that there are all kinds of inner, psychological, emotional, spiritual processes that can unfold that have kind of life of their own and that are wiser than what your mind can calculate and figure out if you kind of You know, logically figured out all the things you've read all the books, the manuals and meditation, this is what's supposed to happen, you're going to go through steps one through three, four or five. Because you know what's supposed to happen, then there's no you know, you're just you're just using a very small piece of the information. Your Your mind is wonderful it is I'm sure you all have really wonderful minds. I mean, I have great respect for your minds. But your wonderful, wonderful as your minds are, I don't think they really get the full picture of what's going on here in this world of ours and even in yourself. And so but the Dharma gets the full picture of the Dharma is the fullness, the Dharma is the way the inter inter active interdependent way in which this world in this inner our hearts or minds the world, comes together, works together finds its way together, and so that the Dharma knows what, so you sit down to meditate. And one day you sit down and you get concentrated. So Dharma knew to get concentrated, the other day comes down and you're agitated. That's what he said, yesterday was concentrated and magically, I'm doing something wrong, this shouldn't be happening. Who knows? The Dharma knows your job is to be present and open to that. That's what comes out of the darkness being agitator. Okay? Now, now that practice is to learn how to be with that. The next day, you sit down to meditate and you're angry, you're angry. And again, I'm not. I'm a Buddhist, Buddhist, I'm not supposed to be angry. I'm doing it all wrong. I'm a terrible meditator doing this Buddhism wrong. I'm a bad person. That's like crowding the space and not you know, that's like, bring your knowing and, but what if you bring your unknowing meaning, I don't know. I'm angry. I don't know what this is about. I don't know what's being born. I don't know what needs to come. I don't know. But this is what's come. And let's hold that in the light of awareness. The Dharma knows what needs to happen. I don't know. Maybe this is what needs to happen. I need to get angry. I've known people for and it's happened to me, that's very surprised that anger welled up or strong emotions welled up unexpected in meditation. And that's what needed to happen. They needed their time to work through and reprocess through something. So, there is this very important quality of meditation of letting there be darkness, letting there be the unknown and, and see what wants to be born to see what wants to come. But once it comes, once it's something arises. Then the next the other half is bringing the light of your awareness to it. It's very important to hold it in awareness. Because awareness is kind of like food for our inner life. Awareness kind of like the, the, the, the shades have been pulled from the greenhouse so now the plants can grow. Now there can be a process that unfolds the Dharma that unfolds grows the best in the light awareness, the light of mindfulness. If you don't bring mindfulness to it, then the mold micro. So if you don't bring mindfulness to your anger, watch out the mold looks really ugly. But if you bring the light of awareness to it, then whatever is supposed to happen if that anger will unfold, next, sadness, joy, peace, all these things can arise. Even things like memories and thinking a lot. Who knows why you're thinking about certain things? Who knows why there's memories arise? Who knows why you're planning your next vacation? Who knows? You know, rather than saying, it's bad, am I supposed to be doing that? Something arose. I don't know why, but then hold it in awareness. And if you hold it in awareness, then you you're a little bit disincensivizing or disengaging, you're not involved in it, but you're seeing it you're present for it. And if it's just a kind of superficial surface mind that's planning a vacation, it'll fade away if you see it clearly. planning the

vacation has its roots in some deep existential angst about life that then if you hold that awareness, maybe the thoughts of vacation fell away, but the deep existential angst will end show itself a nice way. And then you can hold that in awareness. Who knows what you know, you can't second guess, the Dharma can't second guess your mind. But you can hold it in awareness. And be present. Be calm, be be with it in a gentle way. And see how it wants to unfold. This is a great process, to like, give yourself over to, it means being willing to over and over again. Return to awareness, as opposed to thinking about solving, fixing, analyzing, judging what's going on. Just come back to awareness.

Come back and trust awareness, trust, just, this is what's here. And then something else will be born out of the darkness. And then you see what that is to be present. For that, and this combination of, of being willing to live in the unknown, meaning, meaning you're willing to let the next moment be unknown, and you're allowed to as it bubbles up, to not over analyze it and over, label it and over you know, understand it, but just hold it in awareness, hold it in light of awareness. Who knows what wants to be born in you? So it's in the darkness that things are born. It's with the light that things flower. So you can flower what, what's neat, what's neat what's needed and what's with the flowers that you have can can certainly bloom in this process. So thank you. So now we