

# 2015-08-17 Overview of The Meditation Practice

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

meditation, practice, people, teach, present, mindfulness, breathing, compelling, mind, learn, attention, important, meditate, breath, present moment, notice, deep, sound, meditation practice, monks

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So Can everyone hear okay for me? And anybody have trouble hearing? Okay. So what I'd like to do this evening is to describe the kind of meditation that I teach. I've been teaching some, you know, now for here for 25 years, and in some ways how I've been teaching meditation is pretty consistent. In some ways. It's changed over those years. And, but it's not so good. Sometimes people don't quite get kind of exactly what I'm teaching because it can sometimes seem a little more vague than some of the very precise techniques that sometimes are taught as the personnel practices inside practice. So I'd like to see if I can convey this for you So, the mindfulness practice, that is an ancient practice that goes back to the Buddha. And as it came into the modern era of the 18th, and for the last few centuries, up until about 1880 or so, we have actually very little evidence of there being a lot of meditation done in, in Southeast Asia in Thailand, Burma, Sri Lanka, and those places. Undoubtedly, there are people and monks who did some meditation, but it seems to have receded quite far in the background, and it kind of had a because it was so rare that people meditated. It was often considered to be the domain of, of saucers or people had magical powers, because it was so other and it might sounds kind of strange Buddhism which is so strongly identified with meditation should have a period of time where there wasn't much going on. But you know, Buddhism had its ups and downs in Asia. And sometimes there were times when it seemed to almost disappear in some countries. in Sri Lanka at some point, there were so few months left, that they didn't have enough monks to ordain new monks. And you had to have at least five monks too. So it must be less than five months left at certain periods in Burmese history. And so they imported monks from not from Sri Lankan history, and they imported monks from Burma to get the Koran needed to continue there. And then they built it grew again. And so, in the late 1800s, there were a number of people started getting interested in meditation. And they looked around for what to do, and different countries they came up with different little solutions of how to start meditating again or learn it. in Sri Lanka, someone found a manual They looked at the manual and much of the Sri Lankan tradition of meditation had its genesis and veteran 1880. Someone found an old manual and, and it grew from that text. There are other influences as well that came along. In, in Burma, someone went deep in the woods and found an old monk, who was meditation monk. And they asked him, How do you know what, you know? How do you meditate? And the person said, Oh, don't ask me. There's a particular text, ancient discourse by the Buddha, that lays it all out for you to study that text. So they went and studied the, what's called the text called the four foundations of mindfulness texts about mindfulness. So again, it kind of the role of texts became very important for the genesis of the modern movement of meditation in our tradition. And then starting there, it started to grow and there were lots of experimentation, lots of people beginning to meditate and explore it. developing new ideas, new systems, new things, how to do it. And some of them are quite varied from each other. So by the late 1960s, Jack Kornfield went to study in Thailand Burma. And he discovered that there were many

forms of mindfulness meditation being taught. And he published a book in the 1970s, called Living Buddhist masters, which a very interesting study about the teachers who were alive back there and their range of different ways in meditation practice was taught, and even mindfulness practice. And then in the book had to be republished some years ago as living dharma. That's what has now because most of those teachers are not dead. So living Buddhist masters didn't work anymore.

So there was one particular strand of two particular strands for this practice of ours. That had a beginning. On the western way, teachers like Joseph Goldstein, Jack Kornfield, Sharon Salzberg taught this practice. And they came from one which came from an Indian man named Ganga, who learned the practice in Burma. And the other was a Burmese man named Mahasi Sayadaw. And those two people had very different approaches to how to do the practice. The Goenka approach was very systematic. And one of the key things that he taught was systematically scanning through the body to be mindful of the whole body. But in a very, very precise way, start at the top of your head, and do your forehead go down through your head, your neck, your shoulders, and your you know, arms, your torso, your legs, and then you do it again, and you get better and better and more concentrated at it. You can go through faster and faster. It's a way of building up a lot of concentration, and a very precise, deep attention that begins revealing the world of the persona and the persona. It's different than mindfulness. He personally is the result of mindful strong mindfulness practice. And what vipassana means is insight. make some sense. I hope you're following this. So that other school of Burmese meditation that had a lot big influence on us here in the West, was by a monk named Mahasi Sayadaw Tao and he came up with kind of his own way. And Mahasi I didn't study with him, but he started with his one of his disciples. And that was the primary Vipassana practice that I learned in Asia was the Mahasi system. And one of the qualities of that system is it is not systematic like Goenka. You go through systematically, but rather you you there's a way of practicing mindfulness, that is that opens up to your full range of experience. Let the full range of your human experience be the subject of mindfulness. So I was very influenced by the mahasi practice. I came here to the west back from Asia. And I started hanging around the western Vipassana teachers. And they had taken it and repackage it a little bit, the practice MRC and kind of found a nice way of teaching here in the West. And then as I stayed around the western for 25 26 27 years now I've been part of the Western insight meditation scene of Spirit Rock, IMS, I've noticed that the western teachers have trends and how they teach this practice. And you think that you know, you go here, a Buddhist teacher, and this is the pristine, perfect, unchanging dharma. This is how it is. But in fact, in Asia, and in America, things evolve and change over time. People discover new ways to meditate, new emphasis, new techniques, new things that work for them. And so the same thing In the last 40 years in America of the tradition that we're part of here at IMC, you can kind of attract certain trends of how the practice has been taught. And in fact, you can, there's been changes in how I teach to taught this practice over the last 25 years. And there's ways that I haven't changed. It's very consistent, and some ways that I changed. So the way that the primary influence on me for how I teach comes from this tradition called the Mahasi tradition, but then it's been influenced by other factors. And what are the influences on me was my Zen training. And so I brought my Zen training into a little bit to shape or organize or kind of the how to hold this so called Mahasi practice. So I'll talk about that a little bit. So the basic way that I like to teach has four component parts there First is that it's a practice that's all inclusive. Meaning that our whole range and realm of human experience can be included in the practice. There's nothing which is considered outside of practice. And I say to explain that sometimes is saying that what makes the practice sacred for me is that there's no outside, everything can be included within. As soon as you head divide the world between what's acceptable and not acceptable, then you lose that sacred dimension of awareness, which is, you know, panoramic 360 degrees, everything can be included. So that's the first principle is a way in which everything is included.

When the question How is it included? So the second element of the way I like to teach is that there is something called the anchor. It's often called the anchor, the center of gravity, the default place where attention goes, if nothing else is going on. So there's a place where we develop steadiness for And we can kind of develop and refine our capacity to pay attention and begin seeing more more deeply into our experience. And the primary place I like to emphasize for doing this is breathing. And in the Zen tradition, I practice and for many years, breathing was the center of gravity was the focus of meditation. And in the Mahasi practice that I taught, I was taught in Burma, breathing was the center of gravity, that was the anchor the center. And so one of the advantages of having something we kind of begin concentrating on if for many people, it tends to kind of quiet down their mind. It's harder for the mind to be scattered, scattered to jumping around. The mind wanders off and we come back we know where we come back to is no question about where we're going to go. Just come back, just come back. And so there's this There's other anchors that people use besides breathing. Some people will use the body in various ways. So the body sensations fit different ways of experiencing the body with the body. Some people for a long time found it very helpful to do listening, where sounds became the, the anchor for the present moment, use, keep going, if nothing else was going on, just open to sounds and awareness. And that's where you kind of come back to. And there's other things people can use as well. But there's some kind of primary anchor for developing stability and focus. The third element of these four part elements. So first, it's all inclusive. The second is there's an anchor or a center. And the third is that if anything becomes more compelling, in your experience, in your present moment, experience, then the anchor than the breathing, that's the anchor. Then you would let go The anchor, like of focusing on the breath, and bring your attention on that new thing that's compelling. And that new thing becomes the new center as long as it's compelling. so compelling the word they used to be, I was taught was the word predominant. If something becomes more predominant than the breathing, then that becomes the focus of attention. And so rather than being a technique where you systematically scan through your body, you would reality tells you where to bring your attention. Because if there's a loud sound that you weren't planning to have, but that sound, if it's persistent, tells you pay attention here because it's compelling. If a strong emotion arises, and that's really compelling, you weren't planning to have the emotion, but there it is. And so lo and behold, it wasn't your plan. Had to emotion meditation today. But reality had a different plan for you. So you get then bring your attention to the emotion, or the thoughts or whatever's going on body sensations. And what happens is that in the Goenka tradition where you systematically scan through the body, it's very effective. And it's kind of a purification process. With over time, you kind of address and meet so many different things that we hold in our body, the tensions, the holding the, the unresolved issues, the tensions we have, and, and slowly, slowly, a lot of things begin to dissolve and worked out kind of like getting massage in a systematic way. In the mahasi system, it's not done systematically, but it's done, not randomly, but we go through the same stuff of purification and working through things, understanding things, but as reality tells Pay attention over here. Now's the turn. Now's the time for this. The advantage of this way of just being opening to whatever is that over time, hopefully your whole range of human experience can be included. And so it becomes, you learn how to practice in every situation you find yourself in. Sometimes when it's a very technique focused approach to mindfulness.

People can get very good at that technique, and very concentrated and very, but they don't really know how to apply mindfulness in other areas of their life. So for example, in my Zen practice, where the focus was primarily on the breathing and posture, I got sometimes good at that. But I didn't really learn much about how to be present for my emotions in a clear deep way. I didn't learn how to pay attention to how I was interpersonally when I was with other people for, you know, input, you know this kind of really pay attention. But in the way that this mahasi practice opens up to the full range of your experience, sooner or later, I became aware of my emotions, and I learned to pay attention to and bring attention to it. The fourth element of how I like to teach it is that as we do this, as we focus on the

breathing, or we change our attention to something else that's compelling. Then you want to keep an easygoing attention on the quality of your mind on how you are practicing what the relationship you have to what is you're experiencing. So if you following your breathing at the center, you want to also notice how is it you're following the breathing? How do you paying attention to the breathing because it could be that you're stressed Meaning they couldn't be your very goal oriented and really trying to get something. It could be that you're trying to discover something mysterious and mystical in the breath that these people keep emphasizing the breath is so important, there must be something I'm missing there. And I have to really bore down and find out. And so there's this kind of like anxiety. Or it could be that we're bored about the read. We're gonna do it. We're very beautiful, but we're not really into it. Kind of like, oh, you're okay. In breath. Okay, did that out breath I did that. So, some people here the instructions, they follow the breath. And they a little bit get have blinders on. And they just focus on the breath itself, and not how they pay attention to the breath. So the analogy I like to use for this is, you know, pick up the striker that we use for hitting the bell. And there's two things going on as I hold the striker there's the earth Kind of two things to notice and notice the striker and I could notice the holding of it now if I really think this striker is really important and it's really my status as a Dharma teacher depends on this beautiful striker I mean every Dharma teachers have beginning self respecting Dharma to separate really nice Bell striker. And you know and I've had this for many years and this really you know, and so this is really important for my identity in front of all of you. And you're looking at this probably some of you are eyeing it, maybe you want one it it's a little bit concerned about you taking my striker you know, so the striker becomes more and more important than I hold on to it for dear life really hard. And I'm so concerned with the striker, the striker but if I opened my attention to how I hold the striker, I noticed that I am clenching it and it's it hurts. In fact, it's possible to not even notice how much it hurts the I'm so focused on my obsession with a striker and what it does for my identity. Isn't that great? low concentration there. But if I open up the attention more widely, and notice how I hold it is that I don't need to hold it that way. Why am I clenching? As a notice? And I'm clenching. Then I said, Gil, why are you clenching? Well, because I have this erotic idea of my identity as a Dharma teacher. And then as soon as I see it, I suppose proof I don't need that. Wouldn't that be nice? Thank you. And so the same thing with you know, you're focusing your attention on the breathing. Some people can be so involved with the breathing either for or against it or reacting to it, but they think the breath is the point and they don't notice how they pay attention to the breath. And the idea is to learn how to have a relaxed soft mind. That is the same time is called focused, that's quite committed quite engaged.

And to have that right balance of being focused and present, and be soft and relaxed, is an art form of meditation. And it really helps to have both. Because if the mind is too soft and easygoing, then the mind will drift off too much into thoughts and ideas. But if the mind is too focused and tight, that has its problems, you might get a headache. I've gotten headaches from doing meditation that way. So So, so, first, the principle of being all inclusive. Second, the idea of having an anchor, and if nothing else, you know, if it's all if it's okay with a person, I recommend breathing. And if that doesn't, Okay, then I'll talk to them about other options. And the third one is that if the something else is more compelling than the anchor, then to Let go of the anchor and pay attention that new thing until it's no longer compelling, then you come back to the anchor. Or if you're paying attention to this new thing that's more compelling. And then something else becomes even more compelling. Guess what? You go to them even more compelling thing, you go to the most compelling thing. And the advantage of that is that compelling means that's where the tension wants to go most easily. If you don't pay attention to what's compelling, because you're think you're supposed to always stay with a breath, for example, then you set up a tension between trying to be with a breath and this thing that's compelling. And so that tension can be deleterious sometimes. And then the fourth element is very important is just periodically, regularly enough. Just kind of open up a loop and say, How am I how am I in really To what I'm paying attention to. So maybe an emotion has become compelling. And you're horrified. Maybe it's more important to notice that you're horrified, horrified and misled pay attention to the modern, or the resistance you have



to it. Or the pleasure you get from it, you know, get really this is great, and you're holding on to it. And so there's a lot to notice in the relationship we have to it. As we do this practice, the chi steadying, calming settling the practice, the mind starts becoming less and less distracted, meaning you don't just jump around, get lost in thoughts as much as we can less loss and thoughts and more present and more kind of keep focusing on the steadiness of mind. Concentration, if you will. We start becoming aware of more and more of how we operate What's going on for us what's really important here. And many of us live lives which are fragmented, which are we are obsessed with certain things. And we miss out and a lot of what our full life is about. And so slowly over time, different things show themselves that haven't been attended to or seen before. And one of the places where it's particularly interesting is as the as the meditation gets calmer and calmer, the mind gets still learned Still, we start going through layers and layers in their mind, to the more and more subtle operating principles of what makes us tick. And subtle doesn't mean that it's unimportant, it's actually becomes more and more important to start seeing what's going on more deeply. And, but we don't have to go searching for what's deep. In fact, sometimes in our tradition, we say don't go searching for anything. Just be really present for what it is and let it show itself to you. And then in which there will begin showing itself more and more clearly things will be revealed. Because once you start searching and trying to dig to try to understand, then you no longer have this soft mind. So you want to stick with us stay soft and open to kind of expansive in the mind and consciousness and then very present for the experience and over time, and it takes maybe months and years and decades. All kinds of aspects of your life, welcome parading through, and you get to see so many different things.

And one of the analogies that I like to use for this is if you go to the savannas of Africa to be a nature photographer, you could run around the savanna with your camera, looking for the animals take a picture of or you can sit at the watering hole and wait for the animal To come there, because all the animals have to come to the watering hole, supposedly sooner or later. So the watering hole for us is the present moment experience. Just staying present for whatever is compelling in the moment, whatever arises in the moment, and sooner or later all the different issues, all the important things for us to address, all of important things we need to be revealed, will show themselves. And one way I like to emphasize this, to help kind of help people step away from being too self centered in their practice. And think that it's all about being in charge and having certain experience is I like to say that the Dharma knows better than you what you're supposed to be experiencing. And who knows, one day you sit down to meditate and you're calm. So that's maybe what you were supposed to experience that day, there's lessons of calm. The next day you sit down and you're agitated. Rather than saying, Oh no, this is this is not the day to meditate, obviously, because I'm agitated. You know, yesterday worked O'Shea would rather Oh, I guess now today today, to learn how to be present for agitation, to have that to be the focus. And next day have strong emotions next day your neighbor is, you know, doing construction next door and you know, four feet away from your window, banging away. And, again, you know, I shouldn't be meditating now because there shouldn't be. No, Dharma knows what you need. You need to learn how to meditate Now, with this hammering next door. Why does hammering Why was this hammering next door having to do with meditation, spirituality and enlightenment? Why would you want to stay and be present for it? Because as you'll learn to if the hammering next door is the predominant experience, don't fight it. Turn Your attention just to listening meditation in the present moment, there's a sound of hammering going on to listening meditation. And then notice what it's like for you to be doing that. Well, how are you relating to it? And you'll find that you hate it. You're impatient, you have a lot of judgments about what meditation is supposed to be like. You start seeing all these ideas you have that you operate. You notice there's a version, maybe self righteousness, how could they know this is my meditation time. There can be disappointment, there's a lot of things we began noticing about ourselves. And as you begin noticing, and seeing these different aspects of how we operate, we get wise about those areas. And the wisdom that we develop about how we react to the banging next door

helps us in our daily life, because the same kind of reactions can happen there. But now we've gotten familiar with it. And we begin to work through it and through it, and so for me For example, I buy one of my long meditation retreats. I had a someone who sat two seats away from me on this long retreat who's always came into meditation hall late. And he had the lumberjack approach to entering meditation. It was a wooden floor, and he came banging into the hall. wooden floors, and then he would sit down. I don't know where what he had been doing. But he next 10 minutes he was catching his breath and breathing really heavily. When this breath started to slow down and get calm, then he would take off his Velcro jacket. You know, and so one approach is to say what do you do?

So one meditation approach Some meditations do is just to develop a very strong mind that can override that whole experience override, so you don't hear the sound. So you don't kind of cut through and override your emotional reactions get very, very concentrated and focused and enter into kind of a zone into another kind of state of consciousness. Very nice thing to do. But what that that does, is you don't really learn about how to be wise about that the whole experience is kind of like checking out from it, rather than turning towards it, and learning how to work through it. So it took me a while. But after some weeks, it no longer became a problem for me. It was just sound it was just banging of, you know, feet on the wood. Just sound a breathing. It was sound of velcro, and it just became like, you know the sound of the rustle of the wind in the trees or it became You know, just just, you know, she wasn't, you know, background sound that had no issue because so much of the reason why it was a problem for me did not stem from the sound was my reaction response judgment of the sound. So rather than getting concentrated overriding it and rather than writing a letter to the director of the Center saying you have to you know, do something of this person. I steadily and slowly got, you know, was present for the experience. And as I got present for it, I got to see what my reactions and responses were and got to work through them until they settled out and let go what was not necessary, and it just became present for this sound, and an easy way. So, if you sit down to meditate, and that day you're agitated. You get to do the same thing with agitation, hear judgments about agitation resistance to it. You might have all kinds of push and pulls around it and ideas and One of the things we're trying to learn is to be if you're agitated, to be agitated, and nothing else. Just simple, just simple agitation, not agitated because you're agitated, not disappointed, because you're agitated, not, you know, angry at the person who gave you too much coffee that day. You know, just now you're agitated and you learn how to be at peace with that. So this all inclusive approach is learning how to be at peace with whatever comes your way that reality gives you whatever the experience might be. And then as we learn to do this in meditation, the meditation it gets quieter and quieter, more more still, because the mental chatter, the mental agitation, the mental activities are no longer needed anymore. And we kind of understood we get get wise about how it works. So for example, you sit and meditate you Be on the breath. And your mind starts to think. And when it's, at some point you can wise enough about thinking that you're right there and you notice the mind begins to think. And you don't have to even let go of the thinking. All you have to do is that it be just just kind of like, let the mind be free, let the mind be relaxed with the mind be open. And the thinking goes away. It's not because you're letting go of it, but because you're just free of it. And there's a little bit of a kind of very subtle little movement in the mind of letting it be just, I'm not going I'm not picking it up. I'm not getting involved. Right, they're noticing it. And, but the only what you've learned that skill, because you're not getting into some deep concentration state that overrides things, but you've learned how to meet the world of thinking. And become wise about it. And learn how it works. And learn how you work in relationship to thinking, how you relate to thoughts, how you hold on to them, how you resist them, how you get interested in them. And you learn a different way of using the mind. And as you become freer, you'll learn freer and freer away to hold your awareness and hold your mind, the mind the quality of the mind, becomes a more peaceful or more fresh, more transparent, more empty, is a very special word in Buddhism, word empty emptiness, more empty. And by then one of the most important things we're learning is, how to be present for what is as it is. And then we don't

have to have preferences. We don't have to kind of be at war without where things are, or prefer to be differently. We discover some very special way to be present for things as They are.

So when I first started teaching 25 years ago, when I was still very much kind of coming out of my Zen background, I emphasized very much the value of being mindful in the moment for itself, that there was no need to have a goal. In fact, have any kind of goal for the practice was a kind of separated you from the present moment, you kind of know, but thinking ahead into the future, rather than being fully present here. And there's something very, very satisfying and very profound about learning to be fully present. For this experience. You're having that whatever it is, as if it's zen, they said, as it was, it's perfect in itself. As if this is it doesn't have to be any way different. So we're not judging. We're not pushing. We're not manipulating and not fixing Just fully present for this experience, the powerful thing to do. And it can teach you a deep satisfaction of just being alive in a very simple way. Just this, just this, one of the most significant a very significant thing my Zen teacher told me as a kind of offhand remark One day, he said to me, I just to be alive is enough. Just to be present now is enough. If it's not enough just to breathe and be present in a peaceful way now, chances are there some mental activity, some relationship, some attitude, some reactivity, some judgment, that's getting in the way of being at peace right now. So then if that as the mind gets quieter, we start noticing those reactions and those thoughts and working through them. So that was my emphasis when I first started teaching, but what I know noticed is that as I taught this way, with kind of just be present for things as they are right now, a lot of people were kind of complacent about the practice, they just kind of always nothing really to attain, which is kind of here in a relaxed way. It's very nice. And they just kind of like, kind of cruised along. And I thought, well, that's not you know, that's not the practice either. And so now what's happened slowly over time. Now I tend to teach a little bit more a little bit more goal oriented. Yes, if you do this practice well, or thoroughly, really give yourself to it not complacently. Your mind will develop concentration will develop stronger mindfulness, greater stillness, and there is some powerful and significant experiences that can happen. insights that can happen if you hang in there and keep doing it. It is onward, leading deeper and deeper or higher and higher, whatever your metaphor, you're like, realms of our mind of our hearts of consciousness of reality, up into the point of realization of enlightenment that can happen and so people that have that vision that this is possible, then they've some people then get this, I want to give myself more to this. It's not just about being you know, some, you know, stress reduction, daily life and just being okay with things and accepting things as they are. There are some there are some place to go here. So, what I hope to convey, you know, I teach is, is actually not one or the other of those two approaches, but the whole both approaches together. That it's really helpful in this practice, to learn how to be fully present For the breath, for your emotions for your life as it is, as it's happening, as if that's enough, but really fully there. And at the same time to know that it's on with leading, it leads to some there are potential possibilities we can grow into if we do that. And, and, and that can be inspiring. And it not only can be inspiring, but it could speak to something sometimes we intuitively know. There can be an intuitive knowing a sense of there's more here, there's a possibility there's, there's freedom, there's depth, there's a greater sense of being at home, there's, you know, different people in different language words, but there's sometimes a yearning, a call for something into the sense of a possibility. Yes, there is. And if we only say they don't have a goal just be present. And sometimes we're dismissive of this deep inner intuitive Yes, there's something more.

But if we only emphasize there's something more. A lot of people have crashed and burned, you know, then they kind of override kind of overshoot the practice, they overshoot the present moment. So the art what I like to teach what I try to do, and I don't think I'm that good at it, but is it tried to kind of do the balance of these two, to hold both together. Practicing kind of just for the sake of really being here in the present moment. But being inspired and being directed and being somehow leaning into some of the deeper potential this practice has to offer.

So practices all inclusive, nothing is left out. I think it learning to do that we become a gift to our society, as we learn to have more and more inclusive society. Our consciousness our awareness can include everything that our hearts hopefully can include everyone we meet, and then have a center, I call it an anchor today are the days of call it the home, the home base for awareness, have the breathing to be your home. If nothing else is compelling, stay there and develop the practice there. But then if something else is more compelling than an easy, relaxed way, let go of the breath and take in that experience and what's compelling. And then as you do the breath meditation as you do the compelling experience, meditation, and periodically and easygoing way, check in with yourself, and what is your relationship to what you're paying attention to? What's going on in your mind? what's what's the quality of your mind as you do this, and see if you can kind of adjust it to make it a little bit softer or relaxed or sharper or clear whenever is needed in the moment to come into balance. And as these kind of simple principles are practiced over time, it becomes kind of like someone who's maybe an athlete's like a swimmer. swimmer has strokes they do in the water. And the strokes are pretty simple, you know, used to lift your hand over the water over your head and put it back in the water and push through, you know, pretty simple, straightforward. But as a masterful swimmer keeps practicing, month after month, year after year, more and more subtlety in that stroke becomes evident. And they've ever more refined and more refined, more refined what they do, and becomes elegant, beautiful to watch what they do. So as we do this meditation practice over and over again, all that, you know, we start working through and subtleties and the grossness and all the different things that we get to seeing ourselves in so many different ways. And so this meditation practice starts taking many different shapes and goes many different directions. Sometimes certain things get emphasized, we might spend a long time on the body, just our physical experience. Or this house might spend a lot of time on our emotions. Or the times might spend a lot of time on what's going on in our mind, the quality of our mind. Different things become kind of the emphasis in different times. Different things are different. And we learn that different things support different people. There might be certain ways of meditation, this practice of mindfulness really works well for you. That's slightly different than how I teach or someone else teaches it. And over time, we start finding our own way, and what helps us to be free, present, peaceful, still quiet, whatever he's trying to do. And one last thing I'll say that one of the wonderful things to do, and one of the things it's very gratifying for me as a teacher, is when people learn some of the basic principles of mindfulness in the practice, and learn about having a higher quality mind heart From meditation practice, and then they realize they want, why do I only have this in my meditation? Why don't I do this to for my daily life and then they make it to practice to start bringing this practice into daily life. And, and, you know, paying attention to the present moment and understanding themselves and learning how to open the awareness up. Inclusive awareness, relaxed awareness, self awareness, present moment awareness as we go through our lives. And that's a very different way of living our lives. Then, the ways many people live, which are often burdened with a lot of stress, a lot of contraction, a lot of agitation and so to bring that into our life or relationship to others, is one of our gifts so this practice can give the world so I hope that this explanation made enough sense for you and give some clarity to what I teach here. If it is not Clear seem too complicated or something, then you're welcome to leave what I said here today, not take it with you.

Thank you all