

2016-03-02 Practice Notes Free Independent of Circumstances

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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Mind as it'll practice.

He said wisdom and practice is a few weeks ago, I went to San Quentin Prison, where I visited a program that was started by Chuck for down on the actually a number of programs, meditation programs and insight, inspired programs helping some of these men work through some of their deep unresolved issues, some of their deep karmic issue of karmic issues. And it's quite something with the programs he has. And it's quite something to meet. Some of these people who've been in prison for. Some of them had been in prison for 40 years, 20 years, 30 years. And I think some of them needed to be in prison. And but after being so long in prison, something began to shift. And they became interested in a different way of living than they had known growing up and what they did. And so they went started going through these programs that Jacques and others offer. And one of the very powerful ideas that they have in there, is becoming free while still in prison. And, in fact, there was a man who was just released from Mississippi, I think he had his 43 years in solitary confinement. And the judge released him and he immediately kind of felt very confinement just left prison because it was immediately released. And the and that's what he said, he said, it took I took him a long time. But he started, you know, spending so much time alone, he started looking at his mind and look what he was doing. And at some point, he discovered that he could be free, while in solitary confinement so long, no longer defined by the prison no longer defined by the guards no longer defined by the circumstance he's in. But something about not being his his inner sense of freedom, his mind and hearts freedom was not dependent, clearly not dependent on the circumstances in which he was in awful circumstances. And I think it's a wonderful challenge to us. You know, and I think some of us some of some people are free from a point of view of not being in prison, but are trapped in prison by their own minds, imprisoned by their own preoccupations, concerns, the ways we define ourselves the way we understand our relationship to the world around us. And what does it mean to be free? In, in every circumstance? What does it mean to find freedom? That is not defined by the circumstances you're in? And I think that's one of the things that we're trying to discover, by doing this very simple practice of mindfulness is showing up being present for this moment, this moment. It's a discovery. It's a process. It's a path, to discover, what does it mean to be free now, and so that no matter where we go, we're not defined by the circumstances. We're defined by the freedom of our own, our own heart and our own mind. So I offer that to you as something to maybe not reflect on is the right word, but to consider as you do your practice this morning, that every step, every breath, every moment of mindfulness, how it

What would it mean not to be defined by the circumstance you're in, by the circumstance, even internally with you what's going on inside of you? Where's freedom found for you? Thank you