

2016-05-11 Dharmette Pleasant And Unpleasant

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SPEAKERS

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So can you hear okay? Everyone here, okay? Okay. So there's a really important pair of experiences that we have, that if you can get a handle on this to this pair of experiences, a lot will go a lot easier for you in your life. And the only two things it's going to do you know, so it's pretty simple. Two little things that if you kind of get a handle of, can make a big difference. And that is to get a handle on comfort and discomfort, pleasure and pain, to small things. And pretty basic, to the human experience. And I say it this way, because of how quickly we add on top of it, ideas, interpretations, the stories, the wider context for it. And it can get much more complicated and sometimes needs to be sometimes it's, um, situations we're in, are basically uncomfortable to be in, they're unpleasant. And to simply see them as uncut, unpleasant, can make it a lot easier just to step back and not be caught by it. Oh, this is an unpleasant experience. So for example, if you're at a social gathering, and the whole conversations and relationships, people are very difficult, you could get involved in who said what and why and their background and what they said last time you met and what you should say next time you meet them. And, you know, why are they saying that and, and it can get very complicated. And it's probably like a maze, you'll never get out of. But if you kind of kind of step back from the car, to the fray, the excitement of the conversation a minute and look at it from a few feet away. So this is an unpleasant experience. And then if you know how to be with unpleasant experience without being caught by it, you know, I can just relax and hold it as being unpleasant. I can just kind of be mindful of the unpleasantness. I don't have to react to the unpleasantness. And you might discover that part of the prompted you to get reactive and involved and part of the argument or part of the discussion or try to fix it all that was it wasn't not because of the complicated story. But the fact that it was uncomfortable, you're uncomfortable, and you're trying to avoid being uncomfortable, tremendous amount of human response to the world we live in, comes out of the simple response, we have two things being either pleasant or unpleasant. Things are unpleasant, we want to push it away, we want to get away, things are pleasant, we want to hold on to it, we want to get more of it, or to get it. And it turns out that a certain percentage of our behavior, I don't know what percentage of it, I don't want to be maybe different people's different percentage. But certain certain high percentage, you know, I'd like to maybe I'm being silly, but it's a range goes from about 90 to 95% of our behavior.

Except for those of you who are much more sophisticated. In a very high percentage has its origin in our reaction to pleasant and unpleasant, comfortable and unpleasant. It's kind of humbling to see that and, and to see it and then to practice with it to bring our attention to that and learn learn what it's like to be present for things that are uncomfortable in a relaxed way to relax with it, to relax into it. To make

space for it. Not to react not to get tight not to get contracted not to automatically fight or flight just to oh this is unpleasant. Let me be present for the unpleasantness of this situation and hold it lightly spaciously and mindfully. And then when things are pleasant to do the same thing, and some people find it harder with the unpleasant because there can be a lot of motivation with a pleasant there's a lot of motivation with the unpleasant because we want to fix it. But the pleasant like finally you know now I get to enjoy it. I deserve this. You know I've been struggling for a long time and fine. Now I want to hold on to it. I want to get more of it. And but the wonderful art of this practice is that is that your ability to be relaxed and open with one relaxed and open with comfort. It makes it easier to be with discomfort the ease issue with discomfort. And what you learn about letting go and being present in an open way helps you to be with comfort, they support each other back and back and forth. The more you react to discomfort, the more you contract or push away, the more likely you're going to be in reactive mode to where things are pleasant. And what we learned over time, is how valuable it feels I want to avoid to use the word pleasant, but how valuable it feels how satisfying it feels, to have the openness and the stability and equanimity that can be present for things which are pleasant or unpleasant, without getting pulled into their orbit, without getting reactive to it without wanting or not wanting, not going towards or away from. And both are important part of human life, you can't have human life without dosage of pleasant and unpleasant experiences. You can't sit in the chair for very long, without a dosage of pleasant and unpleasant experience of sitting in the chair. And this is one of the first non meditation exercises I heard when I was monastery in Thailand was set yourself in a really comfortable chair. And don't move. And lesson was, sooner or later, it's going to be uncomfortable, even the most comfortable chair if you don't move. And so it's just part of life, you know, and we don't really realize how often how much we're constantly shifting and changing and making ourselves comfortable, because it's gonna be so automatic shifting in a chair or something. But as we get a big dosage of pleasant and unpleasant. And some people have have philosophies, belief systems, tied to whether things are pleasant and unpleasant. They have beliefs that somehow they're failing and things are unpleasant. Only if they're pleasant, are they successful in life, I think is going well. That something is wrong, if there's unpleasant, I'm doing something wrong if I'm experiencing an unpleasant sensation or unpleasant situation. And someone's to blame me or someone else or the situation. Or if things are pleasant. There's beliefs connected to that sometimes belief of self aggrandizement, look at me how great I am, you know, I figured out how to be comfortable in a chair. You know, but once we start seeing these added additions, of beliefs and ideas we put on top of it, and some of the oppression that can come around the pleasant and unpleasant world is not from the pleasure and displeasure and discomfort, but it's from the beliefs and ideas that trigger us. And the odd thing is they're they're kind of powerful thing is that we can have something happening so unpleasant. And our reaction to it is also unpleasant. And now we have two unpleasant things going. And sometimes it's a secondary unpleasant that people are reacting to the most. And then they try to do even more behavior. And then sometimes that reaction is even more unpleasant. And so there's a spiral as some people have a spiral to get worse and worse. And then they want to avoid having it at all costs. When I was in San Quentin, we go there once a year to meet with some of the inmates.

And they were doing a class learning about this. And they were talking about how the crime that they did, that got him into San Quentin, some other were pretty crimes are pretty bad. Were attempts to avoid feeling their pain, they had deep personal pain because of trauma as children. And they talked about that pain was heartbreaking to hear what happened to them as growing up. And that their their it was their attempt to avoid feeling that that got them to into the into San Quentin, which is pretty unpleasant place to be with he had to learn how to deal with unpleasant to survive. And so to bring it back down to basics, bring it back down to just Are you comfortable? Are you uncomfortable? Is it pleasant or unpleasant the situation you're in. And before you kind of use your sophisticated brain to kind of evaluate and make a story or figure the cause or, you know, make it complicated. linger for a

while in the very raw, basic level of it being pleasant and unpleasant. And relax into that feel that make space for it. See what happens if you just kind of relax or find a certain degree of equanimity with the fact that it's unpleasant. And it's possible that a fair number of circumstances you're in will shift for the better if you have that kind of economists mindful presence for it. That is an alternative to being reactive and You know, spitting out the stories and ideas. It's a very powerful thing to slow down, be mindful at this basic fundamental level that we all have, we all share. And it's not a personal failure, that you're uncomfortable. Not a personal fit, not a person, person idea of personal success that you're having pleasant. It's simply now it's pleasant. Now it's unpleasant. And keep it really simple. And then find your way. And then eventually, you've maybe find that there's a, I don't know how to say it, but a higher order of satisfaction that comes from having this economists mind or this open mind on which all these things can travel through without us being reactive. So look for opportunities. Don't make don't make yourself pleasant. Don't, don't, don't, you know, necessarily pursue pleasant, but from time to time when the pleasant and unpleasant comes to you. Practice with that. Okay, great.