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SPEAKERS

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If you go to a foreign country, where you don't speak the language, and you're having to navigate and deal with all kinds of things, but you can't talk to people even no clue what they're saying to you, they might be telling you important things and saying it very adamantly, because it's so important that you understand, but you don't speak the language, you don't know what's going on. And then at some point, maybe you get someone gives you Google Translate on your app, or something, and you can kind of just, you know, instantly, like voice recognition, and it gets translated for you, oh, that's what's happening and suddenly understand, oh, it's a whole new world, because now you understand what's going on. So it's similar to that, in looking at our own mind, that if you're only looking at the content of the mind, and this is where the analogy doesn't work, too well, you know, because you understand all too well, what your mind is saying. You can, you know, you know, the content of your thoughts, what you're thinking about. But if that's all you're aware of, it's almost as traumatic as you don't really know what's really going on, you don't know what's happening. And so what we're trying to do in meditation is to step away from the content of thinking, in order to take a deeper look or a bigger look at what else is going on, when we're thinking. And sometimes, in their meditation circles, they emphasize that the content of our thoughts is not interesting for the purpose of meditation. What's interesting is the process of thinking. So what else is happening? Besides whatever the subject is of your thoughts. And sometimes it's easy to see when you look at your mind that how strongly wedded we are, to the content of the thinking, the subject that we're thinking about the thing that we're concerned about. And sometimes it's like a strong magnetic pool, to back to those thoughts back to those ideas, kind of thinking about the over and over again. And so part of what we train ourselves to do in mindfulness meditation, is to place to kind of open the field more widely. So it's not like limiting yourself, but rather opening up more widely to see what else is going on here. What else is happening, that's different than just the content. So for example, there could be a lot of emotions connected to your thoughts. And so maybe it's useful to kind of switch the focus from the content to the emotions. One of the reasons that's useful, is that the emotions are always about the present moment. It's always something about happening now. Because you can feel it's happening here, the emotions, it's too easy, when we're focused on the content of thoughts, the content themselves, might have to do with other places and other times, so that we're thinking about what's happening next, later, in the day tomorrow. What happened yesterday, reviewing the situation, we're, you know, kind of planning, we're doing all this stuff, about the content, but the emotion, that's the fuel for thinking about it, the anxiety, the anticipation, the excitement, the delight, the you know, the greed, the, you know, the love, so all these other things going on, that are kind of giving fuel energy to what we're thinking about. So if we step back and look at the bigger picture, we start seeing, oh, there's, there's there's emotional, quality, emotional aspect to what we're thinking about. And this is happening in the present moment, then you can ground yourself in the emotions and feel those. So this is what it's like. And if it's something like fear, then the fear the fear, is acknowledged and felt and is there present, as opposed to being unacknowledged and unknown, which

still influencing you, casting a spell on you and perpetuating the thoughts. And if you really see the fear directly, not always but more often than not, then you're less likely to be pushed around by it. So that he has to step back and see or it might be there's happiness, joy and love. That might be kind of the future.

For the how you're thinking, and there, it's interesting then to open up to that, those positive emotions, because they're actually more nourishing, and more satisfying, oftentimes, than what we're thinking about. So it's like dropping into something that's more primary and nicer than the contents of the thoughts. It'd be kind of, I don't know if this is a good example. But say that, you know, you're with a really good friend, and you're having a really nice conversation, it's really great. And you haven't seen your friend for maybe some years, and just nice to be around someone who remembers you, from the old days, and you feel this sense of almost family like feeling it's so you know, So many nice things there. However, as you're met with the person, you get very interested in the kind of car they drive. And in all the years that you haven't seen your friend, the different generations of cars they've driven, and what color they are, and, you know, how they got their oil changed, and, and you're really fixated on that. And the more you get involved in that kind of concern about the car, and then you're worried about your car, and did you choose the right car over these years, and they probably chose better cars than you did, and, and probably better color than you did. And as you get more preoccupied about those kinds of thoughts, the cut those kinds of thoughts, you're no longer being nourished by the sense of being with someone that you love and care for, and they care about you and how rich it is, right? So it's easy to get swept away into the content of thoughts and concerns. And we lose touch with what's nourishing. So sometimes our the emotion that fuels our thinking, that kind of supports it and keeps it going, is something that we don't want to have in charge, we don't want it to be unconsciously pushing us around. So like fear or anger or something, so we want to hold it and see if I can be present for it. Sometimes it's something that's very nourishing. And so we want to kind of be able to relax into it and make time for it and feel it. So we can be nourished, rather than lose touch with it. Because we get you know, we're back in, you know, concerned about the must be a right car color, and then I better figure it out, you know, which takes you away. So kind of opening up to the bigger picture, what's going on? And we think what's the process of thinking like, and part of the process is, there's an emotional quality sometimes, to our thinking. And so what's what's happens there. The other interesting thing, and that is, there's many things to study or be aware of when you're open up, or widely the bigger picture when you're involved in focusing on thinking. But another thing is notice is how interested you are in your thoughts, how interested Are you in what you're thinking about. And because it's possible to be even if even if you don't like what you're thinking about, there can be a lot of interest, or a lot of preoccupation, like a lot of the glue is very, you know, we're glued to it. And if we can notice how glued we are notice how interested we are, notice the degree of preoccupation we have with it. That begins opening up a little bit of a gap of space, where we're not quite as preoccupied, we're not quite as wedded to it. Because then you're noticing how you're relating to it, the how you're thinking how you are, and then you can kind of step back further and just kind of try to look at the big picture in such a way that thinking becomes part of the scenery, rather than thinking becoming the only thing happening. And it's very easy for us to be so involved in thinking that it really becomes, you know, for practical purposes is really the only thing that's happening, we're so swept up in its world. But to step back and say there's much more going on, than the content of what you're thinking about. And if you can kind of open up and get more interested in having the big picture. Then you're interested in your content of your thoughts. There's much more peace available, much more freedom available, and much more wisdom available than if we kind of get swept into the world of thoughts. So if it should happen, especially in meditation, one of these days or months, that you get overly involved in your thinking. Open up more widely.

Don't just let go of your thoughts. Just opened up more widely and get curious and see if you can notice something about the process of thinking that's distinct from the content. Chances are the content is not

very important for the, for the process of meditation, but the event, the bigger picture of what's happening as you think. Maybe it's very supportive for developing mindfulness.

And if you don't think that this helped, this is helpful when I said and then look at those thoughts. So now, we're going to do