

# 2017-10-30 Appreciating Mindfulness of Breathing

Mon, 9/28 9:51PM • 45:44

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

breathing, breath, people, relax, meditation, mind, concentrated, tension, instructions, awareness, mindfulness, attention, happening, taught, buddha, life, settled, calmer, practice, body

## SPEAKERS

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So on my mind is breathing, particularly my own breathing. And that seems like appropriate things to say, because my breathing has been on my mind for over 40 years. And there was a time when I didn't know I breathe, not on an ongoing basis. And if I didn't pay attention to the breathing and in some ways I, you know, breathing happened, but it was not something very, I didn't see it as something valuable and rich and important part of my life. And then at some point, when I was about 20, or 21. I, I felt like I finally learned to breathe. Not that I didn't breathe before. But they, you know, read just fine. But qualitatively, when I was about 21, I discovered a way to breathe, which was really easy and kind of light and easy. And like the body breathe itself, the breathing, breathe itself. And the ease in which that natural breath kind of moved through me, was revelatory. And I had no idea it was possible to breathe in this kind of way. And so, in a sense, I began breathing, or that's where I learned to breathe, I learned to breathe as a valuable, important resource reference point for my life. And I think it will have a little bit of a slow start after that to really get into it. But it became the primary meditation practice that I've done for these many years. And I don't think of it exactly anymore as the primary practice that I do. But I think that if I kind of was thinking about it over the last, you know, especially the last few days, and I think it's the primary practice, because I'm kind of, as far as I can tell, I'm paying attention. I'm always paying attention to the breathing, it's kind of like becomes so second nature for me to be aware of breathing as I'm breathing, that I'm never very far from it. And so when I sit down to meditate, it's always there kind of it's like the beat or the rhythm of my practices. So I might be paying attention to other things at times. But the breathing is always there, kind of kind of keeping the beat dark, moving through me or doing the massage that it does for me. And it's been very helpful for me, because what the breathing does breathing, staying with the breath, having some contact with the breath, it keeps me fluid, and it helps me stay in the present. And this idea of staying fluid is extremely important. So one of the, one of the benefits of paying attention to the breathing and the body, just being aware of how the body is when it breathes, is we can be aware of when the breathing is blocked, when it's held, when it's tight, when it starts to change, based on what goes on with life around us with life within us. And that's valuable information. And it's often the early warning sign that something is amiss, that something needs attention, that if the breathing gets held or is constricted up in the chest, or this belly is kind of tight and not really breathing deeply there. That's a sign that I've gotten caught by something I'm preoccupied and anxious about something or I'm too in a very much involved in what I want to try to get something. And so I get this early warning, I get this information that I've learned, and I'm very tuned in after all these years now, you're tuned in to notice when my breathing feels kind of off, and not so nice. And then to make an adjustment and then making that adjustment, something settles inside of me. The preoccupations or the attachments of the mind don't have quite the strong grab anymore. Because

there's a there's a very close relationship to breathing and what goes on in the mind. what goes on in the heart.

I think of breathing it sits at the crossroads of everything. Like all roads, all roads lead to Rome. I kind of sometimes think all roads lead to the breath that you're breathing. It sits at the crossroads of our conscious and unconscious life or they don't. In our emotional life, or physical life, or mental life, or social life, what goes on around me, our energetic life, if we start doing exercise or doing something active, it affects the breathing, the breathing, kind of, you know, maybe because we're constantly breathing, and the breathing that we do, I guess, regularly helps regulate or provide the proper amount of oxygen for the energy system to work. And so and so it's costly, needs to be adjusted or constantly is adjusted, depending on what's going on. And so many people have found that paying attention to breathing is a great way to regulate things like tension or fear, a common technique for panic attacks is to breathe deeply. In fact, the first one on one kind of interview or practice discussion meeting I had with a Zen teacher, any Buddhist teacher, we met in a small room, and it's just me and him. And I was pretty young. And I was so nervous, that I couldn't speak. And so my teacher Mel said to me, kill, breathe deeply. And so I breathe deeply a few times, and then I could find my voice. So that was my glorious beginning of now, all these people come and see me and I don't know how intimidating I am. But I haven't had to tell that to anyone really deeply. So. So you know, so people use it as a technique for, you know, dealing with certain difficult emotions. But I think it's useful in all kinds of circumstances, because it kind of keeps, as I said earlier, it keeps us fluid, it keeps us I think of the breathing as the great lubricator. If you want to lubricate your mind, breathe mindfully, if you want to lubricate your heart, not get stuck in something, breathe mindfully. And I do think of it also as a massage from the inside. When the breathing is fluid, the breathing moves freely, and likely, it's very hard to keep things stuck or fixated or, you know, and so things loosen up. So the Buddha taught mindfulness of breathing. And it's the only practice technique that the Buddha describes himself as doing. And he said that before his awakening, he practiced mindfulness of breathing. And after his awakening, he practiced mindfulness or breathing, what he was doing during his awakening, you know, that's another story. But probably he was, you know, it was close by the breathing. In the ancient texts, they talk about the Buddha, a variety of mental meditation states that the Buddha attained. But in terms of the technique there, I think the only technique he taught, he talks about actually doing is this mindfulness of breathing. It's also the only meditation practice that he taught his own son. And they Thank you so much, probably a young teenager, when he gave him this instruction. And it's so interesting how the reason he gave this instruction, it seems to be that his son was involved in certain conceit, about his own appearance. And I think to this day, there are occasionally teens, who are quite concerned about their appearance. And, and, you know, it can be a big deal, you know, about going to school and, you know, if somebody for your parents aren't quite what it should be. And so even back 2500 years ago, it seems to be that was the case. And so, the so what's interesting about teaching mindfulness to the breathing, is that the technique he taught, is one to create an inner sense of well being. And some of the words he used for this inner well being, are words like joy, rapture, happiness, gladness, so develop this inner sense of well being that comes with mindfulness of breathing.

And that becomes the alternative to conceit or alternative to be concerned without some outward appearance, is having this inner deep inner sense of well being. And I don't know if you can kind of imagine that that if you're really so happy and settled and contented, in your in your heart, your mind and your inner life that you know, you're not going to be so focused on what people think of you, or whether your hair is cut too short or too long, or whether you're wearing the right clothes, or you put your shirt on and the buttons are a little bit off, you know, you probably someone pointed out to you, you'd probably fix it, but you're not going to be mortified. Because see, if he could mortified, then you freeze up and your breathing, you know, will tell you that you're frozen up. So then you're brave. And

yet sense of being frozen begins to relax into thought. And it becomes hard to sustain. being frozen, it's hard to sustain, you know, being tight. Because, you know, it's so obvious that you have a practice to kind of move through it and relax it. And it's quite a beautiful thing. down through the centuries, in my study of Buddhism, in my study of contact with Buddhism around in different forms of Buddhism. Now, I think it's probably accurate to say that meditating, meditating and breathing is probably the most common form of meditation taught in all the Buddhism, some some relationship to breathing. And certainly for me, that was the case, I studied Zen first. And there was a tremendous emphasis on mindful breathing. And when I first came to zen, the way I was taught was to count the breath, count the breaths. And so it worked a little bit as a concentration practice. And it worked fairly well not right away, but to, to count the breaths and to get concentrated to really kind of be here. As I as I started doing Zen practice, you know, and started to be with a breath, count the breath, at some point, what concentration is, is to be unself conscious about focusing on breathing. So it's no longer a technique, it's no longer trying to attain a thing or to be concentrated, the mind is nicely there. And the mind is not going to wander off much just kind of resting with a breath in a sense. And to have the mind the awareness of resting with breathing, also allows the breathing to rest on itself, or the body to rest in itself. And it's a wonderful feeling to have a sense of rest and stability that can come. And so this beautiful feeling of the body breathing itself, the breath breathing itself, and the self consciousness disappearing, just kind of being in this simple experience of breathing that some people might might initially think, is boring. And in some ways, it is boring. If you think it's boring, it is boring, if you have aversion to it, or you have judgments about it, or you think that there's better things to be doing with your time. But to settled into the experience of breathing, as if that was the most important part of the universe, for the corner of the universe to kind of be be engaged in and dropping, letting, letting yourself drop away the judgments that dropping away the ideas that should be different to your better things to do. It allows the mind to settle. And the sense of well being and sense of ease and happiness can arise it feels actually feels a lot better than being anxious about what you want or having being involved in judgments. So I can remember, you know, learning Zen how to sit there with a breathing and breathe in and out to just feeling so unselfconsciously involved and connected to it. And then it's a fascinating thing that can happen. If you get focused on breathing, really present for it. So you mind doesn't leave, you're kind of like, I don't know, just almost like wedded to the breath or kind of resting in the breath and not going anywhere else, just there in a completely unselfconscious way. So and self conscious. At some point, you're not even you're not trying anymore. It just like this awareness and breathing are happening together. And the breathing then has to be concentrated and set centered, becomes calmer, the whole body becomes calmer, the mind becomes calmer. When the mind becomes calmer, it needs less oxygen. And this is my kind of layman's understanding of what's going on. I don't know how to study the physiology. And what I've read is that the brain is the great energy sink in our system, there's a lot of energy goes into running this brain of ours.

And when the brain is calmer, it needs less energy. One of the big energy sinks is being anxious. So if you really want to lose weight, just you know really work on that anxiety, keep it going all the time. But or something but anyway, so the when the mind gets calm, it uses less energy. And so because of the uses less energy, you don't need to breathe as much. And as you as the breathing gets calmer, it also becomes more pleasant and easeful, which helps the mind getting more focused, which helps the mind become calmer. Which means that the breathing becomes calmer. So I was sitting there meditating, when I was about, I don't know, 24 minding my own business, minding my breathing, just doing this process, I'm self conscious, just kind of, I no longer had any thoughts in my mind, particularly no thoughts, I think in my mind, I was just there, me and breath were kind of the same one or something just breathing and the breath got calmer and calmer, quieter and quieter. And then it was just there. And then I realized, stop breathing. So the reasonable thing to do, is to go, Oh, I'm gonna die. That's what happened. I'm gonna die, I took it, I took a deep breath, you know, like, as high because I was afraid.

And, but eventually, what you learn is, you know, that kind of way of having the breath stop, you don't die. And there's even ancient texts that talk about the breath stopping. And they say, the meditator is some like, in the military doesn't cheat by breathing through the years. And it just, you know, I suppose we still need oxygen. But the maybe there's enough kind of transfer of, of gases, without having to actually breathe, because we need so little, maybe just kind of, I don't know, that's my guess. And so after a while, people just learn to trust this, it's fine, because you can go for a long periods of time, without any conscious awareness of breathing. Again, maybe there's some movement that goes on, but I just, you know, to be there and just get still there and still learn still there. And just kind of one of the advantages of paying attention to breathing in meditation is it helps avoid some of the meditation traps some of the problems that can arise with meditation. One of the challenges some meditators will have, is getting concentrated, but getting concentrated, but while being tense, and not a few people have really kind of said, The point is to get concentrated, so I will, and they kind of bear down or they kind of, kind of, kind of tighten up and kind of a laser focus on something like the breath. And there's all this and as they get concentrated, they they get tense. And some often there's a tension around the face. Sometimes, on the eyes, sometimes around the jaws or the mouth, in nose, sometimes, I've had tense when I was concentrating the wrong way. Sometimes it can be other parts of the body that get tense. And there are people for whom who gets so focused or concentrated in such an unhealthy way, that their whole innards start getting twisted and tight and then because of the concentration is so tight, it's actually unhealthy for the whole psychophysical system. And there can be a variety of psychophysical problems that might arise is the imbalances that can happen if different kinds. People can get headaches, people can get physical pain that wells up, and people can kind of get a little bit. I don't know what the diplomatic way of saying it is. A little odd,

you know, psychologically odd, in this kind of being unbalanced. So meditation can have its dangers. But the most dangerous that I've seen people run into is because their practice was imbalanced, and they're focusing too tightly. So mindfulness of breathing, if you're aware of your body breathing, you'll notice the tensions that are building and the Buddhist instructions, one of the pieces, instructions around mindfulness of breathing, is to keep your body relaxed. Keep notice, notice where the attention is, and relax the body. And if you relax them, and you also have the other instruction he gave, is really feel the body, the full body, really be connected to your body as you're doing it. Don't get lost in the minutiae of your breathing, focus on the breathing and really sense and feel your whole torso and body as you do it. And so this combination of feeling your body, knowing where the tension is, as it builds. Then relaxing, it is a protection for a meditation career, it really keeps things fluid relaxed, soft. Some people who are used to getting concentrated with tension, don't want to give up the tension. Because it does mean they lose some of their concentration. But it's actually better to lose that kind of tense concentration and some of the some of the benefits and come with it, to come back into a calm, more relaxed way of being, and then trying to develop the concentration again, while staying relaxed. And it might take longer, it takes longer sometimes to get concentrated, if you're relaxed. But the concentration you create your build up is much more useful, and much more useful spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, kind of probably, you know, every possible way. So breathing, and it's such a simple thing, breathing in breathing out. Given that it's so simple, some people think it's too simplistic, but to really enter into the world of breathing in to give oneself over to the experience of breathing, to drop all the judgments and ideas about it, that the mind become calm and focused and centered on the breathing can give birth to some of the most pleasant experiences a person can have. And that can be quite wonderful, some time. And there's a whole variety of pleasant sensations that can come with meditation in general, but with mindfulness of breathing, some of them are very quiet and calm. Some of them are actually quite intense. So the word rapture sometimes describes some of the phases of people getting settled on their breathing. And but it's a great adventure. It's a great way of getting to know oneself and enter into one's inner world journey of the mindfulness of breathing. And the Buddha

describes the journey in the instructions, he give the entering into this world of breathing. So I really didn't have anything to say today. Because I just wanted to share with you my appreciation of breathing, mindfulness of breathing, and a couple of poems. So this was all kind of just not having to say so far. And the first poem is by me, so it just something I, I don't think I should call it a poem, I just formatted it like a poem. This is so that, I don't know, just so that it would look nicer on the page or something. It was just kind of inspired thing. One day I was sitting thinking about my breathing, and this kind of came and then I tweaked it a little bit. So I've never met anyone, so hopefully you're patient. Breathing is the meeting place of what is most intimate with what is most not ourselves. to breathe is to live. We breathe more than drinking, eating, talking and working. combined. Yet we rarely know the life giving breath. We rarely inhabit the breathing room of the breath. Room opens. When feeling the body breathing. Enter the breathing, you will find more space all around you. You will realize vastness within greater than the you who breathes.

The Greek word psycho means mind, soul, and breathing. Are these three really distinct from the word psycho. Psychology is the study of breath. In the place where mind soul and breathe and breath come together. The word inspiration and spiritual grow out of the Latin word for breathing. Speed Radha. Spiritual, thus means of the breath. Inspiration is breathing in together. spiritual inspiration is soaring on the breath. The natural rhythm of breathing teaches about the self, about freedom from self about self consciousness disappearing in the blissful rhythm of inhale and exhale. Breathing with others, we conspire with them. In sharing air. We share an air that has been more intimately inside others than we will ever be. We conspire with others in a wide awareness that makes everything beyond us compassionately, personal and everything within us, joyfully impersonal. We breathe. No sharp line between you and me, is found breathing in particles our ancestors breathed, become close to all that's ever breathed.

So then I want to read this poem by a Mexican poet named Arnaldo Garcia. It's called the meditation on breath. I breathe in rain. I breathe out green. I breathe in wind. I breathe out sky. I breathe in laughter I breathe out happiness. I breathe in her. I breathe out poetry. I breathe in daughters and sons. I breathe out hope. I breathe in words. I breathe out mountains. I breathe in sage. I breathe out clarity. I breathe in dust. I breathe out the bones of my people. I breathe in oppression. I breathe out liberation. I breathe in fire. I breathe out clouds. I breathe in ink. I breathe out pains. I breathe in Buddha. I breathe out Mexican.

I love the last two lines the idea of breathing and Buddha, Buddha. Maybe breathe in awakening. And then breathe out yourself. So he's Mexican. So they say here that is a particular of who he is, somehow has a place. When you breathe in. Buddha breathe and awakening. Maybe if you really breathe well really learn if you can learn to breathe. So your breath is at ease is free is your intimate companion. Your breathing provides you with great breathing room wherever you go. So you're not constricted or caught by the world that you live in. If your breathing becomes like that, maybe then you finally get to become yourself. And so he breathes in Buddha and he breathes out Mexican. So those are my thoughts about breathing. Kind of I kind of what I had in mind was trying to talk about this was a little bit more of a self free personally these a celebration of breathing and share something that I have been doing for a long time and also because for the last few weeks, I taught her two week retreat, where that was teaching of the retreat the instructions for the retreat for two weeks. I try to teach people how to breathe. That's pretty cool. I enjoyed it. So we have a few minutes. And in this conspiracy of ours here if you have something you'd like to ask or say. Yes, please. But we have one breath. One breath we share. Yes. Great. That's right. We have the mic.



I'm just wondering if you would repeat again your thoughts and instructions on relaxation around breathing. Like, do you start with a certain place and then work down or

I'll tell you the instructions the Buddha gave around this. So first the instruction was to become aware. So awareness is something that you're aware, know that you're aware. And you're always aware. But to tell them a really No, it was to establish the way where he would establish awareness. And then become and then connect your awareness with your breathing. And that's it to do that is not easy, because the mind wants to wander what wander away so much. So we're trying to get ourselves into the present moment. So we come back to the breathing, wanders off, we come back, some people will count the breathing, some people use other techniques to help them. But the idea is to cultivate the capacity to stay with the breathing. So you have to be with a whole series of readings in a row without wandering off into thought. So you kind of establish yourself in the present moment, you know, you kind of in the old ancient language, he talks about taming the mind. So the mind is not so wild. Jack Kornfield calls it taming the puppy, you know, So the, you know that that's your stay, you stay put your stay here. And once we're here, enough, then the instructions are to start getting more intimate with the breathing, to kind of discover what is your breathing, like, what are the different qualities of it, the characteristics of it, or the different ways that you breathe at different times, just get yourself much more familiar with the breathing. And that helps you get into the world of being settled and hear more and more. As you kind of settled in more on to the breathing, then the instructions are to open up your awareness or maybe include your, into your peripheral awareness, become aware of your body, what's going on in your body as you breathe. So you're focusing on the breathing somewhere, maybe in the chest, or the belly, or maybe the nostrils and then you're you're quiet enough centered enough that you're not having to kind of corral your mind back all the time, you're here. So there's space in the mind to kind of open up the field of awareness. So that the peripheral awareness you're kind of begin becoming aware of what it's like to be in a body. And you're aware of the feelings essentially sensations that go on in the body. And so the Buddha gave instruction just feel just get to know experience with your body is like, although all along while just continuing with your breathing. As you do that, you'll become aware if you're tense, you'll be aware, if you're holding someplace in the body you're more global your awareness is through your body, the more access you have to different places of tension. And so then, when you notice it at some point, at some point, not in a hurry, you don't want to hurry to relax, you want to just hang in there and get to know what's happening first. And then once you kind of have a good sense of your body and what's happening in it, then the instructions are relaxed the body, continue to breathe, relax the body, I find it very helpful, very productive, to relax on the exhale. For me, there's something about the exhale with letting go of the exhale. That kind of encouraged me to soften and relax the shoulders, the belly do different things. And so to do that for a while until you feel more relaxed. What's interesting is that the more concentrated a person becomes more focused, the attention is more sensitive. We are the more subtle the attention we can feel. At first it might be used to gross tensions, they're gonna large course tension, so we feel but there's all these micro muscles that are in there. And you start to after a while you start feeling the micro muscles that are a whole is teeny bit of holding and you start feeling other micro muscles begin to relax. And we start getting a sense of how many micro muscles are tense all the time, you realize how much extra energy you're using, that you probably don't need to do.

So is that kind of you said it sometimes takes longer do you then sometimes lose your concentrate your focus on your breath when you're thinking about your, your awareness of your of your tension? And I think he said he alluded to the fact that it can take longer sometimes then to get back to being with the breath. And I understand that correctly.

Did I say something? I don't know if I recognize that. But earlier from what I said earlier, oh yes, some people will. You know, if you if, if you bear down your attention really kind of hold it tight. It's possible to kind of have it be unwavering. And so you won't go off into thought there's no room and you're kind of like holding tight, it's like having blinders on or holding. And, but that kind of, and to do that persistently, because of all the tensions there creates imbalances and creates problems. And so I, you know, I don't think it's a good idea to meditate that way. So it's actually better to not concentrate that way. But to relax and soften, and then develop a concentration from a soft, relaxed place. But if you do that, it'll take longer to more often than not, it'll take longer to get concentrated, the mind is much easier for the mind to wander off and get distracted. But in the long term, it's a better concentrate, the construction will build, but it will build in a more healthy way. So sometimes it's better in that in with this kind of comparing those two ways of getting concentrated, it's actually better to get concentrated slowly.

Is there a green light on the side is it on.

Um, as you're speaking, I was just recalling, there was a time in my life where I could either control my breath, or be completely unconscious of it. And when I discovered that you could just watch it was incredibly meaningful moment in my meditation growth.

Fantastic. Nice, thank you.

Yeah, the whole issue of controlling the breath, some people have a hard time not controlling it. As soon as yourself, they're aware of it, they're self conscious, it comes in and they control. And sometimes just being patient with that, and it will just pass, the less you make it a problem, the quicker it'll pass, some people make it a problem. And it's the wrong I shouldn't be controlling the breath, and they just tie themselves up. And, you know, it gets worse and worse. So one approach is, don't be bothered, just let yourself control the breath. And just imagine that you're supposed to get a PhD and what the control breath is like, and that's your job, and then you're kind of relaxed, and then you kind of do and eventually it'll pass usually, another approach with control breathing, is to find some part in your body where you can feel the movements of breathing, that is not associated with any kind of control. And I found for me, when I had this issue, the back rib cage, a front cage is too close to the diaphragm, maybe in place a control, but the back rib cage, and that was, you know, that seems to be, you know, I don't know, just going around going along for the ride. And so I would tune into the movements in the back rib cage. And that was a way of kind of cutting or kind of avoiding the controlling. You know, that came with a self consciousness, self conscious breathing. Someone else just came? Do you have any suggestions to the mindfulness of the breath? When you're not meditating? Hmm. Yeah, I think it's a good, it's a good idea at a lot, I may do it all, I'm kind of tuning into my breath, you know, all the time in some ways. But there's some times when it's particularly nice to do it to a higher quality attention. And that is, when nothing else is happening, like you're standing in line in a store. You know, sometimes just tuning into the breath, checking in your breath, even just a two, three breaths to find out what's going on. provides good information. Oh, look, I'm holding lips, Let's relax, it'll be here and settled in. at a red light, you know, focusing on your breathing might be better than other things you could be doing. And so all these little digit always little points in the day where you know, you have that you're waiting for something or, you know, going up the elevator, just take a few moments. There was a time in my life where I would this is before cellphones that there was a time like that. And I would let the telephone ring there, I had a strange habit of thinking that I had built into the universe was this need to answer the phone as quickly as I could? That you know, if somehow I don't know the universe would skip a beat or something if I was too slow and getting to the phone. So I learned I didn't have to do like, most people don't hang up so quickly. So I would let the phone ring six, seven times. And I use that time to focus my breathing. And then I was in better place to answer the phone. So that was one one technique I had is

all these little places in the day, where tune in tune in Yes, no, no, because some people will hear you then.

So, in the sitting practice, we do a lot of focus on the breathing. When you do some of the other practices like walking practice, etc. Is there any focus on breathing there at all?

Well depends on the instructions you're following. When I when in Zen practice, we would walk slow and coordinate the steps with the breathing. So then you had those two together, the way I was taught and the way I teach this Vipassana practice, and that's one of the places where I tell people just forget about the breath, and focus on the rhythm of the feet and legs as they walk. But it's possible to use the breathing and together and there are interesting ways of doing that that be part of it. What I like about my way I like to teach mindfulness meditation, mindfulness practice, in general, is to kind of have as your primary attention, or whatever is naturally the most prominent thing happening. So when you're walking, unless you're distracted, or caught by something around you, the most prominent thing happening is your feet are moving, because rest of your body is relatively to that kind of still, when you're sitting, the biggest movement is happening is the is the breathing. And so when I do when I do formal walking meditation, I kind of that's one of the times where I can't I think I kind of forget about my breath. I put aside, I have to go check it out next time. And but I think that's one of the one of the times in my life where I don't do much attention to breathing. Because I do a lot in the ordinary life. And, you know, it's kind of always kind of there with me. Over here.

Can you speak a little bit about

breath and sleepiness, in terms of when breath slows, it also relaxes. And that can lead to sleepiness? Well, yeah, you know, as I like to say, more, more people in our society eats, people in our society need sleep more than they need meditation. So if we have sleep deprived, and tried to meditate, it's kind of a nice recipe for getting sleepy as we meditate. So we have to make sure we get enough sleep. So we have a balanced life. And yes, for getting calm, can be soporific. And sometimes that's what's needed is, and that's one of the advantages. Sometimes meditation is getting some good rest. And I wouldn't want to knock it too much that it's a bad thing to have that happen, though, is not what we're trying to do. It's a bad habit if you do it regularly. But generally, what we have to do be and look out to notice, when we start getting sleepy, and at that point, do a corrective. So we don't get ripped off or actually fall asleep, you know. And so what some of the things that can correct for it is to sit up straighter, like you're sitting in a chair, which is fine. But there's something about using the backrest, which makes it a lot easier than to fall asleep. So just sit if you can, if your back allows it to sit away from the backrest. And that will bring more energy and maybe keep you more alert, sometimes opening your eyes. And just getting more light into the eyes is enough to keep you a little bit more awake. And then there's also possible to engage with the mind what have the mind building more actively mindful. And there's a variety of ways of doing that, but brighten the mind. So it kind of looks more carefully or recognizes more things or just just paying a little more attention to what's actually going on. So there's more energy in the mind. Again, be enough to kind of keep you from getting too sleepy. So it makes sense. Okay, so some of you now are thinking about bed, probably. It's after nine o'clock. So so. So I want to say one more thing about breathing. Just as a, you know, an evening of kind of celebrating, breathing and how great it is simply important to say with such a man, so many people hear that breathing is not the appropriate or useful focus of mindfulness of breathing for some people. And so and nothing wrong with that. It's just not, you know, you know, some people are left handed, some people are right handed. Some people are breathing minded. Some people are not breathing minded or something. And so if you're a person who does breathing doesn't work, then there's Other things, other ways of being mindful and are just as effective. The and there are some good reasons why some people have trouble



with the breathing. If people have had some kind of trauma related to breathing, almost drowned or have very strong asthma, sometimes any kind of focus on breathing is sometimes counterindicated. So if that's your case, then, you know, you can leave my talk here. And if you want to talk about other alternatives to breathing, you're welcome to stay here and I'll talk to you about it. Thank you all