

2018-03-14 Dharmette Noticing

Thu, 9/3 5:50PM • 12:24

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

noticing, mindfulness, mind, buddhism, reactivity, simplicity, retreat, zen, simple, pulled, meditated, word, mindful, happening, people, sophisticated, felt, life, letting, thoughts

SPEAKERS

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So I want to continue a little bit with this theme of noticing. And that is that, first I want to say that mindfulness is in the danger of being, being an overused term in our society. That when I first came to Buddhism, I studied Zen. And I think it was pretty rare that the Zen people back in the 1970s, use the word mindfulness. Now even Zen people use it. And it's almost inconceivable that this Buddhism without mindfulness, there certainly was a lot of focus on attention and presence and that back back in those days But the word mindfulness wasn't used so much. And now it's kind of in popular culture In such a huge way. And there's hospitals everywhere have in America have, you know, mindfulness trainings for not only for patients but for staff and doctors. And there's a mindful, this new school movement. There's lots of therapists who are studying mindfulness. And now we're have the phenomena that I've had number of people who've come to sit in meditation retreat with me and mindfulness retreat. And, and they've come and told me that the first person who did this said, You know, I wrote a book on mindfulness. That's nice. And this is the first time I've ever meditated. And I said, Oh, you mean first? Have you ever been meditating on a retreat? No first time I've ever meditated and I was kind of flabbergasted because to me, it's instant. saveable that you would learn mindfulness without meditating, because that's the Buddhist Association. But now in the popular culture, it's, you know, you can take a class on mindfulness and become a mindfulness expert. And in fact, I saw two people came to me recently on retreat and said, I'm being trained to be a mindfulness teacher. And I say, Oh, that's nice. And, and they said, one person said, I've only meditated five times in my life. And I said, You mean, you've only been on retreats five times? No, no, for becoming a mind. I, you know, so to me, it doesn't quite compute. But you know, it's empty. But you know, it computes in some parts of our society. So it's kind of mindfulness has gone off in a different way. And so, partly because of this, and I like to have this alternative word for mindfulness that we can use. And it's also for the sake of those people who've been around Buddhist mindfulness for a long time. And we keep using the word mindfulness. If you keep using the same word over and over again, it kind of becomes people don't listen anymore. Oh, yeah, I know. mindful. Oh, yeah. Yeah. Let's be mindful. Yeah. Yeah. You know, and so it's nice to introduce a new word. And the word that I like is noticing. Just notice. And noticing is a very simple, peaceful kind of word. It's a, I could think of it as a light word usually comes without a lot of ideas that you're noticing for a purpose. It's just to notice what's going on. It's not like you're goal oriented and you're doing this in order to become a you know, great practitioner or have great concentration or all kinds of things. You're just noticing. And, and so this light thing, it's also noticing is usually not interfering with what you're noticing. You're just kind of letting be letting what's there be there. noticing it. That's all. You're not necessarily for or against what you notice it just, you're just noticing it, you're aware you're recognizing what's happening. And it's that simple. And, in fact, mindfulness originally has that simplicity to it, just the act of noticing a completely ordinary capacity. It's not this mystical thing that we're learning because because it's Buddhism, it's mystical or mysterious, it's actually something very ordinary, what Buddhism or what the practice of that we're teaching, what it

adds to that very simple ordinary capacity to notice, is two things. One is to really appreciate how simple it is. And two, is the idea of doing it, persistently keeping it up, moment by moment, staying in the flow of noticing and what people who do this noticing practices We do hear what they notice sooner or later, usually sooner is how little there is they're noticing.

The mind wanders off in distraction, and thoughts, or they might have noticed something, but then they're involved in their reactions to it. And they're analyzing, criticizing and fantasizing about it, you know, all kinds of extra stuff then on top of it, and then they're out of the flow of the noticing. And they've kind of taken up residence taking up, you know, this other occupation, React reaction or judgments or something. And, but to stay in the noticing, and to the simplicity of noticing, noticing, doesn't need anything that it notices to be any different. If you want something to be different than how it is, that's a different function of the mind. That sometimes appropriate to have. It's not like a wrong thing. But the noticing is actually very simple. And so one of the things if we can split if we can stay in there noticing. We're staying in a simplicity of being that doesn't come so easily or automatically, hopefully, to some of the usual tricks of the mind of being afraid about what's happening, being anxious about it, or being aversive to it, or have agendas, wanting to fix something, or make it better or hold on to things, or to spend a lot of time now ruminating about what it means and what it means about me and who I should tell and we start having conversations in our mind. And so there's all these we start noticing, start seeing all these tricks of the mind. That takes us out of the flow of moment to moment just noticing. And, and the idea is to just notice that to notice how we get distracted as opposed to getting distracted. And then being upset that we're distracted. Now, if you do get upset that you're distracted notice that keeps trying to find that place of simplicity, that place of there is a certain degree of peace or simplicity or ease or non reactivity that represents this word noticing. And that in itself, for some people is a revolution in their mind. Because some people's minds are constantly in the mode of reactivity, constantly for and against things, constantly trying to fix things and make things better try and cause you're trying to get away from things constantly involved in in daydreams and fantasies and all this stuff. So it's actually a radical thing to do. To do this very, very, very simple thing, just noticing. Some people will complain, it's too simple. I'm a sophisticated person. I'm an educated person, I've read all these books about Buddhism, and I've read all the, you know, great literature of the religious traditions of the world. And I'm, you know, it's done in my, I'm gonna do a sophisticated practice. And, and so it's not good enough, you know, some like it's too simplistic. But in fact, it's a radical thing to do. It's actually sophisticated thing to do, to do very little. Just notice. It's very, very powerful. And what one of the things it'll do is it pulls the rug from underneath. How we build a life, build a personality sometimes build a whole way of organizing our lives, living our life, seeing the world around us. That's built on reactivity built on this complicated for and against activities of the mind. And for some people, that simple thing of just noticing is might be the most hard thing they've ever done. It's so goes against the grain of how they've been habituated and use their minds over and over again. And so we're patient. And so, but in that patience in that kind of simple noticing, I'd like to think that there's compassion. There's a kind of compassion in just noticing. Just letting things be. There's a compassion in not feeling that there's a compassionate and letting each thing that arises, be seen and known for what it is. Some of you may be as individual people have met someone who didn't try to change you. clearly didn't reject you, but they seem to just really recognize and be with you as you were. And it felt like nourishing and nurturing or felt like kind of compassion, kind of a respect to just be allowed to be You were in their presence. You felt like you could do no wrong, they just seem to hold you in a very generous way just to be this way.

So to do that for ourselves, the noticing is that it you're allowed to be, just as you are, just notice it, just notice it. And then the and then the continuous practice over the persistence of it. moment after moment after moment. Keep with a noticing and what will happen you'll notice how much you get easily sidetracked, pulled off into thoughts pulled into retrospective thinking, what just happened now and how

to figure it out, pulled into wanting a different pulled into fantasy pulled into thoughts. Notice that and then and then you're back in the noticing and then notice the next moment. Notice next moment, and as you can see if you start building up strength or capacity to notice continuously More and more pull the rug from underneath all the other habits of the mind. And the mind becomes simpler and simpler, in a very good way to kind of clear away or clear and clear and more settled, and a lot of the tensions and stresses of our life fall away. And we start, we started living and the simplicity of noticing more and more, and it's just a delight, it's freeing. And the more we give ourselves to this and the more continuous it becomes. All all you need to know about Buddhism will unfold in that. Everything you need to know for a path of liberation, or follow in the wake of this simple, noticing. Keeping the noticing simple. Find the freedom that's there in the very simple act of noticing. And then keep doing it and keep doing it. So, if you do this kind of noticing, then you don't have to get on the mindfulness bandwagon bandwagon. wish them well, the people who are being mindful, we just do this you know, simpler thing. We just do the noticing that they will notice each other in this process too. Thank you.