

2018-05-07 Lowering The Flag of Self

Wed, 9/2 1:13PM • 45:36

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

people, conceit, mindfulness, buddhism, buddhist, flag, holding, identity, idea, equal, feel, cultivate, plumber, kinds, buddhist practice, operating, mind, clinging, sense, learn

SPEAKERS

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Someone told me a little story or incident that teaching that someone discovered for themselves, or maybe they were told. And it was that the person had trouble with self trust and distrust for themselves, or distrust for the world of knowing that the person had the issue of distrust. And the counter it thought that what was necessary was to cultivate trust. So how do you do that? in one area of life, develop trust, where do you develop trust? One of the steps for developing trust all kinds of things. And then one day the person discovered that there was no need to develop trust. All the person had to do was to Stop distrusting. So the point of the story is that the story is that sometimes we set up these dichotomies dualities, we have something that we think is undesirable, and we think the opposite has to be there. And sometimes there's an easier away. And the easier way here was the suffering came from the distrust. It didn't have to be replaced with trust. in this circumstance, it was enough to let go with a distrust. This trust here was an activity of the mind. And it was an activity of the mind maybe which was not needed. to cultivate trust, seems like a good thing to do seems like a logical thing to do. But it comes along with complications of various types. Maybe it's just easier to stop distrusting. So there are people For whom there's a lot of self criticism, or even self hate. And so some people think, well, the solution is to have acceptance, to accept myself. And there's something logic to the logic to that. And, and so they work on acceptance. And that can be sometimes maybe easily done and sometimes it's challenging to do it. And but maybe there isn't in it to stop suffering. There isn't the need to accept oneself. All we have to do is let go of the self hate. The self hate is an is an activity. We don't have to swing the pendulum to the other side.

And one of one of the difficulties of swinging to the opposite, is what comes with us is the idea of self. Self hating There's a self sometimes it feels like that. And, and then there's self acceptance and the self is right there. And what might happen then is a reinforcement of some idea of itself. That might not be might itself be a source of suffering or challenge. And they found that in for in raising kids now There used to be a whole movement in the schools and other places of developing, cultivating encouraging self esteem in children. And the people who curse came up with this idea, are now a little bit horrified at what's the result has been. And, and so, you know, logically, it seems like there's a logic to develop it if there's a lot of low self esteem. But what's happened with the self esteem movement in certain circles Now these kids feel feel deserving. They feel like they well they I have self esteem I'm great and wonderful and I don't have to work at anything things should come easily to me and apparently there's a you know a little generation or sub generation of kids that they've seen who when they come into college they have some trouble because of they've gone through too much of the self esteem thing. So certainly a poor self esteem should be overcome. But maybe it doesn't have to be overcome by highest team. Maybe it just has to be overcome by not having poor esteem. So but but is it enough Is it okay just to you know, not have you know, not you know, just to stop mistrusting Is it enough to stop hating oneself is enough just to stop having poor esteem. You know, there has to be something. So in people,

when people do mindfulness practice this sometimes the same challenge arises when, because mindfulness practice, the way it's generally taught. It's a, it's a personal practice. You know, it's like what you do with your own mind. You pay attention to your body, the physical sensations here, you pay attention to the reactions of your mind. And, and you're told if you can cultivate mindfulness and non reactive attention, then you can manage much better at work into challenging situations with stress. And so we're learning you're learning just to manage by tracking your what's going on here. This can be very wise and certainly I teach this sometimes. But if what the message someone hears or what's passed on, is that The self, you the self is going to learn these skills that self management, learn skills of self cultivation, learn skills of, you know, self monitoring and self development, and kind of be able to be in charge of your life be the agent who's going to negotiate and manage. And it's up to you to figure out how to go through difficult situations, maybe difficult situations at work, that no one should go through. But you've learned mindfulness and so you're able to stay relaxed and remember to breathe. And, and even though work is basically oppressive environment and, and people are expecting you to work 14 hours a day and you learn to relax, you learn to breathe, you've learned to recognize how tension arises and so you become a wonderful support maybe for the capitalist system. By having cultivated this wonderful mindfulness, isn't that nice. We have stress free capitalists. That's wonderful. But we're still left with capitalists, which has its has its benefits and has its downside. But from a Buddhist analysis, the concern is not necessarily with capitalism, but one of the concerns is with a self that's developing. And sometimes this practice can actually support a certain narcissism in people. And, and so, you know, so you've people feel like I have too much to deal with this.

So in Buddhism, there's a very interesting teaching around this whole idea of self conceit, Buddhists, Buddhism teachers that There's a problem with having would be an English would call conceit, which in Buddhism is meant high conceit the conceit that you're special or better than others. And most of the people in this kind of scene here world will agree it's somehow having too much concede too much arrogance. And feeling good, you special and you Lord over people is a problem and people sometimes don't want to spend time with people like that it's uncomfortable and but the Buddhist analysis is that says there's a different kind of conceit than they kind of being better than others. There's a conceit of feeling you're worse than others, inferior to others. And Buddhism considers that a form of conceit to because it is a conceiving of self. It's a way of thinking of oneself holding on to an idea I'm this kind of person who is unworthy lower than everybody else. And, and, and that's a way of being Trapped in the suffering of self, that can be as bad maybe worse than sometimes it trapped in the high conceit trap. That's also kind of suffering. But this gets more interesting in the Buddhist analysis. Buddhism also says, there's a kind of suffering that comes, if you think of yourself as equal to others. Oh, what's left? You know, and then now nowadays, Buddhists are getting you know, now it's not making any sense, right? I mean, you know, you kind of along with this, no, be better than others. Don't be worse than others. But, you know, we should all be considered as equal to each others and that's the ideal to be equal. to certain degree. It's true. There's a kind of truth that I want to kind of knock the idea completely, but it's very easy for that to be more of the self game. I am here you are there. And we are eating And now there's a different kind of conceit, the conceit of holding on to a view an idea of who I am in relationship to other people. And they view as equal. And, and in certain situations, that's a problem for sure. The I would be in big trouble if I decided that I was equal in certain ways to my 15 year old son and decide that, since we're equal, I should also be able to pull vault to 10 feet. And I probably, you know, break my back or something if I tried that, but he seems to go over just fine. So you know, there's ways in which we're not equal. And so there's ways in which many ways there's certain ways which we're not equal because we have different abilities, different capacities, we're all equal. So I'm just equal to the local physician. And if you need surgery, you come to me either. So maybe this examples I'm giving a little bit silly, but the Buddhist thing of Buddhism points that is the problems that come with excessive adherence attachment to the notion of self or self identities, how we represent ourselves,

how we believe what we are. And, and that sometimes the alternative is simply not to play the game of self not to be involved. So we're there's three kinds of conceit. The alternative to being better, worse or equal, is not to compare. And are there times where it's actually helpful not to be comparing oneself to others or comparing others to oneself, but rather just meeting people fully and openly and clearly and kindly with Establishing any kind of hierarchy, including equal just here as people and so in Buddhism, there's this teaching on that's very perplexing for many people that sometimes called the teaching of not self, sometimes no self. And, and people are kind of get kind of sometimes quite perplexed.

But there's two ways of looking at the Buddhist Buddhist teachings around self. One is philosophically no one is psychologically, philosophically that's where people get into a quagmire of concerns but is there a self is there's no self there's no self I can that be mostly existential to reality of the self. And that's a kind of more philosophical question to kind of sort through the Buddhist approach this whole thing of self even though myself Seemed like Buddhism takes a stance on this. The Buddhist approach is more psychological, in the sense that it's trying to understand the psychological forces and conditions in the mind, and what's actually going on here. And if you turn the mindfulness to look at what's happening in the mind, it can reinforce a sense that I'm in charge. I'm the one who's doing looking, especially if teachers are the teachings are told, be the observer. Watch your experience, be the watcher, you're in charge and all that. But if the it's possible to have attention, awareness without the activity or the idea of there being an observer to the watching, they're just watching. And if the attention turns inward, to feel and sense what's here, then, if you're paying attention, the right direction, you can feel the suffering the contraction, the tightness, the wind drag, the limitation that comes from being caught up, holding on to identity, self identity, that I'm this way, or I'm supposed to be this way, or I'm gonna prove myself, I'm going to apologize for myself, I'm going to defend myself or I need to be this or I shouldn't be this way. I can't, you know, this is I'm an embarrassment to humankind. You know, all these all these kinds of ideas and thoughts that are kind of a, sometimes a whole constellation of thoughts and ideas, some culturally learned from our society and family, some developed through life, experience them through, I know where it comes from. But we latch on to these ideas. And if you're paying attention to this, you can feel how the actual movement of clinging or attachment that's, that's operating in there. So rather than questioning it, philosophically, the Buddhist quest is questioning should I be clinging should I be holding on should I be should I be contracted around this thing and it gets quite subtle as the meditation practice gets deeper and deeper. So the coarser aspect of this is when we say I am and you fill in the blank, so I am you know, a plumber So, I got to be a plumber and then the good plumber and you should know that I'm the best plumber in Redwood City and, and I got to prove it to you and, and that's why I have the good plumbing truck, whatever, you know all this stuff, you know that plumber, plumber, plumber is kind of like my identity and so the more preoccupied I am with this identity, the more I can feel the toll it takes on the inner life. It takes work to happen and hold on to identity too strongly or insist on it and assert it and defend it and all the different things And so and so what as we start seeing the toll and the impact inside, then sometimes we can drop. I am acts just I am. So that's nice. And some people then champion how wonderful it is to just in just you know be ending as the mind gets quieter even the idea of i, this part of him is just too much the sense there, even though there's no identity, there's no we're not building up a structure of identity around it. Just I am. And I had a wonderful story of many years ago of visiting a friend whose young daughter was, I don't know she was maybe just shy of two or something and she was just beginning to speak out a few words. Talk a little bit and And I pointed at different people in the room and say, who's that? Daddy? Who's that mommy? Who's that that point different people she knew when she named them. And then I pointed to her and said, Who's that? And she said, I am and I thought that was nice. So but I you know, it wasn't the answer I wanted.

So I asked again, but who are you and she said a little bit more forcefully I am. So I was slow to catch on. So I asked a third time and she raised herself up kind of strong and upright and a little bit indignant and said, I am. Okay. And for the moment, she was my teacher, so that that was wonderful. But there was a kind of assertion there. It turns out that even little bit sense of AI in the m&s is extra, it's an extra activity of the mind. And that activity in mind is little pieces of pressure or stress or tension. It gets even more subtle, even the sense of emptiness is too much. And if the mind is really quiet and still, even that little act, it's because of any kind of sense like that as little activity or movement, little doing of the mind. And even that can be put down. And generally they say that when that goes put down as well, that then mind has an experience or freedom of mind, which is not defined by anything, or trying to do something or be something. And this is one of the things that the Buddha was pointing to, was the ability to be alive, clear, present, engaged in the world. Without having a definition for oneself. We are limited. Limiting oneself by a definition, this is what I am. And the Buddha himself was very reluctant to maybe reluctant, not the right word, but he wasn't inclined to be put into a category of ordinary definitions of who he is. And the most common way the Buddha referred to himself was not by his given name, and not by the title, Buddha, just a title. But he referred to himself in this, which would be probably just as strange in ancient India, as it would be, if I said that Yeah, who are you? And I said, the one who is this? So it's like you come up to someone say, and who are you? And they say, like so. You know, that's not the definition is like this. Just like so. Like like such as the word of Tata does justice. And so that's about pretty minimal in terms of getting any information about someone. But maybe there's something profound, to not be defined and not be limited by a name by a word by a roll, by concept by anything. And so, if Buddhist practice mindfulness practice takes us in this direction, then it becomes the antidote to conceit. And then the Buddhist practice doesn't lead to certain narcissism doesn't add to the conceit that I'm in charge, I have to do things. And it's a kind of a little bit of a tire any tyranny, to learn these kinds of Buddhist mindfulness teachings and now think that your whole happiness Your whole well being is all dependent on you. Monitoring yourself noticing where you're attached and letting go. I mean, that's a big responsibility. So here's, you know, the alternative. I don't know if I can do this effectively, but maybe you'll let me try.

If I'm trying if I try to walk maybe along, I we won the coast here to San Francisco with a very, very, very big flag. And generally, let's say on the coast here, there's usually generally gale force winds. But it's pretty strong, but I have this flag and sort of holding on to this flag and the wind blows and then there's people who don't like the flag, and they're yelling at me. And those people who like the flag and they stand in my way with my autograph, and I can't get going so the wind is blowing in it and the people who hate me the people who love me and sometimes they're fighting and they get in the way of me walking up to San Francisco and so I'm just I'm trying to get a San Francisco but so and then my flag starts ripping in the Gale winds go back to town get another one and had to start over again all the time. It's just complicated, this world with this flag. So Buddhism sometimes likens conceit identity as attachment to self to waving a flag. And possibility is put the flag down. If you put the flag down, the winds not gonna be a big issue. You can walk, put the bed down with the flag down to people who like and dislike that flag. are not going to be caught up in it so much. So I'm not sure if these examples are the best ones to use given what goes on in our society. But, but I think that the principle is that if you hold up sometimes when things happen to us, and we're holding up a strong sense of self things happen in the world and come to us and they hit that flag hit that holding up. So if I need to be the best plumber in Redwood City, and my whole self esteem and place in town and status and everything is dependent on that, how good I am as a plumber, then someone comes along and does a Yelp review of me that is not so good. Well, that Yelp review just comes and hits inside of me that place of self. What happens if I'm not trying to be the best plumber and someone says Something about my poor plumber I am. It just goes right through. Or they tell me, you are the best plumber in Redwood City. It just goes right through, it doesn't hit the place it doesn't get doesn't there's no place where it gets stuck. So,

rather than self improvement in certain way, Buddhism is about dropping the flag. Now, does that make us nobody? Does that make us kind of uninteresting? Does that make it impossible for us to take care of ourselves? Are we not just a pushover for what goes on in the world? And are we not supposed to assert ourselves or be in the world in any kind of ways? You know, we're just like, you know, we're just, you know, empty. And I don't think that's the case at all. We have within us. There's all kinds of forces within us all kinds of there is empathy. There's feelings of fairness, feeling of justice, of kindness of compassion. There's a lot of different things that operate here. There's also forces of hate forces or prejudice, forces of greed and all kinds of things that operate as well. If we're doing this careful work inside paying attention, we'll see that more often than not, the afflictive emotions of greed, hate and delusion, are usually entangled with this idea of self. They can be there without it, but often that's part of that Nexus or they'll kind of complex they're working together for each other. And that if there is no attachment to self, there's much less. The mind is less alienated. We're more in touch with ourselves. We're not we're caught up in these desires of self they abstractions and concepts and stories that go along to building up the self. If we're not caught up in the stories and ideas and everything, then Generally we have more capacity to touch into the beneficial forces within us. The empathy, the compassion, the kindness, the generosity, the wisdom, the love, that can be here.

And with a mindfulness practice you can, you can physically feel the difference between a mind that is greedy and a mind that's generous or a heart that is as hate, or a heart that has love. It feels there's a whole you know, qualitative difference. One if you're really attentive, feels like picking up hot coal. And why would you do that? The other feels like you know, a nice spring day and refreshing and nice. So, if, when when we don't have the self active self identities, you know, really attached to it and clinging to it and building it up and all the different things that can make it complicated. We've read one of the things that is less than this fear. And it said that a person who's liberated is a fearless person. And if you're fearless, and if you don't feel like you're trying to defend yourself or protect yourself, it's much easier to step forward and say, Stop, you can't do that. If we need to protest in justice, it's easier to stand up for oneself. You can't do that. You have to stop the Buddhist kind of attitude toward some people who are harming us. You know, it's not completely fair to say to kind of call on this idea, but maybe maybe it's just for the purpose of pedagogical purposes. Okay. There is some, some places where they have this idea that if someone hits you turn the other cheek, kind of offer them the other cheek. Buddhism would never say that. But they would say if someone hits you turn and face them and look them right in the eye. Don't hit him back. But you know, don't just stand there and offer the other cheek. Just, you know, stand your ground and look at them and say What's going on here? challenged them that way. Don't let them just kind of bully over. But you don't have to be assertive and attack either. Just the ability to say no and stop. Let's look at this and stand our ground. Doesn't have to come from assertion. It can come because we're fearless. We're not holding on to it. We're trying to prove ourselves. But we're also no need to diminish ourselves. There's no need to say oh, I'm not really up to it or I'm not really worthy of this or I'm supposed to be kind of, you know, a good Buddhist and our cause trouble This idea of not self or the dropping of this kind of caught up in selfness, leaves a person in a certain kind from neck start looking from the outside, both strong and soft, both receptive and able to stand up for themselves, able to speak if speaking is what's needed, able to be quiet, if quiet what's needed. And in fact, down through the ages, but some Buddhists have been known to be very courageous, very strong people. The Buddha was even though he said, You know, I'm just Deus was superbly confident. But is there a confidence that's not a so much as you know, self confidence? Or is there a confidence that comes from the absence of a lack of confidence? Who are you if you leave yourself alone and just show up without the burden of being better or worse or equal. What happens if you show up without any fear around self identity? What happens if you just sit there? And this is one of the you know, one of the things that I've started to learn through Buddhist practice, I was very much when I was very young. But you know, my early 20s started to practice. I was completely entangled in this whole world of self and

self identity and how people liked me and, and I was approved by people and playing social games to try to convince people who I who I am, how they should see me creating a sense of self and make sure they saw me better than they could see me who I was, but I was trying to pretend and be different than who I was. And it was a real, it was a lot of work to do this. And it kind of kind of really got this Clearly, when the year that I was working in the monastery kitchen, kitchens are a pressure cooker places, and it became kind of the kitchen manager managed all the other cooks, which is really bad managing cooks in the kitchen, is that that's tough.

And, and you know, he had his deadline getting food at a certain time and you had this production, you know, you couldn't just kind of say, Oh, well, you know, take your time, we'll do it tomorrow. You know, we have to feed people. And, and so I would, I would get so worn out until I realized that what I was doing, was doing complicated social genetic gymnastics, and it's very difficult social environment, to try to ensure that everyone liked me. And so this is all the work, I discovered. It's a lot less it's a lot more easy to live life. If you're not trying to get everyone to like you. It's kind of impossible. Anyway, and so now I don't try so much to get people to like me. So you know, it's not be nice if you did. People do but it's not like a big project. And it is not really much of a concern for me. So the whole idea of the city of selfing in many ways is being dropped away. So then, who am I? Who are we? Who can we be? And one answer to this question that in that they given the kind of Zen tradition is you are whatever you're doing in the moment. So, someone is sweeping the temple courtyard, and they up to them and say, Who are you? Then then the answer would just be continue to sweep. You're not even the sweeper you're just the answer is in this doing the sweeping. So when you discover who you are, moment by moment, you In the activities that you're doing it from an activities over to sweepings over you're no longer the sweeper. You do the new on to something else, but you are what kind of defined by the moment you're in but it says femoral or what you're doing in the moment. So if you're a plumber, you're only a plumber when your plumbing when you leave work you know, we don't carry that with you kind of thing. So I think it's fair to say that they are parts of American culture, especially white American culture. That's very individualistic. Very strong sense of privacy, strong sense of self efficacy, self esteem, manage, and it's a little bit You know, and it's very hard to see how deeply ingrained the individualism is that exists in the circles of American and Western culture. I think some people who come from collective cultures, some of the cultures of Asia that way some other, there are other native people in this country and other cultures in this country that have this. They come into some of these strong, individualistic white scenes in America. And it stands out and highlights, you know, wow, this is quite strong. But when people are in it, it's hard to see it's just like, you know, it's like the air you breathe, you know, you don't see it or something. And I was lucky to see it. One of the one of the dramatic times I saw it was when I was in a monastery in Japan, and Japanese culture is a very collectivist culture. So I grew up in a very strong, individualistic kind of currents of culture. And I'm from Norway in Norway, as possible Norway has even stronger than America in certain ways, in certain ways it doesn't. And so I was in Japan, and in this monastery with 20 30, about 35, other Japanese, mostly young monks. And every morning we have to do a period of collective cleaning together. And it was a little bit of a ritual. Because even if something was already clean, you cleaned it anyway. And so we had these columns that held up the roof of the temple. And those columns got cleaned individually, each column got sometimes cleaned four or five times and this rags and you clean it, and you go look for another one. There was no no one was cleaning and you clean that one, even though just been cleaned by someone else. The idea was just to be working. You know, there's like full on you have to work full on and you know, and so it's very kind of fast. And engaged and, and so I was doing that for about three or four months with them every morning.

And then one day somehow and I spent the whole, you know, 24 hours a day we were living together, we slept in the same room, we ate in the same room, we bathe and collected bathing situation. We

were, you know, really living that life with them and kind of experiencing itself. Maybe this contributed to really. So I finally kind of grokking understanding something. And I've kind of one day I was doing this cleaning. And I suddenly kind of saw something I hadn't seen before. And what I saw was that I was operating as one individual among a collection of different individuals doing work. And they were operating first and foremost as a group, which they were a part of. So I was all these individual entities and they had one in the group, and they were all elements that are working together, and how I saw that and how to explain it. I don't know how to, I don't know how to tell you now, but but I saw this very strong way in which they saw themselves as a unit. And, and I and I, I was Wow, I No idea. This is like we're living in all different social universes here. I didn't think that one of them was better than the other just automatically. I didn't put them on. I kind of thought, Well, every human society has to figure out some way. So people can not bump into each other too much or somehow, you know, managed to work together and cooperate enough. And so there are different kind of stories and mediations and concepts we form. And so different cultures do different things, different ways. And, but it was fast. It was it was very important for me to see it. Because then I started to be able to question and see what I was doing and And then as more and more especially as I went to continued my monastic practice and quieted my mind, I started seeing the subtle ways in which this idea of the self, the individual, individual responsibility agency, you know, all these things were operating. And I could put a question mark, bind it or see it as a condition see, it is not absolute. And so kind of hold on to it so much and be able to put it down and when other things were suitable. So I think that, you know, in these currents of Western culture that some of us are in, where the strong individualism is here, a couple of things, it's hard to see. And the logic behind it is code embedded in deeply that sometimes it's, you know, not only we don't see it, but even Buddhist teachers in teaching, like mindfulness and Buddhist practice something Are subtly reinforcing it, because it's so deeply embedded. And I wonder what's going to happen now. Because now things like mindfulness. In a secular mindfulness, my clinical mindfulness is getting more and more popular in in all kinds of settings, and it's starting to be imported into other cultures. And so some of the founders and leaders in this mindfulness, secular mindfulness movement, are being invited to places like China, to teach mindfulness and to train people to do this, like mindfulness protocols, mindfulness based interventions and stuff. But the big question is, are they bringing with them a Western individual idea of the self, who does the practice and bringing it into a culture that doesn't have that sense of the individual, and what's going to happen with a meeting of those two, especially what's going to happen when it's when it's not explicit? Or even the people who are propagating it don't even know what's happening. So you know, there are challenges in teaching this whole mindfulness thing in this kind of culture. And my hope is that people practice well, because if you practice a well then at some point you'll start feeling the limitation of the self thing. You'll start feeling limitations of holding on and clinging to self identity. self identity has a role. But there's can be too much activity too much mental turmoil and agitation and clinging and grasping and resistance and all this stuff going on with it, and we so to learn to see it and drop it to lower the flag.

And then if we're able to do that, well, then the hope I have is that people will have the sensitivity to be able to respond appropriately to different cultures and different kinds of people they meet. who don't have to assert the end of being out. Sometimes it's useful to show up as a strong, independent individual, if yours in places where that's asked for, but you're just as happy to show up and be part of a community in a collectivist in a social thing, if that's what's called for without holding on to a strong sense of self, people who come out of a collectivist culture. You know, Buddhism in Asia often was an antidote to some of the excesses of collectivist culture. And people often will step out of the collectivist mindset in Japan for example, in becoming a Buddhist monastic so you know that that's really it. If you can't imagine Americans, many Americans can't even imagine how radical it is for Japanese young person to leave and become go off and do full time Buddhist practice. Here in America, we do that for a while, then we go back, you know, to our life, and everything's waiting for us kind of where Americans

pick up. But they're you can't do that you step out of their social Nexus, and it's hard to come back. And so, so, but how to be fluid and all this, how not to be caught in anything, be caught in a collectivist identity, not to be caught in an individualistic identity, but to be fluid and respectful for all of them, knowing they have to have something like that has to be operating. And then how do we get fluid and, you know, improvise or play or, or move smoothly within it, and just be wise about it. And be careful with the ways subtle ways which there's maybe it's It's conveying values or attitudes, which are not helpful for people and maybe cause harm. So mindfulness practice leaves you with nothing. There's not good news.

In nothing, it's a kind of very, when nothing which is full of potential, full of be able to respond full of being able to be fluid, full and be able to adapt and change appropriately. Without nothing in a way that we can. There is more breathing room for whoever we actually are. There's lots of room to be who you are When you don't package it, and limited with holding on draping yourself with the self lowering the flag of conceit. So I hope this made some sense this evening. And it's a complicated topic. And what I was trying to do is point to the psychology of how the stuff works, without making any kind of claim that there absolutely is no self, or there is a self. Whether there is or self is not a self. This doesn't really matter to someone who's free of self. It lets you up whenever it weighed once. Then we learn how to be wise and play with it. And if what I talked about this evening is perplexing. You're welcome to leave it here. If it's irritating if it's Eric, if it's you irritating, then. Well, no, it's irritating. You're welcome to leave it here. But if it's irritating, it might actually be useful then it might be redundant, then it might be something here for you to look at more deeply. You know, which flag did my teaching hit? Which flag Are you trying to protect? Anyway, I hope I gave you something to think about and explore and consider in a nice way. Thank you.