

# 2019-01-23 Practice Note: Reference Point

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

clinging, awareness, feeling, reference, sense, visceral feeling, non reactivity, acceptance, reference points, reactive, embodied, practice, mind, recognize, navigating, experience, space, present moment, arise, meditation

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

To say a few words about the practice. It's interesting to keep in mind that sometimes we have reference points for doing mindfulness practice or meditation practice. And those reference points sometimes can be a hindrance, and sometimes can be a support. They're hindrance if the reference point is expectations, or some high standard of what it's supposed to be. And then we don't measure up to that, and then we're disappointed and discouraged, and that somehow takes over and interferes with the meditation. But it can also there can also be reference points as that are supportive and helpful. And, and some of the best ones are not ideas that we carry with us, but something that we've experienced so thoroughly, that it's almost like it lives in us, experientially here. gives us kind of a almost embodied way. And so there might be experiences of sitting with a lot of self acceptance. And that feeling of self acceptance almost like love or compassion and, and to have that as a palpable reference point. So that when there's not us, acceptance, self acceptance, that we kind of can recognize that and almost feel our way back to the sense of peace or spaciousness or kindness or intimacy or something which we might associate with that sense of acceptance. There might also be a sense of non reactivity that we've had experience where we have enough experience of something arising that maybe has been difficult in the past and there's a lot of space for it. There's a lot of Almost like permission for be there because we don't identify with it, we don't take it as me myself in mind, or we don't get caught up in for and against, just there it is, and we kind of see it arise and, and, you know, it's almost like something appears in the middle of the room. But I'm sitting here comfortably and nice and I can just watch it and whether it's pleasant or unpleasant, you know, just something to notice and not get caught by. And that sense of non reactivity, when it's really experienced and known, registered, recognized, and then it can can better become become some like an embodied or available reference point. If we have that kind of acceptance and we don't really acceptance or non reactivity, and don't let ourselves really let it register all this is what it is that it's not going to live inside of us or, or we won't have the feeling or know how to recognize it. And when it's You know, how to feel our way back to it something like that. And one of the preeminent reference points is non clinging, to have a mind which doesn't cling to anything. And, and that can be kind of a palpable way it can feel sometimes, it's almost like there's a lot of space in awareness, a lot of space in the mind, and things can arise. And there's no stickiness to it, there's no inclination to move towards it, certainly hold on to it, get stuck on it, or to be reactive to it pushing it away. There's a feeling of kind of, like, of like spots or room for things to be there, or a feeling of, of ease, or feeling of peace or a feeling of untouchability in the awareness like nothing, insane night, very nice, where it's like, nothing can touch it. And it just there peaceful and alertness alive. And this feeling of the sometimes a reference point for non clinging can exist certainly in the body since he's on non non clinging non tightness on tension, but more importantly I think it can exist as a quality of awareness itself. That the, the awareness that broad some people have the feeling of a field of awareness or space of awareness or kind of way of perceiving or knowing or beat up some

people it's more a sense of being rather than awareness that has no boundaries. has, has almost like has qualities of the space around us. And, you know, if you throw you know, something into space into the space around you The space doesn't care. It's not

reactive, and just lots of room for it comes and goes and doesn't matter what goes into it, say words into space and the space doesn't do anything. So there's something about the quality of non clinging mind or non clinging, presence or non clinging awareness. That can feel like it's very spacious or things and that spaciousness. We can have a visceral feeling of it's always here. And so to have that as a reference point, if it's available, and that's something that grows over time. It's not something you do, you know, just because you read it better or someone tells you about it. It's not an idea or that non clinging is a good idea. But rather over time in practice, it becomes you almost like you recognize it, even if it's not, they're fully clinging to something. It's possible a wonderful possibility of feeling that you're not clinging to the clinging. This kind of Bass for there. So openness or acceptance of it, or non reactivity to it, it's there. So, you might consider today as your practice here, do you have any, from your practice to date, or from other some other experiences in your life? Do you have a reference point that lives in you almost like an embodied living or a visceral feeling or sense, that kind of is here that can be called on or be supportive of the very practice of mindfulness, the mindful that keeps you in the present moment. And because of the goodness of this reference point, that's only exists in the present moment, you have to be here and attentive to it, to know it or feel it. It becomes easier to be here fully here. Or it's more easier to be interested in being here. Because you're kind of navigating what's here, the feet as you walk into walking, meditation, the breath as you breathe, whatever you're doing. Doing, you kind of miss swimming or navigating. It's finding or touching into or supported by this reference point of, maybe of non clinging or acceptance or non reactivity, kindness, something. And if what I'm saying doesn't make any sense today for you, if you want to remember this idea, and maybe over months and years of practice, that's what Gil is talking about. And then because you recognize it, so it's maybe can live in you in a more fully more beneficial way because now you see it, there's a greater value than just, it's nice in the moment when it's there. Anyway, I hope you enjoy this morning.