

# 2019-02-24 Emergence

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

emergence, emerging, happening, meditation, evolve, upwelling, people, life, bhavana, process, conditions, birth, developing, clinging, arising, thinking, practice, english, experience, hands

## SPEAKERS

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So, I would like to talk about an important phenomena that can go under the name of emergence, what emerges the process of emerging? And to introduce this topic? I'd like to say that in much of our modern world, maybe especially modern Western world, that many people find themselves stressed. Many people are, have a lot of doings that they do. And they have busy schedules and trying to fit it all in can be stressful and, and it's not just doing a lot of things, but it's also attaining a lot of things accomplishing things. attaining certain identities or the status or the stages of success, all kinds of things that keep people busy and going and doing And, and because of all this doing that people do, some people find it very helpful to have a practice, for example, like meditation, that they understand that what they're doing is just being. So that contrast between doing and being. I'll leave many of you have heard this before. And that it can be a relief to stop the doing and just to be and it just kind of lets a lot of things just shed drop away the stress, especially if the being practice can be done for some time. And so the layers of holding that we have layers of preoccupation, have a chance to settle away, settle away, settle away, and come back to some, some people say kind of a more natural state of just being and it's quite wonderful for some people. One of the things that makes it wonderful is is the settling of all the doings. It's a subtle some of Mental preoccupations, some of the ways in which we mentally will be judging ourselves and others sometimes incessantly, sometimes not even, you know, clearly knowing how much we're kind of living with criticism and loading and judgments. And as that those cut that kind of doing that kind of thinking settles and gets quieter, which would allow ourselves to be, it can feel like just being in this more in that so called natural state can feel like, like we become whole again or we become good again or like we're free from all the weight that we've been carrying on top of us. And so this is being and so exactly what being means is of course, it's an interesting word. And, and but I think of being as being somewhat the word to me seems to be kind of static. It's the it's the activity of it's the English be doing a B, just just like you do in Canada staying the same. This is how it is. And when my son was young, I jokingly with her with him, try to prohibit him from growing anymore. I put my hand on top of his head and saying you got to stop this now. And, and you know, this is big enough and this is perfect. You know how you are and let's like keep it here now. And that was he thought that was lots of fun. Because it wasn't going to stop. You know, there was this. He wasn't going to be six. He was going to become seven and eight and use this process of becoming it was just a process. And it's certainly one of the great wonders of the world to spend time with any forms of life that are growing from birth. into adulthood and beyond. And to watch the tremendous biological drive to process, this process of evolving and becoming and developing, that goes on. And to watch a little baby, go for an infant go from, you know, not crawling to crawling and crawling, to standing into standing to walking to running. And in this drive to explore the world and find out what's out there and smell the flowers and go out and be on the edges. You know, stop when we have two sons, and the first one that I kept worrying if he wasn't developing fast enough,

you know, that he couldn't, he couldn't see how this was going to work that I remember him laying on the changing table. And he just is flailing his arms and hands around like, like really floppy. Like how This person never got to learn to hold anything. You know, this is not gonna happen. And so I was kind of eager for the milestones to come the walking Oh yeah, he started walks. But I knew better for the second one. And there was a no hurry, because every milestone to the youngest, like had some other kinds of stresses for the parents. Okay, now we have to, you know, baby proofed the house, and now we have to do this and that. So, anyway, this is this momentum of growth. And to watch it, you know, and to watch it, you know, through teenage years and into adulthood, as you know, just doesn't stop the momentum of it, not only the physical growth, but also the psychological emotional development that goes on. And it's kind of like watching a force of nature that evolves and develops this morning. Coincidentally, I saw a little National Geographic video that's titled become And it's, I don't know, maybe five, six minutes long. And it's, I think a Swiss documentary person who spent some like six months capturing the six minutes of our Alpine knew to kind of salamander going from film to going from a single cell to becoming a full blown salamander. And apparently salamanders and newts have transparent eggs. So if you get it just right, you can kind of film it with some kind of you know, microscope. And it was kind of awesome. Oh amazing to watch this single celled morphing change and become bigger and you know, at some point you see it you speak bigger and bigger, kind of like ball of something something and then beginning to fold back on itself and inside out and then expand and still dig things pop out a little bit and think it was And then eventually there's this new that comes. And so this kind of like, you know, just, you know, stop. No, you're not gonna stop, it's gonna help us it dies, it's gonna keep going and going. And then it goes into old age. And every stage of life is its own process of evolving of becoming, there's a natural process that goes on. This morning, I was washing my hands, and I kind of was looking at in the bathroom mirror through the mirror into my hands. So sometimes if you see parts of your body through the mirror that kind of like not quite your own, at least for me, you know, like, quite and, and I saw in my hands, the kind of the old hands of my parents, my father. And I said, Yeah, it's happening to me too. And, you know, this evolving and changing and movement that goes on and rather being distressed about this. It's also possible just be amazed. And this this process, it unfolds that we're part of where the conveyor belt that you know, it's never you know, it's always it's moving, whether we want it to move or not. And we're going along for the ride and will change and morph and all these wonderful ways and, and so, this process in English Buddhist Buddhism is often called becoming. And it comes from a Pali word *Bhava*. That occasionally has been translated as being and as occasionally has existence. But I think the more popular thing more recently is becoming because it's more active sense it's not something static but something that's in process, the process of coming into be and Buddhism sees everything as being impermanent, doesn't see that things are chaotic, but rather things evolve because of causes and conditions in particular patterns. And that in that pattern of, of coming into being is called becoming the this word *bhava* then we translate as now that's becoming, comes also is related to the word *Bhavana* and *bhavati* abama. Now is the is the Buddhist word for what which often translated to English as practice. But practice doesn't really do justice to the origins of the meaning of the Pali Buddhist word word. The word means work closely like it was interesting is the first entry in the Pali English dictionary for *bhavati* and *Bhavana*.

Is the English a little bit archaic, maybe English expression to beget and, you know, big begets something Often is used to give birth to children and parents can beget the children. And so this idea that something gets born something creative and, and just dates and gets ready and then comes forth in this way. And so this *Bhavana* is to practice certainly, but it's the more the process of cultivating something and giving birth to something developing something that is being emphasized here. So, right, so you say, you know, I practice which we say in English, that begs that begs the question, What do you practice? And then oh, I follow my breath. I do loving kindness, you know, I, you know, I'm trying to practice something. But if you say I'm cultivating and begetting, you know, what are you cultivating?

What are you developing? then the chances are that you don't answer saying, I'm following my breath. I'm doing loving kindness, because I'm cultivating compassion and cultivating freedom and cultivating wisdom. Then we start talking about patience. crueller qualities that we're developing and evolving and begetting rather than this kind of, you know, you know, this little bit removed thing of the practices we do.

However, I don't like the word becoming too much. Maybe because it feels my English my mouth, it just seems so awkward to keep using it then. And in my more colloquial English, you know, becoming is associated with, you know, he's amazing. You know, and so it's leather has associations, which compound don't quite work for me. But the word that I like is emergence. And so, in Buddhism, and everything is constantly in a process of emergence things are emerging things are being born costly Every moment is an emergence nothing ever emerges and then is there's no is there's just becoming, they're just emerging, emerging emerging, something new emerges. And as soon as it emerges itself as a process of further emerging, further evolving, further developing. So the same thing is true for us physically, emotionally, psychologically, mentally, spiritually, that we have the opportunity, much of us has just continued to evolve and develop one way or the other, it keeps emerging and developing. And we find in early Buddhism, a tremendous amount of words that are used to kind of kind of say the same thing. So, the there's the word, many words that can translate to English as arising or manifesting or appearing that are used. upwelling for this idea that things are constantly coming and coming. The other side of that His whole bunch of words for the ending of things the ceasing of things the disappearing of things. And these things go hand in hand right things so if one thing arises something one thing emerges at what was is no longer there some aspect of what was there and you know many of us because we're thinking about things we think that you know that you know we have a concept of Joe sitting in front of me and I turn away my eyes and Joe still hear it Joe hasn't changed. You know, he's in his note, you know, right to same Joe. But actually in the moments by my eyes turned away and they go back, something has changed. Maybe he's embarrassed or I call them out. And, and so this, you know, there's constantly emerging into new new new person new something and maybe subtle ways, but is our thinking fast enough or flexible enough? To see the new thing that's happening, or am I still with the Joe that was there a minute ago? And, and or, you know, kind of watch and change? Or how about for yourself? Are you still with who you were? A minute ago, a day ago, a year ago? 40 years ago? Are you flexible enough to kind of see the change in the movement that's happening? moment by moment, day by day, I meet plenty of people and to some degrees in small ways, corners of my life, I've done this do that, who I was or what happened to me 4050 years ago, somehow, I'm still trapped in that image and that idea, I haven't really freed myself from some things. And so, you know, this ability to kind of be current with oneself is a quite something quite something. Some of us like I've had, you know, self image of being younger than we are, I don't know how many of you have that. You know, you know, so but quite sometimes, you know, I feel like I'm not quite current on myself because you know, I still have some idea. So this idea of emergence, and then things are constantly emerging. continual coming into being, our inner life or physical life, even our world is in a constant process of change and evolving. And so meditation, the meditation practice, when people are trying to use meditation, to make something happen to be the doers, the agents of change, I'm going to meditate and get something to happen. That's often stressful to do that. If you look at meditation is something we're going to attain. I'm going to get that wonderful state or the wonderful status That can be stressful.

Not that it's unsuccessful to some degree, but it's often a difficult way to meditate. And the other way of meditating is to allow and nourish the proper arising to develop and cultivate something beautiful to arise. And it's kind of like a farmer who knows when to nourish and feed and water the plants and when to leave them alone. So we have to water our inner life, we have to feed it, we also have to know how to get out of the way. And meditation is one of those great places to get out of the way and allow

something to emerge, the emergence of things. This was something I discovered early in my meditation practice. When I was still in college, I was meditating twice a day. And I began meditating because I was suffering and I wanted to solve some of my problems I had social problems, personal problems, not suffer so much. And, and somehow I thought meditation would help. And it did, but very differently than what I thought I would print fault. What happened was instead of becoming a better, likable, wiser person, my I settled into meditation. And I found that I was no longer being swept along in the currents and rivers of my thinking. And I was no longer identified with my thinking so much. And my thinking mind quieted down, not completely, but it was no longer at the center of how I saw myself how I thought about life, I was experiencing life. And, and as that happened, those concerns I had began to dissolve some of the questions some of the searching I was looking for Just to kind of faded away without any planning to do so I didn't even know that it was possible. And what happened instead was an upwelling of some kind of feeling or presence or way of being. That was kind of an emergence, something that felt profoundly satisfying, profoundly at homeness somehow at home in this universe, circa profound sense or experience, of being alive, in completely adequate, peaceful, happy, contented way. And I got to see the difference between being swept up in these currents of thinking and preoccupations, and letting those recede and even dissolve fade away, and what it was like to be a person alive breathing in these two different states, and that seeing that contrast is something that I continue to see right now. Today goes on, I feel very lucky that I have something like meditation. Because still to this day, I'll go around some hours preoccupied by something concerned about something. And, and I'm still to this day, at times kind of tricked into believing or acting as if the solutions will come. If I just think about it enough. You know, that's where that you know, that's, you know, that's where it all libs see the whole thing. And that's the way you negotiate and find your way and something's getting around. And it turns out that some of this kind of staying in the world, this currents of thinking, not only is not going to be the answer for certain things, but it actually makes it worse. It's kind of like staying stuck in the story. Staying stuck in the assumptions, staying stuck in the kind of labyrinth of concerns, where there's no way out of the lab. And so it's like the Gordian knot that you can't untie. And then meditation is like having a sore to you cut the cut the knot. You don't, you don't untie the knot. So you sit and meditate, and, and then I'll have all these thoughts will just recede. I say, Oh, I'm back, oh, these these concerns, some of the concerns I had, don't really deserve to be concerns. They are operating under certain assumptions, which aren't really not that good to operate under. And now that I've kind of reconnected to myself in some deeper way. And now I'm going to operate on it from a different premise, a premise that I'm already content and satisfied, it's already alive and peaceful way. And I don't need some of the things that I was offering or 90 that I need that that person has to do this for me or that for me, you know, all this kind of world of things.

And to be able To come back over and over again to this place where we drop the kind of world of thinking which is kind of a place that gets stuck in to the place of being unstuck of what is emerging, the emergence to be arising of phenomena becoming a phenomenon that almost like for me my sense, maybe it's my metaphor, the upwelling from within. So when I first started meditating, the first year, really meditating every day. This was a big discovery for me, and it made a huge difference in my life, to change my life, the rest of my life, kind of set the course for what direction I took my life into. But we are not the we don't have to be this allowing this emergence in allowing or letting be is not meant to be a completely passive, non participatory event. because things are constantly emerging and changing and becoming new constantly. But the things become new based on the conditions that preceded the conditions in which they occur. And so if you plant a seed in a in fertile dry soil, nothing's going to germinate or if it germinates, it's going to wither quickly. But if you plant it in a soil that's fertile and soft and moist, it might thrive and come in nice big plant. So what are the conditions that nourish and support the seeds inside of us, it's becoming and moving. And we have a role in that in establishing the conditions that are for betterment. And this is represented by what some people would say is the first

the opening lines of the Buddhist Bible, you know, I say that just to kind of contrast it to the opening of the Old Testament or the Torah. All experience. That's like pretty much a lot right? All experience is preceded by mind, led by mind made my mind speak or act with a corrupted mind. And suffering follows as the wagon wheel follows the hoof of the ox. So what we do with our mind has a lot to do with what our experiences. And here you have to be a little careful with the word experience, experiences, not what's out there. But how we experience what's out there that our personal direct involvement participation experience of something. We're not innocent by standards that just have reality happens to us. And we're just the victims of it, how we experience it, how we know it, how we perceive it, is were actually much more actively involved than most people realize. So they put Buddhism puts the mind kind of at the seat important. Be careful with your mind with your mind does, so speak or act with a corrupted mind, then suffering emerges. Those are the conditions for further suffering. And the next verse goes on experience is perceived preceded by mind led by mind, made by mind, speak or act with a peaceful mind. And happiness follows like a never departing shadow. So, what kind of mind Do you cultivate? What kind of mind Do you meet? What is your relationship to what's happening here? What's going on? And, and so if we resist reality, if we contract around reality, if we make the experience with greed or with hate, if we meet our experience with selfishness and self absorption Those are particular conditions that allow that means that this affects what's going to emerge, what's going to rise. And all the ones I mentioned, were probably in some way or other, create discomfort for the person who has it. That's what's going to rise and all kinds of things might follow in the wake of that. But if we can experience reality, without resistance, without contraction, without greed or hatred, without selfishness, that creates a very different set of conditions for how things will evolve. And certainly our inner life, how to evolve. And so, a big part of Buddhist practice is to get out of the way. So we can allow this beautiful thing inside to evolve without the influence of clinging

or version, selfishness, all these different things for the in the Buddhist Kind of psychology, if you have clinging and that clinging, joins together with the emergence of the next moment, then what they say that's going to give birth to suffering, that's going to give birth and if that clinging, is clinging to self, and that clinging to self joins the emergence of what's happening in the moment, then it gives birth to holding on to identity, attachment to an entity. If it Joy's desire for sensual pleasure, some people are very focused on sensual pleasures. If that's the desire, then as things emerge, there's birth into a world that's were oriented towards pleasure and pain. If we can join the emergence of things, the content Then flow without clinging, then the emergence is not going to have these extra complications that's going to give birth to suffering. give birth to further identity, which is going to be fragile and challenging to have. So to allow it to get out of the way, is not to make ourselves a victim of experience, but rather to get out of the way to allow this deeper upwelling to occur, which apparently is a very trustworthy thing to do. What's not trustworthy trustworthy is to allow the emergence of experience that constant becoming of life. It's not trustworthy, if that's being influenced by greed and hatred and contraction and selfishness, that sets in motion all kinds of visible and invisible kind of movements towards things that you should be very careful with. But if we can get out of the way, and stop having the selfishness stop having that clings and induced experiences, upwelling in the movement and what's happening and unfolding, we have remarkable capacities inside, for healing, from core movement towards freedom, towards understanding to wisdom to goodness, it's amazing what's in there. It's almost like if we meet with contraction and hate and aversion and clinging, it's really kind of we're operating kind of in the surface of our life. But if we can get out of the way, it allows for the depth of what's here to evolve. To watch this little video of the newt the salamander cells evolve. Wow, I was calling like, how could this be? How did this evolve into something this was kind of awesome to watch. And, you know, we are awesome you know, we started off as single cells. If someone could you know, video, you know you if they you know the family video the nine months you were you'd like, and they sped it up so it's six minutes. And it'd be would be an aha. Why does this natural process of amazing about evolution that

we are as beings? Why do we think it stops Why can't be trusted in a deep way. And that's what I've learned from doing this practice. I've learned to, to get out of the way, get out of the way, know how to get out of the way. And then let this the emergence of things come and evolve and come with the discovery of emergence. So we become friend of reality, not the enemy of reality and reality becomes our friend, not our enemy. And so, we discover something that I call the magic Date of emergence, imagines majesty of this life that's unfolding and moving and coming. And then we discover the wonderful space in which things emerge isn't just the things emerge, but these the awareness that's aware of that, that awareness is quite an miracle and quite an amazing thing. And to discover and feel or sense or to in that non resistance that can exist, that allows this emergence to becoming to just unfold, and just be it's one of the great pleasures of life, the sense of freedom or non resistance and just this thing's happening, to get out of the way and not muck it up with being selfish, self centered and all that.

So, you might say, Well, yes, that's good. So I'll just allow things to be and what's coming through me now is strong desire, strong aversion. And as we still Let it be, in a sense, yes and no. The yes is the know is that it will those forces to interfere with the healing good forces, they're deep inside, they muck it up. It's still a natural process, but at the moment that moves towards suffering. The yes part, yes still allow it is to allow it in a particular way. That were a friend of reality. So if there is clinging, if there is grief and pain, hatred or whatever we experienced difficulties we have inside. We don't want to bring those work through them, become them in such a way that we they contribute to how the next moment is shaped so If we identify them strongly and think out of them, we kind of set the ship in one direction. But if we can get out of the way and not be troubled by these forces inside of us trust that something wants to be born here. What is it that wants to be born, to sit with grief, to sit with emotional pain, and not see it as a mistake or a problem, not see it as something needs to be get rid of. not see it as an enemy. But see it as oh here in this something wants to be born. Something wants to evolve. What is it? If you here's you know, I like to say if you cut yourself and you keep the cut clean and don't interfere with it, what wants to happen? The amazing process of healing the cut will heal It's amazing that it does that. If you break your heart, you can, you know, put salt in the crack all you want, and you'll never heal. But there's a way of allowing an opening and making space for the grief, the broken heart and see that as part of the overall emergence. Get out of the way, let it trust it, let it be there, learn what it's like to kind of open up and sit quietly. Sit quietly means don't see if you cannot continue the spinning. The world pool of thinking and ideas is that kind of keep us stuck. Keep contributing ways of being stuck with it all. But to sit quietly the myths to trust in almost ask yourself the question, what wants to be born here but don't answer it with your words. The answer be what wells up inside? What wants to come here? It's all kinds of possibilities may be very different than what you thought. Some of it might be your strength. Maybe there's phenomenal degree of strength and motivation, courage that's waiting to come through you for some things. Perhaps what it is, is greater, deeper appreciation of our humanity, our collective humanity, what it's like to be human in the birth of compassion. What if your grief is a door to a great universal compassion. I've known people who have come back and said that they hated their grief. Their hurt when they had it. It was very difficult. But when it was over, they said, Wow, I wouldn't trade that for anything. There. So now I now I know something about the wellsprings. The upwelling of compassion as well. So to sit here and allow the emergence keep allowing things to emerge, to arise. And if we trust the emergence, there'll be no emergencies. Something is working through us.

The Buddha used a lot of different metaphors for this process of the natural unfolding. One of the things I like a lot is that they use water flowing down a mountain. You know, unless there's a barrier, water will flow and to describe the inner life, it's a life that will flow intellectually. We talked about it flows all the way back to the ocean. And so we will flow back to the ocean. If we don't block the water, there's a natural, almost like a natural process unfolding here. But we have a responsibility to that process. And

that is to create the very best conditions for that to unfold. In my life, I discovered the meditation is one of the best things I can do for that. And it helps me get out of the way it helps me quiet this thinking mind which kind of mux things up at times, and makes lots of space and Roman last me to feel fully and in a good way and really be with things things need time. For this, these for some of the stuff inside here to really emerge fully and properly, it needs time. And so to sit and be quiet and give time to the inner life, to have Sabbath days have days where we just kind of allow things to unfold, to resolve themselves to, to settle out, and then discover what is it that wants to emerge? What is emerging? And then and then don't get stuck. Don't Don't pick up what is emerging, be ready for the next emerging. The next becoming and what what does it take for you to keep being ready keep being open. Keep allowing this now this now this now, fresh, alive, nothing stuck, nothing springs, nothing sticky, not preoccupied by what just happened but ready for what's going to happen next. So emergence, the process of emergence. Life is a continual process emergent emergence, the Ecwid farmers care for your emergence