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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So I would like to say a few more words about the topic of seclusion. It's a foreign word for in Buddhist meditation. And the most common way to appears in the teachings of the Buddha is in English translation is being secluded from sensual desires and secluded from unskillful or unhealthy mental states. But I think sometimes I think the word seclusion has a lot of negative connotations for people in English speaking world word, they can somehow feel like you're, you know, locked up someplace, you know, the literal meaning of the word and in the ancient language is to separate apart like you would for to distinguish To distinguish things to separate them apart, and you find that in other Indian religions besides Buddhism, the word for so we translate seclusion, which is the veka is extremely important word. There's a very famous teacher in the late 1800s, named very influential in the West called the de Becque Nanda. So he's the joy of the Becker. And so Buddhists would say the joy of seclusion, but in because of their literally means distinguishing or separating apart. It's closely associated with wisdom, and especially liberating wisdom or discriminating wisdom, distinguishing wisdom. And so he's the joy of wisdom, of ultimate wisdom. So in that sense, it's understood more in the Hindu tradition. It's a very important word so but so you have a separating apart and if you want to become your own teacher in meditation, find your own path and let you know unfold. It helps if you can, if you can start making simple distinctions of teasing apart things of what's going on. If your whole experience is just one big buzz of confusion, then you know it's hard to do anything with it, it just a big a morphus. But if you can start kind of identifying different aspects of it, you can see different parts of your experience and you can find your way. When I was many years ago, I read about a study. I probably have it not quite accurate, but where they took teenagers from New York City, inner city kids to Costa Rica and had them go into the jungle. And they would point things out in the jungle you know, like there's the parrots or there's the birds there's the you know, and these kids couldn't see anything we're just to them was just all a big blur, but the local teenagers could see all the details that jumped out. They're familiar with him, they knew how to tease apart their brains could distinguish all the details that someone was unfamiliar with just all via buzz. And my guess is if you did that, in reverse, you took the teens from the rural Costa Rica and put them in the middle of New York City, it would all be a buzz, and, you know, a morphus. And so for many people, their own minds, their own inner life is just confusing enough. And what mindfulness practice partly what it is, is learning to tease apart or distinguish the different aspects of what our interiority is like, what's going on in there. And so, you know, some of you know, I mean, a big part of mindfulness is learning to be embodied to recognize that we have an embodied physical experience, and that becomes a great gift to understand, to tune in to be aware What's going on the body there's a lot of self understanding comes from that a lot of healing that comes from that. A lot of wisdom that can come from, you know, dropping in and really feeling Oh, this is how it is in the body right now. We tease apart that our thinking, and we see that there's how we're thinking what we're thinking about, we tease apart our emotions, start seeing that, you know, it's actually you know, some some detail there, the emotion is not just a buzz or something. And we see the relationship between

these things. Once you can distinguish body and emotions and thoughts, then it's possible to see how they relate to each other. And that maybe that the thinking is maybe for some time has a big influence casts a big shadow or big influence on our emotions. And sometimes what we're thinking is not necessarily healthy, not necessarily wise forms of thinking, but even so it

can be quite depressing. undermining us so distressing to have these thoughts over and over again, they say that one of the leading sources for stress and depression is rumination. So, you know, So this idea of, you know, the impact, or sometimes it's the other way around, we have an emotion, and who knows why. And then the thinking mind makes a story about it, mixed conclusions based on it. And I've done that I was depressed once a member and, and that was very clear, I had this thought that had nothing to do with depression directly. It was like a interpretation or conclusion based on it. And it was, I'll always be depressed. That was a depressing thought. And so it was kind of this, you know, loop that, you know, you get caught up, caught up into. And so, by sitting back and being mindful, we start separating apart. The things that sometimes we don't see because we're not really familiar with the inner landscape. And as we get more and more familiar with it, more and more things get teased apart to get separated out to be distinguished. And then we become wiser. We can go through the jungle easily if we know you know how to read it, we can go through the you know what, in Buddhism, sometimes they call the mind a jungle. And, you know, so you can make our way through the jungle more easily if we see all the pieces and parts. And so this so the point where I quoted earlier, secluded from sensual desires and secluded from unskillful, or unhelpful states of mind becomes teasing apart distinguishing how we're caught and been involved in essential desire, comfort to pleasure. That is a huge draw for many human beings in one way or the other. Or teasing apart and seeing clearly the distinction between what is healthy for mine To be involved in and what is unhealthy what is helpful and unhelpful or in Buddhist language as skillful and unskillful and so, by making these distinctions and seeing, then we can start kind of gravitating in one direction or the other, we can seclude ourselves we can not get into we cannot lean into not be so actively involved in the things which are not useful and helpful. So, the grossest idea of seclusion is that a physical seclusion which I mentioned earlier, where you would go sit and meditate in a quiet place, you're not in a place where you get a lot of distractions or even more importantly, a lot of temptations. It's probably not a good idea to sit down to meditate with a low table seats in the floor, and in front of you, is, you know, if you have all these things here smartphone, your tablet, and your computer, and they're all open with all the notification signals, you know, ready to go, you know, on, and you're sitting there and, and, you know, it's probably not that good. You know, it's, it's you should be, you know, if you meditate, you should best to seclude yourself, separate yourself from all those devices so they don't kind of grab your attention. And so to the physical seclusion to support the, you know, connecting to himself more deeply in the meditation, but once we start going in meditation, then there's this deeper form of seclusion, when we learn to see what's going on in there, and to recognize, you know, this thinking this way is not useful. Thinking in this you is undermining me is taking energy away from me is fragmenting me and then say, you know, I'm not going to invest in that or I'm going to seclude myself or separate myself or I'm gonna go in the other direction. certain ways of being involved with emotions, maybe you can choose what emotions you have. But how we relate to the emotions might be where we see Oh, that's an interesting way of relating, I hate what I'm feeling. You know, I'm feeling really discouraged, or here it is again, and there's all these reactions to it, which are not helpful to be able to see that with clarity. And to see it with a clear enough mind that is little bit free is the mind that can then choose to not latch on or get involved in those reactions, and maybe even choose to be involved in a different response. So it could be you know, the emotions are strong and I hate them or I'm dismayed at one more time there's like this. And so whether I keep going down that dead end

of being dismayed and discouraged. Know that or I could do something different, I can do something radical, I could just be aware of it without any judgments. So that, you know, that's kind of a choice to be mindful and nonreactive way, it doesn't have to be more complicated than that. It could be it could be that you decide to have some compassion for those emotions, or kindness, or some other way. So as we begin to distinguish and see, we begin to seclude ourselves from the unhealthy directions, and we move more towards something that's more healthy and good. The advantage of that is, just like I talked about physical seclusion is it's a it's meant to be a way to start becoming unfragmented not divided as a human being. And so even though we're teasing things apart, we're teasing apart, distinguishing what takes us away from being whole what takes us away From being settled and, and open and present in a whole way, because a lot of these unhealthy impulses, thoughts, ideas, tend to create divisions within ourselves. We're fragmented. One of the terrible divisions is when we hate part of ourselves, we're angry at ourselves. And then one part of itself is opposed to the other. And then we're not whole, we're divided. And so to the study of seclusion, in separation from these unhealthy situations, is not supposed to be exactly a restraint or shutting down or blocking things out. It's actually the opposite. It's the opening up to something that's good inside, opening up to that what's healthy and flowing. That's deeper than our reactivity deeper than our our, you know, opinions and just judgments and all that. And so what happens at some point, and the idea is to be turned inside out. Meditation is a way of going in seeing what's here, finding out what's how to be here in it from the inside out to help you away, and then turning inside out. So we bring that way into the world in a different way. So the example I gave before this morning was, you're in a crowded mall, and people are screaming and yelling, it's a sale of some, you know, maybe major sale and everyone's screaming and tugging at things and wanting things and the music is blaring, and you're trying to find your way and hardly get around all the crowds. And I said about as bad as I can describe it. And, and it's just you feel harried, you feel afraid you feel like you're, you know, just can't manage and then you duck into the malls, meditation. were no one else is there and you meditate for a while and you get all peaceful and calm. And you've learned to identify, you know, to let go of your thoughts and concerns and settled in. And then you feel a healthy sense of presence and calm. And then to being turned inside out is you come back out into the, into the chaos of the mall, but you bring your calm with you. And so rather than being feeling attacked or feeling like everything is influencing you and upsetting you and pulling you around, you walk with this calm, that everything's kind of like you know, you're kind of like a little bit maybe in a bubble and you're not letting things influence you and you're haphazard in the presence of mind, clarity of attention, that, that, you know, there's not overwhelmed by what's happening around you. So clusion is is a very important word in Buddhist classic Buddhist meditation practice. It's meant to be a beautiful word. And it's a word that allows what's best in us to begin showing itself. And then the idea is to stay close to that. Staying apart from what is unhealthy, and then be able to bring what's best of us into the world and turned inside out. So seclusion, to be Becca, may you really become your own teacher, your own guide by looking and teasing apart what is most healthy for you, as you sit as you walk as you live your life and so you become secluded, or separated from what is unhealthy for you to be involved in. May you be a meditation help with great inner help.

So thank you and We have at this period of cleaning now.