

Foundations of Mindfulness Part 15 - Mindfulness and Liberation

Gil Fronsdal

June 03, 2019

Keywords: mindfulness, awareness, liberation, Nibbāna, Four Foundations of Mindfulness, attachment, suffering, equanimity, concentration, refrain

So since January I have been giving talks on the primary instructions that the Buddha gave on mindfulness practice. And now, when I was first introduced to this text many years ago, I found I found it deadly boring, and I probably fell asleep reading it. I probably didn't have a very high opinion of it because of the formulaic kind of way in which it was written and style and things like that. But as I then was introduced to the mindfulness tradition, the mindfulness practice that we do in part of insight meditation, then slowly this text started to come alive for me. And now I find it immensely interesting, and I find that it has all these nuances or depths or different aspects to it that they continue to come alive for me. And I find it quite a wonderful inspiring text.

And so I've been giving a series of talks for these months on this text and going through it systematically, and today will be the last talk in the series. And one of the themes I presented as I did this was to view or interpret the instructions as describing a journey, that the journey of mindfulness. And maybe I could give in my own life. I am quite happy to call it the adventure of mindfulness. It's been a journey, an adventure, a wonderful discovery, the process of mindfulness, and having my life opened up, the life of the world open up in wonderful ways through this practice. So what this is using, what mindfulness uses, is our human capacity for attention.

It's a completely ordinary capacity to be aware. But we're using it kind of intentionally, and we're using it in such a way that the awareness, over time, is set free. The mindfulness practice is a practice of liberating our awareness. So what does that mean? If this afternoon I went on a few websites to look at car tires, the car tires. The front tires of my car are getting

pretty worn down, and when last time I checked the oil, they looked at me and shook their heads.

You know, you should really do something. So I then got interested in seeing where in the Redwood City I could buy car tires, and what was available, and where the good deal and Friday things, and it was a relatively relaxed thing to do, but it involved a certain kind of attention. I think it was not required, but I had a certain kind of focused attention, an attention that was trying to understand the details of car number, car tire numbers, and sizes, and thread types, and I don't know all kinds of things. And then trying to hold it in my mind, to be able to compare it to another merchant's what they're selling, and try to decide where to go. And it was a relatively common thing to do, but I was very aware of my attention being very focused, very directed. And I would say that I had some attachments involved, some concern with getting the right price in the best place, and a little bit, you know, kind of in the little tiny bit of the mind, vice of concern about this little mundane topic, and to do this well.

So that's just getting tires, right? So I think that some of us will have other things which are much more, pull us much more strongly into its world where there is much more attachment and concern. And some people go around all the time with concerns that their attention is being pulled into. Does it need to be a bit louder? The sound, they get turned up a little bit. So is that better? If not, just go like that.

So then, so some people. I've certainly had this happen to me many hours, maybe days, maybe lifetimes. The mind is really fixated and concerned with certain things. Some of that stuff can be just habit or conditioning, or that's really been built in from a young age. Some people grow up in horrible conditions, and they grow up with fear, and their attention is hooked into, maybe fixated into the mind vice of it is grabbed the attention, and it's concerned with how to be safe, and it's scanning the horizon, scanning the room, the situation, and it's always kind of caught in the vice of being afraid and wanting to be safe. And it's, you know, it's probably a very important thing to do at some point in their life, they probably maybe even save their lives.

But to always have the mind in that vice, or say differently, if awareness is always being put into that channel of fear and concern and looking for safety, the awareness is not free. If it's desire, I've had desires of various types. When I was very young, I had caught in the grip of lust. I remember doing things that, you know, that was kind of really captivated by this, like a woman or something, a girl. I've told the story before. Give you an example of a preoccupation of the mind, and how intense maybe it can be.

Kind of, you know, just attention was really drawn to it. Met this woman, the girl. I was four-

teen, so I was a boy, and all I knew was her first name, and I'd kind of walked her home, I think, something like that, and all I had was I had the first name, and I had the street she lived on. And so I went with a friend and we had two telephone books. That's all we had back then to look people up. And I went from the front of the book, and he went from the back of the book, and we called everyone who lived on that street and asked for her name.

So I would say that at fourteen doing that, my attention was not free. It was in this, you know, my vice of concern about whatever that fourteen year old mind concerned with there. You can use your imagination or not. And so, you know, can be all kinds of things. So they can be chronic, these concerns that can be serial concerns, one after the other, and the mind is kind of, some people talk about the mind getting hijacked by these kind concerns, and we see somehow that the mind, the attention, the awareness is not so free when we start to meditate because we sit down. The instructions might be to sit down and meditate, and let go of your thoughts, and focus your attention on your breathing.

And people discover how difficult that is, that the mind wanders off. And when the mind wanders off, the attention wanders off, gets lost in something. In a sense, the attention has been hijacked. In a sense, something besides your own conscious volition has grabbed your attention. Your attention is caught in that concern. Whatever it might be—a fantasy, it might be an aversion, it might be a conversation, it might be a memory.

So many things I get pulled into. But sometimes being pulled into it is quite intense, and some people it's very hard to get out, or something that will go into that world. And we talk about being lost in thought. That's a quite powerful expression. I was lost in thought, you know, sitting in meditation. I was lost the whole time. I was lost in thought, and luckily they rang the bell, and so then I kind of, where was I?

And so the attention is not free. Something has the attention. As we begin consciously waking up, consciously waking up to using our attention, engaging it to notice what's happening in the present moment, we begin a process of liberating our awareness, so the awareness is no longer held captive by our desires. Our fears, our hates, our preoccupations are all kinds of things that, you know, grabs it. And it's a phenomenal thing to begin to discover what a free awareness is like. A liberated awareness is like an awareness which because is not been caught by society's attachments to what society thinks we should be concerned with, or what society kind of throws at us.

Is not concerned about our own, what our own inner life throws at us and grabs our attention. And for the awareness to become free, I liken it sometimes to if you held your hand in a fist for thirty-five years, and you never knew it was possible to open it up. And then finally someone

said, By the way, you could open it up. And Oh, how not only is it pretty good, if you're good to finally have it relaxed and open, but the sensitive part of the hand is now available to feel the world, to be in touch with the world, that is not if you make a fist. So the same thing with the mind. The mind, the attention, can be held in a kind of a fist and preoccupation, be caught in things.

And to start feeling the fist of the mind open up, not only is it a fear, really good for it to be relaxed. Lo and behold, the sensitive part of the mind, of the heart, becomes available to connect to the world and connect to oneself. To be for the attention to be caught in the grip of its preoccupations means that there is a kind of disconnect or loss of sensitivity and narrowing of attention and narrowing of our way of being. Connect it to ourselves and the world in what goes on. And as awareness starts becoming free, then we start discovering we can use it in different ways, and we can use it in ways that are useful. We can use it in ways that are specific to different circumstances, in ways that bring ease, that meets the situation properly, and that can help us understand what's going on.

So part of the mindfulness adventure is an adventure of understanding. And in terms of meditation practice, a lot of that is understanding ourselves, understanding what drives us, understanding how we get caught, understanding our beliefs that we have that grab us and hold us. Understanding how emotions work for us. And we're learning a lot about how our thoughts and cognitive world works, and the more we start learning about this, understanding how we work. We have more information about what's going on in here, and that gives us more choice. You don't have much choice about things you do if you don't know you're doing them.

And so there's many times that people say things without even being aware of what they're saying. We think things without even thinking that we have beliefs and operating that are, you know, underneath the surface, we have unconscious bias that goes on—subconscious, I'd like to say, because it can become conscious. And all the stuff that's going on inside of us that can be quite unconscious or subconscious or not known, and then you have no choice. But if you see what's going on, you begin to be able to exercise choice. And one of the most important forms of choice we have, partly so we can keep it really simple, is we have the veto power. You can't necessarily decide and choose.

We know what's the wisest way to buy. You know, all these decisions be, but you can decide. You know, right now, I think I don't want to make the situation worse. I'm going to be quiet. I'm not going to speak. I find my mind is going down some thought train where I have aversion towards someone. I'm not going to do that any more.

I've done that for thirty-five years and it didn't lead anywhere. It did no good for me. I'm not going to go down that track any more. And so into this idea of saying, No, I'm not going to invest in this. I'm not going to do that any more. I'm going to hold my mouth. I'm going to hold my body. And not give in to that kind of thing one more time.

That's a powerful thing in the Buddhist, early Buddhist tradition. The Buddhist tradition puts a tremendous value on our human capacity to have the veto power. What that allows is allows our awareness to continue to become freer. Our inner life becomes freer because we're not being hijacked or pulled into all these drives and forces that are operating that sometimes pull us into them so quickly. And so there's a freedom to say, No, I'm not doing that. So that comes from understanding. And that's a choice that comes with greater self-understanding. Great choice we have.

One of the things we begin seeing is to start seeing how attention is in fact influenced or caught in our attachments, how we get fixated. And to see that really clearly is the beginning of a path to become free of the fixations. One of the things we see when we start paying more attention, and also if the attention is more free to see what's really going on, one of things we see is to start seeing our suffering. And one of the things that Buddhist practice specializes in is not suffering better—because that doesn't do any good—but rather understanding, seeing our suffering better, and looking at it directly, and being very honest about it, and not sliding away from it, not avoiding it, not making it pretty. But really an honest look at what's really going on with my suffering here.

Now we're doing that with this eye towards awareness, being free. We'll discover how when we suffer, we're not that free. Many times we're caught in our fear, or being running away from it, or preoccupied with it, or taking it personally, or having self-pity, or having anger, or having blame. And all kinds of secondary things arise, and they happen so strongly, and such an automatic pilot gone away, that awareness can get sucked into its kind of demands or its needs, and that our suffering prevents the awareness from being free. As we begin discovering to be aware of suffering, it's bad enough to suffer. Let me see if I cannot lose my awareness in that process, and be able to step back in a sense and look suffering right in the eye.

But suffering staying free, suffering not being reactive to what we're seeing, the awareness not being reactive, the awareness being open. Cunning, in a sense, maybe spacious, maybe relaxed, maybe clear, maybe receptive, but in some ways it's being. It's kind of like if the door is open and someone throws a ball against the door. It doesn't bother the door. It just goes right through if the doors of awareness are really open. No matter what happens, even

our suffering can be experienced as it kind of, it's kind of like doesn't touch anything in the freedom. There's space there. There's openness there.

And so as this mindfulness journey continues, and we start understanding nature of awareness, in how awareness operates, in awareness starts getting freer and freer. We start seeing our activity much better. We get more sensitive to the subtleties of it. We get much more aware what it feels like to be free. Oh, we get much more respectful of our lives, because respect has a lot to do with taking a deeper look. The literal meaning of respect in Latin, the Latin-based word is to look again, to take a deeper look.

And when awareness is caught and is forced to kind of go in certain directions and think certain things, awareness is not that free to look again. But to really be free allows it a deeper and deeper look. And as we look more deeply, we see the deeper forms of attachment of suffering than we have, and we find ways to free it and liberate it. And so this path of mindfulness is a path of learning how to use attention. And there's different kinds of attention that we learn to use. Sometimes we learn to recognize what's happening there clearly, recognize and study and investigate what's happening here.

Other times we're learning an awareness that's kind of like an awareness that's kind of metaphorically like leaning up against a tree in a nice day, have no concerns and problems whatsoever, and just kind of having a beautiful view of the park in front of you. It just kind of relaxed and at ease, and open, spacious, wide open observation. Other times, we discover that awareness is a deep intimacy with the experience when we really feel and sense the sensations, the physicality, the embodiment of what's happening, the moment, in a very sensory way. And it's just fantastic sometimes to feel like you're right in the middle of the sensory world of the body and the experience we have, and making space for that world to open up and to reveal itself. So as this practice deepens, awareness gets more liberated. As awareness gets liberated, there's less baggage involved in being aware.

And what less baggage involves, what it means is we don't bring along with awareness a lot of our ideas of what should be, what shouldn't be, our judgements of things, our history with things. We're able to start seeing things much more simply for what they are. And in some situations in life, like in meditation, that opens up deeper and deeper doors to have awareness with not without any baggage. One of the ways the meditation tradition talks about this awareness with no baggage is that awareness is no longer coloured or filtered by a lot of concepts, abstract ideas of something. The idea of right and wrong, good and bad, is usually not a very useful concept with which to see your experience when you're meditating, to see your experience when you are meditating through the lens of me, myself, and mine.

So I'm sitting here meditating, and my mind drifts off in thought, and the thought, you know, that's to just simply see that, Oh, my mind just drifted off.

That could be very simple and clean: a moment awareness. Just see that versus my mind just wandered off. And I am a lousy meditator. I just blew it and did the wrong thing. I didn't follow the instructions, and I hope no one noticed. You know, that's a lot of baggage that comes along with the awareness. And so we learned to make less and less baggage. It's simpler and simpler.

And this idea of seeing things as we meditate in a simpler and simpler way actually allows us to see things much more clearly. And as this clarity comes along, then the mind becomes freer. Just this wonderful reciprocal relationship, the clearer we can see, the freer awareness is. The freer awareness is the clearer we can see, and we can go further on that journey. One of the consequences of this as a meditation journey is the inner life tends to become more and more peaceful. He becomes a greater stillness, beautiful, sweet stillness and quiet.

The quiet within the mind becomes quieter. The mind becomes more equanimous, more peaceful, non-reactive, all in the service of looking and seeing more carefully, all the service, having awareness be set free. And at some point, the equanimity, the peacefulness, the ease, the non-reactivity starts feeling like a home. The Buddha called mindfulness our original home. Now, you can actually use the word home. He calls it our native land. I like the word home, but our native. You want to go to your native land. You go to mindfulness. Mindfulness is our native land, the kind of awareness attention that mindfulness is.

To rest in awareness, to feel at home in it, to feel like it. You're really, you know, or in your true place, and you're at ease and awareness is not hijacked, not caught by anything, and you can rest in that. It means that you can carry your home with you anywhere you go. It's a phenomenal thing to discover. So as the mind feels at home in itself, awareness, it feels at home in itself. It's not caught in anything any more. Awareness is at ease. It's at rest. It's free. It can look at different things.

It can be used in different ways. It gets more and more equanimous, more peaceful. And as it gets peaceful enough, at some point, the last remnants of attachment let it go. At some point, the last ways in which the mind tries to actively do things and make things and fix things and solve things is put to rest. And that final movement of being put to rest, or the final movement of the ropes of attachment finally being worn thin and just snapping free, is one of the descriptions of where this path of mindfulness goes. And it's called liberation.

I, as I'll read you the last paragraph of this text, that I'm doing these last months. So he's just

finished talking about this practice of mindfulness. So that's this. You'll hear this. So it was with reference to this that I said the Buddha is quoting to Buddha in reference to this that I said this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true method and for the realization of nirvāṇa. Nibbāna is our Pāli way of saying nirvāṇa. This is a phenomenal promise or phenomenal kind of good news of this tradition, of this practice. And now it's described one way. So it's not talking about cosmic consciousness. It's not talking about some very deep insight into the nature of consciousness, or you know, some true nature that we have as it's taught. But it's talking about something that I think is phenomenally significant.

If you can attain this, you'll live happily with or without cosmic consciousness, or something like. Now, talking about some big bang experience of meditation, or some big kind of insight into satori or something. They're talking about a transformation. And the practice of mindfulness, this journey of mindfulness, is a journey towards a transformation, and the transformation happens all along the way. But then at some point there's a kind of a quantum leap in the transformation, and this is a quantum leap leads to this. So I'll read it again: this mindfulness is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the surmounting of sorrow and lamentation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true method, and for the realization of Nibbāna, namely, the four foundations of mindfulness. That's what he thinks been about these four areas of mindfulness.

And so then, how long does it take to do this? And you know, this must be really hard, right? It takes a long time. So the Buddha says this: If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in this way for seven years, one of two fruits should be expected: either they'll attain final knowledge, full liberation here and now, or if there is little traces of clinging left, they'll attain something almost as good. That's a paraphrase—seven years. But who has seven years? It's important websites to visit and books to read, and let alone seven years. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness for as in such a way for six years, and then Dada thought it was to fill in what I just read before for five years, for four years, for three years, for two years. For one year, one of two fruits should be expected: either final knowledge here or now, or if there is some small traces of clinging left something almost as good.

Then the Buddha said goes on. But let alone one year, if any, one should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven months, six months, five months, four months, three months, two months, one month. See why I was bored before when I first

read it. But now it is exciting. Scott, where were we going for one month, for half a month? One of two fruits should be expected: either final knowledge here and now, or if there some trace of clinging left something almost as good, then let alone half a month. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven days, one of two fruits should be expected: either final knowledge here and now, or if there is a trace of clinging left something almost as good. And seven years, seven days—you have seven days. They give to this usual the interpretation is that yes, it can be done seven days, but you have to give yourself over to those seven days, all to practice and mindfulness, all your waking hours. And people who do seven—we teach a lot of seven day retreats, and people practise well and good, but very few people who really do it, you know, a hundred per cent for those seven days.

So I think that is your to really give yourself over to it. Otherwise it takes two weeks or a month or, you know, seven years or something. And there was a wonderful teacher named Sylvia Boorstein, and she practised for a long time. And I think she was, I think, I think if she tells a story, she was kind of just kind of coasting along, and maybe a little complacent in their practice. And then she heard this little teaching, and I think it was a teaching, came from the Buddha, and that is that a ship, a boat, might have a really thick rope that may be holding something up, you know, maybe a mooring rope or pulling sail up, or something really thick and strong. But you know, it's at sea. It's years there in the weather and all that stuff. And slowly it begins to wear away and wear away, and at some point then no one can really know. It'll become thin enough. It'll just snap. It'll break apart. But you never know. When you're getting to that point that just kind of something just happens. And so you heard that this is how it works with this mindfulness practice. You're wearing away your attachments. You're clinging, the ways in which mind is caught, and those are wearing away. But you might be just one day away from the attachments, finally just puffing. You might never quite know. It might be really about it, you know? And isn't it supposed to be waiting there like a mouse at the cat door for it to happen? That does not work. But that inspired Sylvia to no end. Ok, I don't know how close I am. So she then really gave herself over to the practice and was no longer complacent, kind of lackadaisical in her practice, and that made all the difference for her. And then her practice bore fruit for her.

So the end of the book, end of the instructions, talks about how this practice of mindfulness is the practice that leads to liberation, the spiritual liberation that Buddhism champions. What made the Buddha an enlightened person? And remarkable thing about this is that the key element to this liberation is your own normal, ordinary capacity for awareness. So you have

the tool. It's not like a foreign tool to you, but you have to learn to use the tool, and develop that tool, and to free that tool from the ways in which it gets caught in or hijacked or caught in preoccupation concerns. And that can be done. And it knows it's a grand goal, the goal of liberation, Nirvāṇa, and Nirvāṇa, the path. The very best way to do this is to value, appreciate, enjoy every step on the path to that. It's a fantastic way to live a life. To live on this journey, the adventure of mindfulness, and every day you do it is a good day, is worthwhile. No amount of mindfulness is ever wasted.

And ideally, as people are learning to do this mindfulness each moment, that the awareness is felt to be a little bit more free. Or we use mindfulness to use a freed awareness: Just here, aware of my suffering and aware of this difficult situation, but let me be mindful of it. And in that recognition of mindfulness, there's some freedom there that's worthwhile in its own right. That's a life well lived. So I say this because there is this grand goal at the end of the tunnel, end of the rainbow, or end of the tune of liberation. That is a real goal. It's valuable. It's a noble direction to take a life, but enjoy each step along the way, each step along the way. It's worthwhile. It's valuable. And it doesn't really, from the point of view of the value moment by moment. It doesn't really matter if we get to the end of this path. It just matters. You're on it. It's a beautiful thing to be on this adventure, in this path, and I think that it tends to bring out the best in people. And to the degree to which the best that you are, it's still lying dormant in you. You'll find that if the more you practise the mindfulness and free your awareness, that what's best in you will become available for the world as a gift, and hopefully in doing this, you'll make a world a better place.

So that was the final talk, and we have ten minutes before the usual ending. And now, if any of you have any questions, comments about this, I don't know how many of you've been through. You've been along for the whole, you know. It's been like five months of talks now. What that's like to have gone to it, or anything you'd like to ask.

Test: I like this idea of attention baggage. Often I can see myself responding to a phenomenon out in the world, and I can see myself responding, and that response, and not like it, and then I very quickly, without words, just avoid it, or get angry or frustrated with that response, get afraid of that response without any words. So it's like I'm trapped in that meta level of responding to the initial phenomenon. I feel like that's a mine. That's an attention baggage that I carry with me a lot. Any tips on how to get out of that kind of a great that well described?

I think one of the best things you can do is get to know it better, that you turn your mindfulness. If there's a small problem, how you operate what you do, turn your attention to look at

it more carefully, get to know it better. And the freedom comes from seeing it clearly in two ways. It comes from actually learning how it works, and learning the tricks, and how you get caught in it, and what's really going on, and what the emotions are underneath it, and what drives it. But also what you learn is awareness itself can hold it, probe the so-called problem, and see it in such a way that you're free while you're looking at it. So expense at to think about it. Look. Don't think about. Look at it over there and by the windows.

So the analogy of the rope that slowly gets worn away and then, at some moment, breaks, serves suggests that the sort of moment of liberation is a moment. Yes, it's usually under. It's usually understood to be a particular moment, it's something. Something gets released. And my favourite translation into English of the word *nirvāṇa* is release. There's a release that happens. And so is that a non-reversible ict on release happens? Does it ever go back in the full liberation? Is non-reversible full liberation? There's no more clinging. That's the what's being released is the clinging, so the clinging doesn't come back. Generally, the first dramatic experience people have of the hand opening up, as it's memorable, shows them what's possible. And for the five fingers, still want to close up. But now we know what's possible, and that makes all the difference. When we know the direction, we know it's possible. We don't really now, even though we've heard about and read about now, we really know for ourselves that's what they're talking about. And so now we're inspired to practise more. And it might take a while for the other fingers to begin opening up, or metaphorically, right? So generally, that first dramatic experience doesn't do all the work, but it really shows the way.

I Gil, so you talk about this whole teachings like a journey torn. And in the past five months, you said there's thirteen steps, yes, each step. So there's so much of a and when we practice, do we go step by step, or there's so many things? For example, sometimes we focus on the body, the feeling will come up. Yes, that the thought will come. So I just wonder, what's the best way to erects? I think that most people who teach out of this text will not teach all the exercises, and usually they'll pick a few of the parts of it that they specialize in. So some teachers will mostly specialize in the first foundation, the body. Some will specialize in the third foundation when the mind. Some will specialize more in the fifth and fourth foundation and the and so there's different choice. People use this. It's more like this. It's like the grab bag of practices. And so very few people I know who go through these thirteen exercises systematically, the way it's laid out. It's possible. It could be quite effective. But I've never known anyone to teach that way, except in Dharma talks like here. And so it depends who you're studying with, how they will teach this. And so for me, the way I

like to teach this, in the way I was taught this when I was learnt this in Burma is that it's you focus on the breathing, and if any of the other foundations come up and are more predominant than the breathing, you let go the breath and turn the attention to that phenomenon. So it's not systematic. It's not like you have to memorize these steps and know where to go. A reality tells you, bring your attention. So you don't even have to make a choice, except it's time to leave the breath and to focus on the emotion. And now it's time to leave the breath and focus on the body or the mind or whatever it might be. And then, when there's no longer compelling, we come back to the breathing. And reason I like teaching in that way. There's other ways of practising that are quite good for I know one practice is the right for everybody, but one of the reasons why I like to teach this is that it keeps the attention coming back to the breathing, which is, as a practice, that also develops concentration. And it really helps to have a lot of concentration to do this practice. So the more concentration we can build up, the stronger the mindfulness and clearer the mindfulness can be. So stay with the breathing until something else are about.

The refrain, as you talk something about, refrain is that you said it repeated thirteen times a little bit louder. The refrain, the refrain Yes, you said its being repeated thirteen times. Yes, necessary in the sutta is that a set of principles we supposed to use with, to apply, not used to apply with each step or whatever were practising? I think that the refrain has a number of functions, but one of the functions is a little bit of a map of what is what is kind of important to notice. So one of the things it says is, I notice how things come and go, and not every one is that not every mind is tuned in to rising, noticing things arising and disappearing. Because when we're involved with our concepts, ideas of things, there's a funny way in which concepts and ideas can lend permanence to what we're concerned with. We know it's not permanent, but in the moment we're sitting here, it might feel like, This is it. You know, like I am. I mean, there was many years ago I came to the conclusion that I was depressed, and I'd never not be depressed. This is how it's going to be. This. I'm stuck. This is it. That's and I was operating emotionally from this point of view that this is it. This be depressed forever. But if you're really, if you'd it is, you know, and my awareness was held hostage by that depression, I was I surrendered my awareness to my depression. I kind of let it sink into it and be taken over to learn how to pull the awareness out of something like depression and really see it. I step away or turn round, really look at that's depression and see it. And that's our looking at it more carefully, and not with the baggage of ideas and stories and time and all this. After a while, you start seeing. Actually, you're not depressed all the time. It's actually, it's actually coming in and out of existence continuously. But it's not always there. There's little flash moments. It's not there. Flash moment is there. And that's

a whole different game, the whole different world to live in, as opposed to the idea, I'm stuck. This is it. And so the way the way that refrain talks about it's kind of like this is important to notice the coming and going of things, and at some point as people meditate, to have that as a guideline can help them kind deepen the meditation further. The other thing the refrain says is that is it kind of another description of the goal of practice, where we're going. It's kind of like, This is a North Star. This is what one being guided by. This goal and that goal is a wonderful way to end this whole series now at nine o'clock. And that goal is to live without clinging to anything in the world. That's where it's going to dwell, without clinging to anything in the world, and to use the language of this talk today, to dwell without awareness attached to anything whatsoever. And what in the world is awareness that has no attachment to what it's aware of? And you might want to reflect on this, and ponder, and imagine, and visualize, and what it's what would be like for you to have attention. And whatever attention it knows, the attention itself is not attached to what it knows. Awareness that is free of what it knows. May it be so. Thank you very much.