

2019-12-08 Living The Practice Into Daily Life

Tue, 8/11 10:41AM • 36:46

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

practice, welcoming, life, people, daily life, harried, attitude, important, feel, world, tea, question, meditation, nice, behavior, day, kids, kinds, fill, racing

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdaal

Everyone and welcome to IMC so one of the very gratifying questions that people will come to me with is, how do I bring my practice into my daily life into the into my life? And it's very nice question. It's very nice that they have a sense of the practices relevant for their life. Maybe what happens in meditation shouldn't just stay in meditation but should somehow spread into the rest of their lives. And, and there's all kinds of things that can be said in response to that question. Maybe everything we ever teach is in response to that question. In some way or other, and we could say things like, you know, meditate every day or practice meditation as you are done meditation, but be mindful Have your speech as you speak, that if you want to really have you know, supercharge your everyday practice in daily life, pay careful attention to why you say what you're going to say. And you'll learn a lot about yourself and you'll learn how to be present in a much clearer way. Or it might be as simple as if you're driving a car, or if you're on the bus or a train, that don't, don't do anything else. But just sit there and collect yourself be really present for that experience. Don't read a book if you're driving on the bus or don't listen to the radio or podcast and just really be there to simplicity of driving. And so you're beginning to kind of bring that sense of presence into your life rather than constantly multitasking or doing two things or something. Or a person might say, you know, you should practice the precepts. Try to be naturally be ethical, and ethical life will help you know, bring it in and open up all kinds of important things. So a person could say that. And another thing that in response to the question of how do I bring my practice into my daily life into my life is to say, Well, you know, it's a nice question. But it's not really the best question. A better question is, how do you bring your daily life into your practice? So rather than putting the onus on your practice your practice, you have to kind of somehow mustered up or adapt it or change it or apply it and to do the work of practice. It fits into your everyday life. Instead, how do you fit your life into your practice means how you are when you're practicing the state of practice, the state of presence, integrity, wholeness, that comes with practice. That actually is the center of gravity. That's actually what It has priority. That's what's most important your daily life is, you know, it's just a hodgepodge of all kinds of things. And, and but we tend to prioritize it. Because we have a lot of desires and a lot of things, we want a lot of protection. We want all kinds of things we want in our daily life. And sometimes we prioritize it. And it makes some sense. But I think what I see with people who've practiced for some time and really gotten into that practice, the, the, the, the things, it gets reversed. And what's more central to them is the experience of being alive that comes out of the practice sense of integrity, wholeness, the way of connecting to the world. The way of being is so important, that that does, you don't they don't want to compromise that. For anything that going on in the world, and that's a radical thing to say, not to compromise the state of your mind, your heart state of being that you have in practice, for anything going on in the world. In a way that may be not quite as radical as that is to say that there's no no benefit you can do the world that requires you to sacrifice your inner peace and well being. There's certainly a lot of benefit we can do the world and things we should take care of in the world for sure. It's not saying we shouldn't do that as you'll sit and meditate and smile. But none of that

requires us to sacrifice. Peace well being happiness here. Just didn't say it again. Still another way. Why should you sack Why should you suffer so that other people don't suffer? Why are you more important? Are you less important than anybody else?

It isn't that Buddhism is selfish. That, you know, you're supposed to just take care of yourself, but you're not supposed to discount yourself. your well being is just as important as any other individual's well being. And there's no need to sacrifice what's here. It's possible to take care of the world and other people with this presence this experience is freedom that's found here. So as practice develops with people, there's some people then who turn that question around, and they ask the question, How do I fit my life into my practice? So both questions are good, but I kind of like the second one, especially since the people tend to ask the pass the first one. And my job is to try to give you a different perspectives. And so one of the so I would like to give a little different perspective for all the same kind of same similar thing rather than bringing your practice into your day to day life. yourself, make yourself make your daily life. Turn your daily life how you are in daily life into something that your practice wants to enter. Make yourself into the live a kind of person live that kind of live where your practice will naturally flow into it and fill it. So now the onus is on you not to practice the bonuses, how do you live your life? How do you conduct yourself in your life? So there's space there's time, there's goodness, there's a kind of way of being that whatever is happening in meditation, whatever is opening up for you in practice, it just wants to go there. It's just like feel so welcomed. It feels like this is the best place to go. Just just ready to fill you. How do you make yourself so who you are welcomes the practice? Now we're talking about getting into hard work. The practice will take care of itself into your life if you begin to adjust your life. Now, this this kind of involves, among other things, it involves a change of behavior and a change of attitude. And some people don't want to change their behavior. And the question that how do I bring that practice into my daily life? Literally, for some people means how do I do it all and maybe even more? Running around being busy doing everything that has to be done more this and more that and racing between one thing to another? And how do I bring my practice into that? So that I can be centered calm whole, so I can be free? Perhaps the answer is you can't. If you're running around greedy or wanting or trying To do so much that's operating from the very principle in the very way of being that the practice supposed to free us from. So, to try to get everything some people wanted to have everything and you can't, one other wise way of living. For some of us, we live in a society for some of us who are pretty privileged. We live in a society, we have a lot of choices. And we have a lot of messages about what we should be doing. Whether its obligations to save the world, whether it's to explore more recreation opportunities, whether it's to do more spiritual practices, you know, it's and Buddhist to do too much Buddhism. If it just if what that means it just you're just doing more and more and more things, just getting busy. You know, I've known people who just get busy, you know, go to this sitting group and read this book and do that practice and then do that practice and then go to that teacher and, and they're just like racing around filling themselves more and more and more with Buddhism. That, you know, too much Buddhism isn't non Buddhist. So the

so the idea is hot. So sometimes we have to change our behavior. And that's hard. Because sometimes it demands or the world sometimes all the authority of things that should be done. All the wonderful, important good things that we can do all the good intentions we have and all that is just literally too many things. Just you know, you can't just kind of try to fill your day with all the possible good things that's available you can do the helpful things for the world. A wise life doesn't Try to fill everything that we possibly do. But it does a fewer things so we could do it better. So that we do it in a way that the practice comes along. We're not out of breath, we're not racing from one thing to the other. So there's a little bit of time, before and after we do something, to catch our breath, to pause to have a cup of tea, to just be. And lo and behold, if you take that kind of time, or if you do things carefully, which in my mind means you just do one thing at a time. Then the practice wants to come into that. If your practice is

strong, it'll just show up for you. And you'll find that you're present. You're sensitive to how you get caught and how you're free and there'll be a prioritization for being free. Rather than caught up in your things. You'll feel a notice When you're being mean, and what and what it's like to be compassionate and caring, and your system will want to go towards being caring and compassionate, it's a lot of work to be mean. It's a drag if you really pay attention to it, your system really doesn't want to do that. If you really take the time, but if you're harried and running around and busy and you know, it's could be quite, seemingly quite satisfied to be mean, on the fly, person, that's maybe why people do it. But to settle down and be present and relaxed, of course, you'll be different. So sometimes a wise life means to look at your life and change your behavior. Stop trying to do so many things. Try to trust filling everything. Stop trying to race through things so you can get to the next thing. Stop maybe some of the multitasking that goes on? Sometimes maybe you're, you know, maybe it's fine to do two or three things at once. It's not enough. It's not like necessarily a sin to do that. But is that if the question is, and this is this is the big gift, this is the conditional background for this, what I'm talking about, if what you want is to have your practice in your daily life or your practice flow into your daily life and form your day. Like, if that's what you really want to do. That comes at a cost that comes that has certain requirements has certain things that and one of that is changing your behavior, changing how you're living your life to some degree and perhaps doing fewer things. But allowing the practice to fill what you do brings a much greater greater treasure to your life. Then all the pleasure of doing many things, although gravitate gratification of getting all kinds of worldly success, worldly success, doing a lot of things, in a sense is kind of only skin deep. But if how you are from the inside out is where your satisfaction comes where your inspiration comes, then you know, that's a treasure that not only you carry with you, but becomes a gift to other people, for people to encounter someone who knows how to be happy and at peace with themselves and be engaged in the world that way that shows everyone within as possible. I thought I just had to kind of be out of breath to kind of have some kind of success, success success and you probably met people I've met people who, you know, when they're somewhere 45 years old, 55 years old. They think Wait a minute, there's no end to this pattern I'm in that there's always something next next to that, I have to get that I have to get that.

Recently, I met someone who had a very successful life, not financially, but very successful. And certainly an enterprise actually doing a lot of good for other people kind of just kind of kind of a activism role. And she said that, in my kind of activism, the most people don't have much success. But I had a fair amount of success and became a little bit of superstar and my little domain. But at some point, I realized I wasn't happy. And I was just shocked. If this didn't make me happy, and I had success where was Happiness is going to come from. So she took a whole break for many years in her life, to do practice. And after doing practice, some years she went back and was of service in a very different way. So, something in a behavioral change, how do we make make ourselves so that our practice is welcomed into the space? I love it that this is a little bit of, you know, a twist of the ancient epitaph or the title of the Buddha. Some of you know me said tagata thus come one kind of strange name. He was reluctant to identify himself and in the identities and that were common in his time, you know, some kind of have some kind of identity or have take things personally certain way. So he had these titles for himself that kind of kind of shattered the usual kind of identifications that be Within this time, and one of them was that sukha and got convene to come and like to arrive and Sue can mean good or well, so well, the welcome one. So the little twist, I like it. The Buddha is the welcoming one. And, and so we're supposed to be the welcoming ones too. And so that's a change of attitude. How do we become the welcoming one? How do we become the one who welcomes maybe first and foremost welcomes ourself? Have you ever been really felt welcomed by someone? I had a grandmother who and a great mother grandmother actually, both of them who I felt so welcomed by, I felt so loved and cared for and not imposed on. It was just like this field of goodness to sit With these two women, sometimes I would just sit with them just to be with them and my great grandmother in particular, she didn't talk much. But

she was like, you know, radiant, there's like Darshan sitting with her. And the, you know, really felt welcomed. Maybe you've welcomed someone, maybe it's second nature for you, if some lover, some family member, some wonderful benefactor you've had over your lifetime that come to see you that you're welcoming for them. Maybe they come over to your house, and for them, you clean your house. For them, you make sure that there's some nice things to offer them. Some nice tea, some nice lunch, something like you, you maybe even take a shower before they come. You know, you wouldn't you know, you wouldn't still be in your pajamas. And maybe for them not only that, but you would, you know, maybe you would even kind of, you know, be refreshed and make sure you were kind of not harried and just out of breath to breathe just at your door just before the 30 seconds before they get come there, you'd be prepared for them. You'd be welcoming them. So this idea of his attitude of welcoming that allows the practice to flow into you. Can you welcome yourself in the same way? Can you have an attitude of welcoming to yourself? And what would it take to be welcoming? For some people, it means not being so critical, not being at war with oneself, not feel that some of the things we did in the past are unacceptable and that we have to hate ourselves for it or we have to feel a tremendous weight of the guilt or to not to Feel that somehow how we are in the inside is wrong. It might not be right. But it doesn't have to be wrong. be welcoming to this to be welcoming to this to.

When I was when we were young, we were I wasn't young, but young parents. We had many of my kids were I know my son was maybe I don't think I don't know if they were these kids were talking yet they were so pretty young, maybe a year and a half or something or a year and nine months. And they had playdates with different kids and there was one kid who would had this issue of biting and hitting other kids. And so you know, we'd have playdates, but you know, I have to take this into account. And but the parents of this kid also were quite concerned about this. So they went to a therapist, the child therapist and explain the behavior. And the child therapist said, whenever your son starts doing this, just love him a lot to go over there and hug him love him. We can't do that it's gonna be positive reinforcement for that behavior. be strict or something? No, no, no, trust me. Just go and just love the kid. And sure enough, the behavior stuff quickly. Wasn't positive reinforcement for this kind of behavior and actually was the very thing that healed that. Who knows exactly what the kid was trying to accomplish needed to happen, what was sense of hurt or loneliness or being scared or something that kid had? But so the parents were welcoming in a certain kind of way. So what goes off Who knows? All of us have some kind of I don't know what your favorite word is. I like to ask him to connect. He knows that Buddha in English, at least, Buddha didn't seem to speak English. But if you spoke English and read his translations, he would say we all have blemishes. So that's not so bad, right? Just a blemish. So we have all these blank, we've kind of, kind of don't have to be so heavy with all these things that we have, in a certain way, be welcoming it, who you are, and all of who you are. Not to give into it. Because some of these things shouldn't be said and shouldn't be done that comes inside of us, comes from us, but the welcoming into our hearts into our awareness. So maybe it can relax and settle. So that the underlying kind of hurt the underlying wound that we carry gets mad Then held and relaxes. How do we welcome so that we don't see anything about ourselves as being wrong, but allows something to flow and move and heal within us. So it's a being a welcoming one. To be a welcoming one for ourselves, will translate directly to being a better welcoming person, for other people to be able to do the same thing for others. And when we meet people who are difficult, rather than feeling that, you know, shutting down the art of learning to step forward and open up and welcome them. Many people don't have that ability. You don't have never had models for that, or maybe had good reasons in their lives not to do that because they've been hurt and harmed betrayed. But how, but how do we learn how to stay safe and welcoming to all things We will come here and develop a street smarts to do that. We start I would like to say with ourselves. And as we learn this welcome. What do we do in our daily life? How do we live our daily life, not only so there's limited time and space. But so how we walk through our daily life. We're living away, we're creating a daily life. That is welcoming, welcoming of our practice,

welcoming of our goodness, welcoming of the freedom and the compassion, the love, the care, the integrity, that could be confined inside of ourselves. Where mindfulness just wants to come. Rather than mindfulness being work. Mindfulness becomes more our natural expressions switch to we are we're aware we're attentive awarenesses that So, instead of asking the question how do I bring my practice into daily life? How do you make your day life? be welcoming for your practice?

How'd you do the equivalent in your life? Cleaning your house, make taking a shower, putting on nice clothes. Having a nice treat nice tea or something. So that when your beloved comes from love, it feels happy and contented and received and honored and respected. Maybe your beloved is your practice. And how do you prepare yourself make yourself the kind of person that your practice just wants to just come and relax and be with you. So this is a little different message than we usually get, I think, where the idea is to, you know, kind of depend on the practice to solve everything for us. And we don't want to have to be the one has to do something because we, that's the whole problem. We're always doing doing doing. And anyway, I'm supposed to do something, it must mean that I'm wrong. It must be a judgment against me. And you know, you know, it's kind of like, just to practice, just practice, be mindful, be mindful. So you don't have to burden of having to do anything. And if you have to do it, then you can fail. And then you have expectations, and then someone's measuring you. So don't do any of that. We say just practice. Just be mindful. it's wise to give that advice, but it also is, it also shortchanges us. It doesn't give us the full picture of what's possible. And I would like to suggest today that a wise Buddhist life is a life where we give thought concerned reflection at the macro level of our life, what we're doing in our life, our behavior and our life, the activities we do, and the attitudes that we wish we do them. And in a reasonable way, consciously intentionally try to change some of those. Some of it can be quite small. Maybe like for example, maybe if your drive to work, or take the bus to work. You actually leave 10 minutes before you have to. Or you take the earlier bus if it's only 15 minutes, just so you're not hurried. And so you have a feeling of ease ease and relaxation, and maybe you've come to where you're get off out of your car out of your bus. And you come there. And you know, it turns out, it's a beautiful day and there's a rainbow. And rather than rushing and missing it, you take your time to take it in and feel the fresh air and look at the rainbow. And lo and behold, that I feel kind of strange what's just happened. Oh, my practice showed up. I'm present. I'm aware this is nice. Now I started walking to work now across the sidewalk or the parking lot and actually feel like I'm really here and feel the ground. And this is pretty cool. Usually I come to work and I don't even notice I'm in the parking lot because I'm already imagining I'm at my desk and taking care of things, whatever. So to give thought so that's an example of something very simple, you can do just simply give yourself a little more time in order to do things, so there's more stuff base for the practice should show up. Or maybe it's a change of attitude. And sometimes we think attitude is so deeply ingrained in us. We're so identified with it. We don't think we can change it. But we change our attitudes all the time for important things. If you go to someone's memorial service, chances are fairly well you step into the memorial space with a little different attitude than you were yesterday at the basketball game. You go to a basketball game, you know, you kind of get into a different attitude. You take it on a different note, you know, you're cheering your team on or something. But you don't cheer people on at the memorial service. In that, not in that kind of way. At least. I was really struck by how My attitudes changed when I used to go into my kids preschool. Especially if the preschool kids were napping a couple of times I had occasion to go into the preschool when the kids were all sleeping. I mean, talk about sacred.

Talk about it. I mean, that was like, wow, I mean, that was like, talk about pristine. You know, you don't want to wake them up. This is like so good. It's like the embodiment of goodness. 20 you know, three year old sleeping. Boy, did I change my attitude quickly? We can change our attitude to some degree. We can't do it. This certainly well all the time. But the welcoming attitude is welcomed even when we

don't do it. Well. We don't make it a burden or criticize ourselves. Stop the war stuff, the criticism, be willing to be welcoming even of what is difficult inside of you. What's uncomfortable,

be welcoming.

So as you do this practice, those of you some of you here today might be pretty new to all of it. So I want to warn you there's a real risk. That if you get into this meditation practice and you discover something really good inside, something, something that teaches you that you actually good. There's something wonderful way of being in the world. That You Might with that reference point. It might occur to you, you know, I think I might have to change my life a little bit. That's the risk. Watch out. My thoughts today and we have about we think maybe five or six minutes or something if anyone wants to protest yes I'll do the tea Okay, okay well let's take five minutes now if you have any questions or comments about what I said or testimonials about it or

well

I have

a flyable where I cannot be on time doesn't matter all get up a half hour earlier Yeah, no, I will find distractions and things to do. And I will be walking out the door late now when I walk out the door late I don't rush I just continue my Well here I am kind of thing but i i don't know how you do that.

So so you meet you mean that no matter how many Things you have that day, or they're just a few things or a lot of things. you procrastinate. You take you kind of take time. You don't actually show up on time. Yeah. Great. do more. Okay.

Schedule. You're

saying how I do that

skit Yeah, schedule more into your day, but schedule things which are not that important. So that as scheduled them in between the important things. And then you realize, Oh, I don't have time for that one. It's okay. But you know that using scheduled books is actually a good thing to write. You know, these calendar books and writing schedule, what you're going to do, and schedule things are not that important. And maybe you do them and it's nice to do, but maybe that protects you a little bit for your way.

Oh, go ahead. Yeah, go ahead the first.

Thank you. I really appreciated this. And as someone who is feeling very harried on my way yesterday, like really struck true. Do you have any guidance on how for someone who does lead that very busy life? And as I think about Okay, what can I take out to give myself a little more room? any guidance on a practice of like, how to do that? Oh, you know, when many things feel important?

Yeah. So one of the things, you know, it's a few couple of things to say. One is, when there's a lot to do some work, I used to be a faster cook, after I was in a Buddhist monastery. And I loved it. And, you know, happy if I was spinning around in the kitchen, I had multiple meals kind of tracking at the same time, and I would leave the kitchen calmer and more center than when I came rather than here. Read.

And so you don't have to do things slow. But, but don't hurry, you can be fast, but don't hurry, never hurry. If you're ever hurting, you're already lost. Figure out how to be fast if you need to be fast, but don't hurry into the areas in attitude and be fast. And then. And then the idea of just doing one thing at a time is really powerful. Now, when I was the faster cook, the one thing at a time, was only cooking all those dishes, you know, wasn't listening to the radio or doing other things just so it was just kind of, I just gave myself over to the activity I had to do. And so if you can do one thing at a time, or just give yourself over completely to the activity you're doing, even if it's a lot of different things. Just give yourself over just to do that. So you're not thinking about the future or the past so much. You're not you know, trying to Get other things in or, you know, and nowadays, you know, you know, you're not going to check, don't check your phone, you know, leave your phone in another room, so you don't even tempted, because that's way of dividing up your game. So just doing one thing at a time. So maybe the last one.

I really appreciate it, you're bringing to mind your welcoming grandmothers and great grandmother. And so that create a brought to mind some people in my life that were that way and consider that towards our practice. And in my daily life, one of the opportunities I have over and over again is with my cat. And it is to make myself welcoming to my cat as my cat comes up to me, and we spend time together and it is such a strong and deep experience and so being able to Take that essence and bring it toy tie. Welcome my practice. I appreciate the instructions nice man sitting down to meditate and greeting yourself in meditation, the way your dog greets you.

wag your tail. Great. So thank you. So we have a few minutes before the usual ending and we do have tea, the tea so you're all welcome to stay and socialize and talk. But as it as a tea I'd like to ask maybe if you turn towards one or two people next to you and say hello, and maybe say just a one simple, good idea that you got from this talk for yourself for some provocative, really nice idea. And just share that with your partner and you can go after that or stay for tea.