

Four Qualities of Attention

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Good morning, everyone. And is the volume loud enough out there? A little bit louder. So how is it now? As it gets any better, it's better now. Go ahead, great.

Yes, I think their times are up now for Yes, I supposed to hire? So I'll begin with a story I heard many years ago, probably—I don't know if it's a true story—about a person who is very learned in Buddhism, spent years studying Buddhism. A person believes they know a lot about Buddhism and is kind of an expert on it, and came to a Zen master in Japan and said, "You know. Let me tell you about myself. I'm well studied. I've learned a lot. I know a lot. And could you please write some calligraphy for me, a scroll that I can hang up to remind me?"

And the Zen masters in Japan often, partly, one of the arts that are closely connected to Zen and Japan is calligraphy. And Zen masters are often known for their calligraphy. And so, asking a Zen master for their calligraphy, I got a meaningful—so person came and explained how learned the person is and asked for calligraphy. And the Zen master grunted and, "OK," and took out the scroll, piece of—enō's beautiful rice paper, and made the ink and the brush, and then wrote. And the person wanted the word that really captured the essence of Buddhism. So the Zen master wrote: attention.

And the person said, "No, no, you don't seem to understand. I know a lot about Buddhism, and I want the essence, the Zen master." So the Zen master took out another piece of paper and wrote across that one: attention. And the person said, "No, no, no. You don't seem to understand. I really know what the essence, the heart of it, the truth of it, the real, the core, what it's all about." Oh, the Zen master said, "No, now I get it. OK," took out another piece of paper and went through the whole and wrote across the paper: attention, attention.

So what is it about attention that is the core, the heart of Buddhism, at least for this Zen master or for us? So I'd like to maybe talk about this, or around this topic, this question. And

my aspiration, which you have to participate in wholeheartedly if it's going to work, is that as I talk about attention, that you're using what I say to look at your attention as you're listening to the talk. We have this amazing capacity for attention, I believe, like when I think about what a miracle is. I'm not sure what a miracle is, but if I've encountered miracles in my life, it's attention. It's the capacity to be aware.

It's an amazing function of our being, this, that we have this capacity to be aware and attentive, and take in the environment, and process it, understand it, and find our way in it, and it's just mind-blowing. And often it's taken for granted. Or often we are so caught up in it, in our thoughts, that the thoughts obscure the fact that we're aware, you know, it's kind of like it eclipses them. Or sometimes I think that my thoughts sometimes are racing ahead, pulling the awareness with it, but what's really in charge is my thinking. And it's a whole different thing for it to turn around that and have awareness be first and foremost. And awareness doesn't necessarily eclipse or obscure our thoughts.

But awareness is strong enough that it's kind of like the light went on and now we can see our thoughts, just like when light goes on in a room and suddenly we can see the objects in the room. It's a whole different world with the light of awareness turned on. It's a whole different world. If awareness, attention, leads to show and the thoughts, in a kind of way, come in the wake, or come in support, or come kind of behind the thought. Awareness—have awareness lead. And so what is this awareness? What is attention? What is mindfulness?

And I say this question with the disclaimer, I guess. But that's what we call it. I don't really know. So you know, here I am, a mindfulness teacher for many years, and it's kind of outrageous, right, for me to say, I don't really know what mindfulness is. You can all go home now, or—but I certainly—it's one of the things I love tremendously in my life. Mindfulness, attention, awareness is such an important part of my life. And so what is it?

So what are some of the things are? It's made up of component parts. There's different aspects of it that we can look at. And what I'd like to do today is offer you four aspects of what could be called awareness, that could be called—each individual thing can be its own mental function, and perhaps a variety of mental functions come together to construct what we call awareness. Or it could be considered one and the same thing, just different angles on it, different perspectives. Just like if we go and take some look at the—study the ocean water off the coast here, we could study it from the perspective of its solidity or viscosity or temperature. Or, you know, different aspects of it, and it's still ocean water. But it has these different qualities.

Maybe attention, your attention, has these different qualities that are built into it. And so

these four qualities that I am talking about can also be considered to be practices in their own right, and they're powerful. And to recognize them in our awareness that they're there, to recognize these capacities in ourselves, and then to engage them, and to know when to engage them—different ones in different circumstances—and to feel their power, is quite a phenomenal thing to encounter. So maybe you'll see that you have these abilities.

The first one I'll mention is the capacity to recognize what's happening. It's the simple act. Maybe, you know, underappreciated. So easy to not even notice that we're constantly recognizing what's happening. Sometimes our recognitions are interpretations. Sometimes there are wild interpretations that have very little to do with what's going on.

Sometimes they're simple kind of, you know, optical illusions. Still, to this day, when I go hiking in the mountains up here, it seems like probably every six months or so—I don't know. Often I see a snake on the trail for a split second, and it's just the root of a tree that's got a wind into the top of the trail and exposed. But, you know, so on awareness, that recognition isn't always accurate. Sometimes recognition comes along with bias, where we kind of see a projection of our own judgments, ideas that we project on people, and bias in terms of judgment that's often negative. And so recognition isn't always accurate. But recognition also can really help us to see what's happening when we're really cut a loss from it.

One of the things that can be very helpful—maybe you've had something similar happen to you. Someone will tell me something like, "Well, you seem pretty upset," and that's the first I've known I'm upset, you know. Oh, thank you for recognizing that. Now I get it. Now I see it. And to know that makes a world of difference, on and on. Or to sit down to meditate, and only then discover, "Oh, you know, I'm kind of frazzled. I didn't realize I was frazzled. This is being frazzled." And then I have a whole different relationship with being kind of speeded or frazzled than if I just continued being frazzled. I didn't know it. Something shifts inside when that happens.

And so, maybe you ought to have a somewhat accurate recognition of what's happening. It's really helpful. So someone asks me, "How are you?" in a moment, and I might say that I'm having a difficult day. Well, that's kind of recognizing what's happening. But if I sit down here to meditate and to really check in what's happening, and I say, "I'm having difficulty," then I'm in a kind of an abstract world. I'm in a kind of a story, an interpretation of the day. It may be accurate enough, but it's not actually concretely what's happening right here. What's happening? What can I recognize here? Oh, I can recognize that I'm tense. I can recognize that I'm frazzled and my mind is spinning. That's what's happening now.

To recognize that, to know that that's happening, means that I'm beginning to not be caught

in those, pushed around by them, led by them. I'm beginning to kind of somehow separate myself from being wrapped up in them. And the beautiful example and metaphor, similarly, that's used in Buddhism, is the lotus that blossoms out of the muddy water. So the act of recognition can somehow free us from being in the obscure, muddy waters of our lives. When we step up, we get above it, in a sense, and see how this is what's happening. I see, OK, you're listening to a talk. What's it like just to know that you're listening? You take your listening for granted. Do you kind of just listen and take in the words and like them and not like them? It's not, "My preference is my preference. This is getting long-winded. This is—I know I was hoping for a different talk," or, you know, "I wonder if I should check my contact lists of my phone and see if they need to be updated." You know what's going on right now, to recognize.

But the fact that if you are listening, it's an amazing thing that you can listen. What is it to both listen and hear the words and appreciate that you're listening? What is it to recognize what I'm saying? What is it to recognize that somehow you're listening too? There's listening happening. What happens to you? So that's one of the aspects of awareness is a simple recognition. And part of the practice of recognition is to make it simple and direct, and try to find some way to be less and less interpretation in the recognition, and more really what's happening in the moment.

Now, why is recognition so powerful? Why could it be liberating to have clear recognition? Not recognize it what it is, but why is it that it can really transform our situation, who we are? What is it about your ability to recognize? Have you ever stopped and used it in a way that questioned it, or kind of tried to use it in different settings and see, "Well, I hear it's powerful. I hear it's freeing in some way. How does that work? Let me try it," and then try recognizing what's happening in the moment, and see if you can kind of begin to feel or discover. In fact, there's something liberating about it.

The second aspect of attention, quality, practice is to allow whatever is happening, whatever is recognized, allow it to exist freely in awareness. To allow it in awareness doesn't mean that you'll allow it with your behaviour. It might mean that you have to change things in the world. But there's a powerful thing to allow someone to exist in awareness without automatically reacting to it or judging it or getting entangled with our thoughts, but simply. And that's one of the reasons why it's so powerful to meditate, because meditation is meant to be a time that you don't really have to take care of anything. Whether you need to change something in the world or not. Meditation is not the time to get involved in that. That's for later. To consider meditation as a time when we're learning the art, the skill, to just allow something to exist in awareness.

And the more we can learn to do that in a non-reactive way, just allow it to be there, the actually wiser we tend to be about how to change the world, how to change what's going on when we come out of meditation. So it's not an excuse to not do anything, but it's almost like you want to do something. It's preparation for that. But this ability we can have, let awareness occur, being aware of things without it going together with reactivity, without going together with our preferences, being for or against what is happening, going, pushing it away or pulling away, holding on to it or trying to hold on, adding all this commentary on top of it. Just go, just let it be there, and like, kind of floodlit, float free in awareness.

Now, that's kind of a strange word. If I walked down to downtown Redwood City and walked up to someone on the sidewalk and came out, or just came out of the coffee shop and said, "Just let everything just float free on your awareness," they would probably doubt my sanity. But I can say it here, I hope. So what is it about the—is there some quality of attention, of awareness, of perception, that you perceive, and what is perceived is allowed to be there without being for or against? What is that? What part of the mind? What part of consciousness doesn't have to react? Is not reacting even if other parts of your mind are reacting? Is there a part that doesn't react? Is there a non-reactive part that can see yourself reacting?

This is why the recognition practice is so useful, because if you can recognize that you're reacting, then you're a little bit starting to blossom out of the muddy water. The act of recognition, in the simplicity of it, has some kind of freedom and allowing right there in the recognition. So even if we're reacting, how—I'm reacting, and then you might not get pulled into it, or it might be very sticky. But then you can experiment. Let me keep saying to myself or recognize, "That's reactivity. That's really reactivity. I'm a hundred per cent sure that is reactivity," as opposed to saying, "Boy, am I reactive? Oh, you know, here I am again. I'm always reactive. And here I am again. And nothing seems to help, and I'm just a mess." That's reacting to your activity, then you know, then you're caught in that web.

But if you use a kind of experiment with, "How—I'm angry, yep, this is anger, you know, don't use the word I, just, yep, I'm annoyed, this is annoyance, I can really recognize it." You can even go through in your mind, you know, in your mind's mind, say all these things. Just keep saying it until you can feel that you've disidentified with the anger or the upset, to whatever it might be. So you don't take it to be you, and you're not caught or entangled in it. You've pulled yourself apart enough that you can just allow it to be there and see it, without assuming that anything has to happen. Not judge it, not judge yourself for it. Just let it, allow it to be there.

And I've had that happen where—I've had that happen when meditating. It's really cool.

If you ever have this opportunity in meditation to mind your own business, and you know, you're quietly kind of doing your own thing, meditating, and then anger wells up. Some little thought that you had, you know, your high school sweetheart, wells up, and this heat comes up. But to watch the anger arise, and not pick it up, not react to it, not identify with it, just kind of just pass it and pass right through. I call it teflon mind. It's amazing to do that.

So what is this crazy thing that Gil's talking about? The mind's capacity to allow things to exist in awareness freely. Just allow it. It's a practice that we can develop and learn and experiment with. It's a practice and gets stronger. And it's easier, I think, if it becomes strong, this capacity to allow, to feel how—what a blessing it is, certainly the power of it, how freeing it is, how it's conducive to a certain kind of peacefulness to our life. Just to allow that part of the mind is not agitated.

The third part of awareness, attention, is feeling what's happening, feeling what you are recognizing. And feeling maybe is a difficult word, complicated word to maybe define or has different meanings. And what I mean by this is experiencing what's happening physically in the body, feeling the felt sense, the sensations of the experience. How is the body sensing what's happening? So if we're upset, what is it? What does it feel like in the body to be upset? How is it—this—is there heat? Is there tension? Is there stomach being twisted? Is there upwelling energy? What is actually a sensation of the body?

Oh, if there is, you know, something is really pleasant. What are the sensations of pleasure in the body? If I were, you know, there's a stressful situation. You're in a difficult meeting or something. What's the sensation that are present for you being at that meeting? What is it that's a felt sense for you? The agitation, the hot and the cold feelings, the energy that's coursing through you. What—the feeling of wanting to bolt, impatience. What does that feel like physically?

Now, you might ask, "Why should I do that?" Especially when Gil uses these bad examples and it's uncomfortable examples. One of the reasons why it's so useful to include in the awareness practice what it actually feels like is that feeling the sensations—our senses are part of the apparatus of awareness. They are operating all the way anyway. But we can fill out the picture, get a richer part of the experience, if we feel it physically also. Then we're much more in touch with ourselves as we go through the experience. There's much more information about how we are acting, what our responses to the situation. If we feel how it is physically in our body, we can feel some nuances or some of the salient kind of emotions that we might be missing if we're in the mind problem-solving, "Oh, I'm actually feeling this way or that way."

Also, the body is interesting. The physical sensations in it, of themselves, are not a story, are not an interpretation. And many times what we're—the lens through which we're seeing our experience is through our interpretations, our ideas, our stories. What's in it for me? What's going to happen here, our projections of the future, all kinds of things. And some of those are accurate, and some of them are not so accurate. And many times the complication around situations we're in has to do with that story-making mind. To drop down and feel the body, what's happening in the body. To feel what's happening is a protection from being swept away in the story-making mind, the interpretation, the meaning-making mind. And it's a grounding in the present moment. We're here. We're grounded. We're present. We're not so likely to kind of spin off and spin out, if we can, to keep coming back to the body.

It's so important, the idea in Buddhism of being embodied, that I wish that we had translated the word *sati*, not as mindfulness, but as bodyfulness, because mindfulness can give priority to the mind. It's OK, but I just like—the huge benefit for my practice of Buddhism is how much it's put me in my body, and how much information, how much life is lived through the body. And so there's something freeing and powerful about being aware through the body, sensing and feeling what's happening. If you don't think that the sensing and experiencing through your body is important, then the body becomes senseless for you.

So then the fourth quality of attention that I would emphasize here is—inherent, can be inherent in a clear moment of awareness, but that takes a clearly developed awareness to really feel its inherent quality. Before that, it may be a practice that comes along with being aware, that supports being aware. And the practice part of it is called relaxation: to relax, to recognize what's happening, to somehow allow it to be in awareness, to really feel what's going on in the body, so you can feel the tensions and the holding patterns in your body, and then to relax, to soften, to relax. And as we relax, that changes the inner environment to some degree. And then when we recognize next round of recognition, we recognize something deeper, something different, something more concrete, and then we allow that to be, and then we can feel that, and then we can maybe relax further.

I give you an example. So if I say, like I said before, that, "Oh, you know, how are you, Gil?" Or, "I'm having a difficult day." Maybe you asked me just before I came in, and, "Oh, I'm such a difficult air," and, "Oh, that's too bad." So Gil sits down, meditate. "Oh, I'm alive," you know. Or, "I have a difficult day." Today's not a difficult day, but imagine, "Oh, it's a difficult day." And so I sit here, and I'm thinking about my difficult day, and thinking about it. "I shouldn't have a difficult day. And after all, I'm a mindfulness teacher, I should not have a difficult day. But I have a difficult day, and I'm not living the difficult day," kind of, you know, swirl. And

then finally maybe it's accident, something. Maybe someone comes in and closes the door, or some sounds, and I get pulled out of my difficult day thought, and then I kind of like, "It's what's," and I have a habit of being mindful. So eventually I think, "You're having difficult day thoughts." "Oh, yeah, that's difficult day thoughts. Okay, we can allow that, okay? Can I feel what it's like to have difficult day thoughts—just tension in my eyes, my forehead. You know, there's a lot of energy in my head. I'm not really connected to my torso, and well, that's what's going on." And then I relax, and then I notice that all those thoughts I'm having are still operating. But now I'm much more aware that I'm thinking. I'm aware that more. There's more tension in my shoulders. Can I feel that? Allow that. And then I relax that. And then I'm realizing, you know, these difficult thoughts are so abstract. I'm more interested in what's actually happening here. Well, right here and now, there's still energy to think, compulsion to think about the particular issue of my day. But that's just compulsive thinking. I'm not so interested any more in the content of my thoughts. I just recognize compulsive thinking. I recognize that as I'm having that, there's still tension in my belly. So I feel all that. I allow all that, just with it. And then I relax a bit. And then I notice I'm not so involved in those compulsive thoughts any more, and I realize underneath the compulsive thoughts, and underneath that, you know, being upset was a little bit of anxiety. And that anxiety, how does that feel? That feels like still, like butterflies in my stomach, and it can create kind of tension. So I relax my belly, and as I recognize anxiety, relax the belly, I find that actually, you know, there's not so much anxiety any more. And I recognize that really what's happening is that, you know, I feel kind of insecure or vulnerable in my, you know, in life these days. And so then I feel its vulnerability. And I've noticed that as I do that, my breathing has gotten quieter and more relaxed. Oh, the breathing actually feels kind of good. Let me feel the goodness of breathing, and then I relax the breathing some more. And so it's kind of a journey that goes on, but it's that. And as I go deeper and deeper into this process, the relaxation part becomes less and less what I do, and more just follows in the heels of recognizing, allowing, and feeling until the time comes that awareness gets stronger and stronger. Co, the sense of attention begins to become stronger and stronger as all these layers begin to relax and attention becomes much more continuous. Awareness becomes almost like an entity that's there, that's recognized and known, rather than something intermittent and unlucky if it shows up because I'm so busy in my life. But it's just like clearly aware—whoa—and now this miracle of awareness seems to stand out—whoa—it's an amazing thing to be aware. I'm more amazed by the miracle of awareness than I am by these ideas of having a difficult day that's long gone. Wow!

And then I notice that as I'm aware of things, that the clear awareness of phenomena, the

clear recognition, allowing it to be. The perceiving of things has within itself freedom. There is release in awareness itself. And release is—I think it's different than relaxation. I think attachment—more something I do. I relax. Release is more like creating space around something, a lot of freeing, letting go of the clinging, the contraction, the tightening around whatever I want and what I'm trying to get or to see or know—this kind of space that's formed. And just to recognize, in the very act of awareness, there is a kind of freedom from what?

One of the things that's free from—part of what this letting go, release, can be in the awareness itself. We get released from ourselves, from the self, me, myself, and mine. That I'm the one in charge. I have to do this. I have to be aware. I have to fix the problem. I have to kind of do this whole procedure, this Gil teaching. Now, you know, recognition and allowing, and we like feeling, and this is a lot of work, you know, I got, I got to do, and now—but you get released from all that, me, myself, and me being the agent—I've to do all this stuff. And then you might notice that in the strong awareness that's there, that it actually, in and of itself, has these qualities. They're operating on the natural functions of the mind. Recognition, it's a wonderful expression. The cognitive functioning of emptiness—didn't—is great. It's supposed to—you know, my cognitive function is not so good. But it's not you yourself that's operating. It's something deeper, beautifully, freely impersonal that's operating in the mind. The mind can wonderfully operate without your—all the ways you identify, "This is who I am." Silver Fruit, you know, sort to become free of myself.

And do you want to be free of yourself? Is that safe to be free of yourself? Is it a kind of dying to be free of yourself? What is that? What is that? Why is Gil celebrating this release from self-awareness? Well, so initially, you know, many people, when they come to meditation, or we come out of a busy, frazzled day, it's not easy to just open up and settle down and discover that great miracle of awareness. But there are these practices we can do: practices of recognition, practices of allowing things to be in awareness, the practice of feeling and sensing deeply what's going on. The practice is a relaxation. And I kind of like following that sequence of those four. But you can follow any sequence of the four. Some people might prefer the other direction. Some people want to start with relaxation, and then go to feeling and sensing, and then allowing, and then finally recognize what's happening. You know, it's all kinds of ways. Depends on the person, what they like. But these four qualities of attention can be practices that we do, and maybe at different times. One particular one is the one that helps ground you, that helps you shift from having your thoughts eclipse awareness, having your thoughts, you know, in the lead, and you're just lucky to follow, to kind of taking control, or taking—being present, or not being lost any more, and being grounded. And maybe one

of those is the most useful one for you. For some people, it helps—some people, it's recognition. Some people, it's just a very clear sense. They can allow, "I don't know what's going on here, but I can make space." For some people, it's some feeling, this feeling experience physically, and for some people, it's the relaxation. But to have those four tools in your toolkit of awareness and to use them as is appropriate, to know when it's best for you to use them. And then, as they work their magic, as they work there on you, then slowly your awareness will become stronger and stronger, more stable, more present. And then you'll notice that those four qualities are right there all the time. And awareness and each of them in their own way is a wonderful thing. Each of them in its own way is a natural functioning of the mind, and each of them is freeing.

So I hope that this talk has been evocative for you, so that you'll go home, leave here, maybe for the rest of the week. "What in the world was Gil talking about?" And look into it. Find out for yourself. Look at these things, how they work. You know, Gil says their power—he's always kept using "powerful," and more often than he should, he kept, you know, saying it was freeing. And what is he talking about? Find out for yourself. Keep looking at this and see how it is. Make it your own. That would be really satisfying for me if you did that.

So we have about five minutes before the usual end, and if anyone has any questions, comments, testimonials, or protests. This is the time. In a previous daylong that I went to, we discussed the awareness of awareness, and that seemed like a wonderful thing to do. I felt a lot of great stuff going on being aware that I was aware, and I just wanted to ask you to comment on that.

I think that that's what allows you to feel the miracle of awareness. When you are aware that you're aware, it's a great thing. But, you know, it's more accessible to people than they usually realize, but sometimes something dramatic has to happen for us to really be interested in that, because usually the mind is interested in other things. Have you noticed that? One and other things can seem so important. And awareness, you know, awareness, you know, it has no shape and no color, and it has no sex appeal, and it knows no financial gain, right there. And, you know, it's like, not something you can show off with your friends. "Look at this great awareness," and so like it doesn't really have the usual things that we want to kind of, you know, that interest us. But in fact, it's one of the most significant and wondrous and important things of human life, because the medium through which all our life kindly flows one way or the other. And to really clear that medium of its debris, of its clouds, of its filters, really makes life much more worth living and engaging. So to become aware of awareness, to get a sense of it, you know, it can be done. But if you don't have access to it, then do those

four practices.

So I see Mary, and then we'll go here. See Mary first. I have been working at developing the skill of being an observer, especially when things are really dramatic or challenging or, you know, hard. So as I listened to you today, I got to wondering: is attention and being an observer—are they really the same thing? Or what does it mean to be an observer? And how is that different from paying attention? Nice question.

I think one of the most important things to say is that we should probably reword the question: is observation and attention the same? Because observer is a person. Observing is the act of the mind. And so, some people find it very helpful to switch that language, because as long as we're the observer, all this old baggage about being who we are comes along and makes it hard. But if we can kindly just put aside that language and just notice the act of observing and how that fits with attention, how it's the same or different, and how it overlaps. This is, you know, it's variable, depends on the angle you use. And you don't have to worry about it too much. I think what you're doing with observation is really great, and the attention follows along, and someday you might realize there's something different than observing. Maybe observing has a lot of recognition in it. And it's possible to be aware without recognition, or just kind of very, very simple. And it's a journey of discovery. And I don't want to tell you exactly how that'll go for you, but what I would like to add, as you said, you're doing a lot of this observing when things are difficult for you.

Well, I found it was really hard not to get sucked in to the situation, rather than simply being with the person who this, you know, that was undergoing all these things. I didn't want to get sucked in, and yet I was like, "You got on like a yogi," you know? Great. Why—love here? And I very much appreciate—love hearing that you're practising this way, it's really a good thing to do, useful things to do. And, lest—I want to add that, don't only practise it when things are difficult. Sometimes practising when things are easy builds the muscle so you can better do it when things are difficult.

When—one word, what would you recommend for people with—and who—like I was tutoring this young girl, and she has really poor working memory, and so literally what I taught her like two seconds ago just vanished at times. So what will you recommend for people with ADHD? And have you seen cases of people, through mindfulness training, have been able to expand their working memory?

So to try to answer your question as specifically as you asked it, which I don't really feel qualified to answer, really. But I do know that our ability to remember is based on many of our different faculties. And sometimes when we try to remember something using a particular

faculty that's not suited for you, for the individual, it doesn't really work. And so some people remember things kinesthetically more than they'll remember verbally. Some people remember more from hearing something than reading. Sometimes some people remember better by reading than they are hearing something. Some people remember better by a song. They can remember songs really well, but I tell them to remember a math formula—it's hopeless. And so you have to kind of understand the person in how that person's learning style is and how it works for them. But I would think that, you know, not knowing so much about this world of people with attention, things like that, is that I would try to do it physically. I would try to have them move while they're memorizing.

And in Burma, if you go there and the monastics in Burma are memorizing Buddhist scriptures, volumes of it, and they do a lot of it walking up and down. You see them outside the monasteries walking, walking back and forth with a book in their hand, memorizing. There's something about the walking that can help memorization. And I've done that a little bit, and then I remember even better if I go back and try to remember in the place where I am, the location where I was doing the memory. So you might see if there's some way of making a game of movement, if it's a young child, that somehow in the movement game it's fun. It's a game that somehow uses more faculties and makes it sink in deeper.

And finally, because it's a real interest of mine, and maybe you'll permit me to say this about—I use this acronym or your letters for what and how—contrition disorder, any—it's really unfortunate that we call this kind of mind a disorder. Oh, it's only because I think of the peculiar way in which we learn and operate in this modern world, that it kind of doesn't work with how we've organized the modern life. But for much of a human, you know, you know, the history is out of history, but way back, you know, a long time, that it was actually a very important function, a very important intelligence or capacity of the mind that really helped the tribe. They say, ten per cent of the people have this so-called attention deficit disorder. And now, but it's a wonderful capacity of visual capacity, of being interested in exploring and discovering new things. And we need to have ten—we used to need, back in the wild, ten per cent of the tribe had that ability. It made us survive much better as a group, and so now people have that particular wonderful mind. I think we should see it as a gift. I just have to find where that gift works. And I've known people who have become park rangers, where they're outdoors a lot, and their minds constantly moving and taking in things. I've known one who had a wonderful career as photographers, something as that that works for that kind of mind. And so we should be careful with calling it a disease, a disorder, and see the gift that it is.

So may your capacity for attention become as profound for you, more core and essential for

you, as the Zen master said it is for Buddhism. Thank you.