

Dharmette: Trust & Mistrust

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So good morning everyone. Is this on loud enough everyone? Okay good. So thank you for being here. And so what's been on my mind, my heart for a few days now, is the concept of trust. And what do we trust in our lives? And when have we been betrayed in our trust? And how does that prevent us from trusting again? And what can we trust?

And one of the easy answers to what we can't trust is we cannot trust the neurotic mind. Not that any of you have a neurotic mind, of course, but there are people who have minds that are a little bit out of control, and there's spinning stories, and all kinds of preoccupations and fantasies, and, and, and repetition of the same thing over and over again, that are maybe anxiety-based, maybe aversion-based, maybe just confusion-based. And we can be spinning in these thoughts.

And, and it's probably accurate enough to say that, and you know, kind of maybe in a kind of a little bit provocative way, that kind of get you to look at things in a fresh way, is that if you're, the more you spend your mind caught up in spinning in your thoughts and your ideas, the more something in you trusts doing that. Something in you thinks that that's the way to go, that that's important, that's valuable. This is the, this is where I'm supposed to be in order to be safe, or in order to find my way in life. This is where the solution is going to come to my, all my life problems, if I just think about it some more. And I didn't manage today, but I'll just pick it up again tomorrow morning and keep trying, and think, and think, and think.

And, and I've done that in my life. And I've had things that I've went on for months, and months, and months, you know, that I was trying to figure out, and solve, and get to, and just kind of churning away, churning away. And in the end, the solutions didn't, never came from that churning, spinning mind. So eventually I learned that I don't have to, you know, I didn't think of myself that I was trusting that kind of neurotic mind. But in fact, something was. And it was unconsciously a misplaced trust.

And one of those times, when I spent, I think, about nine months with one kind of thing I was ruminating about, and because I was anticipating something was going to happen at the end of that period. And all the thoughts were contingent upon certain thing happening. And that that thing didn't happen. And when it didn't happen, it was like a moment. It's like, in one moment I knew, oh, it's not happening. And I, and then I just said to myself, Gil, what in the world have you been doing with yourself these last nine months? What an amount of wasted time that I spent planning for a future that never came.

And so slowly I learned not to, that's not where the trust goes. One of the things I've learned is that to trust my body. That's, not the body in the abstract, but the body that's always here. The body can't be anywhere else. The mind is what can be somewhere else. The body is always here and now. And to

trust the body brings me into the present moment. Oh, the way the body experienced it. It's actually a lot of information here. The body is a subtle instrument of attention. A Zen teacher once told me the body is an antenna. I love this idea, the body as an antenna.

Because when I heard that, then I became more interested in what is, what is the body picking up? It's not just my own, you know, my own inner feelings, but it's also my inner feelings that are a reaction to what's happening in the world. It's the inner feelings I have that are the empathy or the resonance with what's happening around me. And once I started being more attuned to my body, I became much wiser about how to live in the world. Because I was, I could understand it. I had more information. I was more connected to what's happening.

And so I learned that value. I learned to trust. Oh, the body knows. The body has much more information than the spinning mind does. So I learned to trust the body. I learned to trust the mindfulness itself. And I think that's probably one of the things that I have the greatest trust in, is mindfulness and attention.

I trust letting go. I trust non-clinging. I trust all kinds of things. But I can't always do it. But I can always practice mindfulness. I can always stop and pay attention. I can always notice, oh, what's happening now? I can always drop into the body and say, what's going on here now? And feel it through the body.

And I've seen over and over again, I've been in situations where I, my mind had no solution. I didn't know what to say. I didn't know what to do. I didn't know. But if I stayed present and mindful, something opened up. It's like it opened doors. And things that I never could have anticipated began showing up and revealing itself, or understandings would come.

And so I trust more than, you know, I have this amazing trust now in the staying aware. And if the awareness is too vague, then the way that the word mindfulness points to something is a little bit more dialed in, a little bit more attuned, a little bit more attentive to the details of what's happening, then mindfulness is a good, good word, a good idea.

And, but where in our life do we learn to trust our bodies? I would suggest that for many people, it's the opposite. Something's wrong with our body, something's not right in our body. Our society doesn't like the body that I have, the kind of body I have. And, and, you know, there's all kinds of ways in which society sees us through the filter of our bodies.

And so the body's betraying me, or the body's not right, or the body's not this or that, or, or the body is where I carry my suffering. And I don't want to suffer. I've known people who protested heavily, strong protest when they were suffering. And someone's teacher told them, "Feel it in your body." And they said, "No, I'm here not to suffer." You know, "No, that's not, that's going in the wrong direction. Tell me how not to feel my body."

And, but, so we get, you know, our society provides messages, our families and everything that, that somehow, that is not enough just to be alive, breathing and attentive to what this world is about.

Carefully attentive. And so then we trust other things. We trust being a fixer, fixing things. Always fixing.

And, and if you like being a fixer, you're in a good place being born as a human being. Because there's never going to be an end to things needing to be fixed. So congratulations. And there's so much that, that needs to be fixed in this world of ours, that you can't take a vacation. Vacation's not allowed. You can barely allow to sleep.

So after a while, it gets kind of ridiculous, right? This idea of like, oh, we're supposed to be fixing. But some people, that's kind of the orientation. Or we trust being the escaper. If I can just kind of get a better movie to watch. So I'll keep looking until I find the movie that grabs me so I don't have to feel myself. That's what I trust, being distracted. Or blaming. I trust blaming. If I can just blame someone out there, then I feel better. Because then I don't have to be present for myself.

So there's all these things we trust. And so I think from this perspective that I'm offering today, you might ask yourself, where have I put my trust that is not really working? Where do I, I mean, not that you usually think this way, but hopefully you're kind of with this different orientation now. What do I do all the time that really represents some kind of subconscious trust that this is going to be the solution? And that it doesn't work anymore?

And so to ask that question maybe speeds up the process. To give you an example of the process for me was that it took me probably, from beginning to end, 20 years to understand well that I had a very bad track record predicting my future. And I had a lot of fear and worry, a lot of planning and guessing what's going to be, you know, I was going to do something tomorrow and like, you know, what, you know, they're planning ahead, you know, okay, well, I have to buy gas in my car tomorrow. So what am I going to do? How am I going to do it? Well, where do I get

the best, cheapest gas? And how do I, you know, do this and that with the gas? And I don't know what, you know, how to make it efficient in my life.

And then I wake up the next morning and my car is not working even. And all those thoughts about getting gas never happened. Or it turned out my wife went and got gas. I'm just using a silly example, but you know, it's been in so many different things. Sometimes there were big important things that, you know, that I got nervous. You know, sometimes I've given, this happened that, you know, got nervous. There was a time I used to get nervous by giving Dharma talks. So I'd plan it out. And then I'd show up to give the talk and I had the wrong day. Or I showed up to give the talk and something happened in the world. I can't talk about that anymore. I have to talk about something else.

Anyway, slowly over 20 years, I started seeing that my ability to predict the future, how poor it was. And then, you know, Gil, maybe you don't need to do that as much. I trusted the predictions. I trusted something that tended to be void of real value. And so after 20 years, slowly becoming familiar with this, then I started to stop planning so much. I was more willing to show up to things and just discover and find out what's happening now.

So by having you ask the question, what are you trusting now that's not really working? Maybe we'll speed that process up a little bit for you. So you don't have to wait 20 years to slowly, slowly have it dawn on you and, okay, that's how it is. And then what can you trust? And the chances are that what you can trust has no monetary value. So that makes it less interesting. You know, that's not safe. Just being trusting my body, trusting my mindfulness.

So I hope these words this morning that I'm giving just now encourages you to kind of go do some reflection, some consideration, some thinking about this topic of what you trust and what is the, what's not wise to trust and what is wise to trust. And may that help you be more settled and calmer and, and more resilient in how you meet the challenges of this life. Thank you.