

## Buddhist Meditation: Insight (5 of 7)

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So today I'd like to continue on this, what's what has become a series. I hadn't thought about this when I started this series, but there's a certain progression in the talks. And again, the progression of the talk is to describe some of the basic, the basic unfolding of the practice of mindfulness, and how it ties to the practice of concentration. So I talked about those of you weren't here. I talked a bit about mindfulness, of mindfulness practice as understood in our tradition. And then I talked about concentration, and some of the ways that concentration, fact practice, unfolds, and how it relates to mindfulness.

And today's theme is to talk about insight. Insight is the name we have in our center, the Insight Meditation Center. And it's meant this kind of a translation of *vipassanā*. The Pāli word *vipassanā* comes from the word, yes, what comes from the word *passana*, which means to see. And *vi* is the prefix. *Vi* is sometimes taken to mean different things.

It's often used in Pāli as an emphatic prefix to emphasize something. So, you know, seeing with umph, a seeing, a—so it becomes sometimes in English clear seeing, especially in some special way. Am I a special seeing, or clear seeing, or unique seeing, or so? You know, this is what we do. We aim for insight in when we are practising mindfulness, and insight has to do with seeing something. So understanding something really deeply.

And then there's a—it's *sīla*, a bit vague exactly what we pose not supposed to mean. Besides being insight, then it belongs to a kind of a class of what can be called spiritual states of mind or qualities of mind that, in one other part of that class, is mindfulness. Part of it is insight. And but also has to do with wisdom. It overlaps with wisdom and or discernment to be discerning. So when we start in, mindfulness gears up, and mindfulness gets strong, and then mindfulness is coupled with strong concentration.

As the practice goes along, may first sit down to meditate. When you're new to all this, your mind is probably all over the place. A lot of what the practice has to do is reigning in the mind, bringing the mind back and back and back. So the mind is not something that keeps wandering off and therefore being unuseful. But the mind is something it stays put and is therefore useful. In a language that we don't use very much here in the West, maybe in the West. Maybe the association of this kind of language is not favourable.

But in the teachings of the Buddha, he talks a lot about taming the mind. So you have this wild, uncontrollable mind, and so you're taming the mind and tamed mind, so that the contrast is sometimes given in the discourses. It is between a wild elephant and a tamed elephant. And when the elephant is tamed, it's really useful. And the example is given is you can take the tamed elephant, and like the king or the soldiers have these warriors elephants, and they can go be taken into battle, and there can be all these sounds of battle going around, and arrows flying, and the tame elephant will stay tamed, will stay disciplined, and stay calm in the midst of battle.

So the idea of a tamed mind is a mind which will stay disciplined and stay calm, stay balanced, no matter what's happening and around us. And that kind of mind is said to be a useful mind, a mind that can be used for something. If we start reacting very strongly, and the mind's already run away. Before we run away, then our mind of presence of mind is not there to kind of deal with the situation in a good way. So a big part of the practice of mindfulness begins with learning to hold the mind in the present moment, to keep the mind in the present moment, to be here, to tame the mind. And then once the mind is able to do that and keep the mind in the present moment, then it's a matter of connecting more deeply to this present moment experience.

And concentration is a strong, very important part of that, where the mind has a stillness or a steadiness in it that it can see very clearly what's here. And the analogy I like to use that of a telescope. If you can look at some star up in the space or something far away with a big telescope, and you're holding it, holding it in your hands, it's going to wobble so kind of hard to you hold it still, but you put a the telescope on a tripod, and then it still, you can kind of focus on something in the distance. So the same thing with the mind. With the mind, if the mind is really stable, then you can see much more penetratingly than if the mind is not so stable. But part of the function of concentration, as I mentioned, I think the last couple of weeks is concentration practice also is a cleansing of them.

That cleanses the mind doesn't simply steady the mind or balance the mind, but it also purifies the mind. And if something happens as the mind gets more still, more and more steadied,

that the forces of agitation, forces of restlessness, distraction in the mind become lessen, in lesson. And those forces of agitation and restlessness are often called hindrances, and or sometimes called defilements. There is a lot of different names for different kinds of broad ways of talking about a kind of the dirt of the mind. What keeps the mind clouded over? What keeps the mind filters on the mind? I can't see very clearly.

And part of the process of this concentration mind forms of concentration both is it involves a purification practice, and all this stuff gets cleansed from the mind. And if you think of the mind like a telescope, again, as a lens, if the lens is not clean and clear, then you can't see very well through it. So he has to kind of clean the dust from it then. So a very important function of concentration practice is this purification practice. Really cleanse what's going on. Another important part of concentration practice is an effort sooner or later to bring a sense of well being, a deep sense of well being that's, for many people, not comparable to any kind of well being you can have in ordinary on life well being.

No matter what kind of great success, a great kind of worldly experience you might have, it doesn't compare with the tremendous sense of well being and stability that can come from concentration practice. And so with that condense of well being, then there can be a willingness sometimes to take the next step, go deeper into the mind, grow deeper into the process of letting go. Whereas if you don't have that well being, it might seem very frightening to let go. It might seem very bland, or very kind of nihilistic, or something to go into a deeper kind of challenges a spiritual life has to give. You know, they talk sometimes, but in a dark night of the soul kind of experiences. There can be very challenging times, and any kind of spiritual discipline, and it can be the kind of dark nights at times.

I think any spiritual practice that warrants the name spiritual should challenge you in some very, very deep way, so deeply that at times you feel like the very foundation of your life. The very kind of way in which you understand yourself and the world around you is being shook up and shaken. Now, it's a lot easier to be shaken up that way or be challenged in that way if you have this kind of sense of well being, stability, and well being inside that carries you through the difficult times. And another function of concentration practice is to provide that sense of well being. So when the concentration is strong enough, and as I said, different teachers will emphasize the need for having different levels of concentration, there are teachers who teach what's called sometimes is called the dry path.

And the dry path is the path of only teaching mindfulness or reposing, without doing any kind of conscious emphasis on concentration or cultivating concentration practice. And it's called dry because the consent when you do the concentration path, when you only do that

or completely do that, is called the wet path because it's so full of joy. All the joy is kind of wet, and a *vipassanā* is dry. So then, you know, one wants the dry path now, right? You want the wet, dry, and brittle. But some teachers emphasize just doing *vipassanā* without any emphasis on concentration at all, and all the concentration you need will follow.

In the wake of doing the diligent mindfulness practice, just staying present, noticing what's happening here in a very diligent way, the mind does get concentrated, and whatever concentration you need will come along. Other teachers will say, No. First you have to do a really dumb, serious phase of practice that's only focusing concentration practice. And once you have developed a very strong steadiness and stillness of the mind, then you can then you switch over to do the *vipassanā* practice, the insight practice. That's there's two types in a third type, our teachers who say the two should be integrated all long, yet we should have both mindfulness and concentration developing both at the same time. But in an integrated approach, you're still looking for a very deep level of concentration, but you're not kind of separating it two out, one first and then the other one later.

But actually, is a way in which they cannot work together. So when, in some way or other, when mindfulness is coupled with concentration, when there's enough concentration, then the mindfulness begins to reveal things, that opens up the path to liberation, opens up the world for us in new ways. And that, so it fancies, I like the word revelation. Mindfulness involves revelation because they do of revelation. Not that someone out there, some enemy, God, or someone can reveal something to you began to hear voices, but rather that the revelation has to do with its something you can make happen. It's not something you can plan to make happen.

But at some point, when the mindfulness construction is strong enough, certain things get shown to you or appear in its own time and place. It's going its own when it's ready, or when the practice is ready. Then the reality that's showing itself in new ways to you that get them is not obvious in ordinary street consciousness. So we talk about insight. So what are the insights that we can see? So what are things we start discovering as the practice gets deeper?

There's a whole range of things that could qualify as insight. Things that we see, and perhaps anything that we understand for the first time or understand deeply, can be called an insight. And so people see it when they have a lot of insight here in the post proton psychological West. It's not uncommon for a lot of people to have psychological insights when they meditate, and they said they start understanding themselves is understanding how the psychology works here. Nothing wrong about that. And sometimes it's very freeing and very helpful to see that, to realize certain patterns of why we do something, to realize, you know, sometimes it has to

do with memories from the past pop up.

Or we see the mind going round and round around one same themes over and over again, and we make psychological connections: Oh, because of X I do Y. Because I want people to like me so much. I am always saying, Please, well, that's an insight. Why? No, I didn't know. I said please all the time. And now, no, not only do I see, I say please all the time, but I notice why. So there's an insight kind of what women psychological insight, and these can be very helpful to people.

The problem is there a danger? Maybe not the problem, the danger which the psychological insight are. Maybe I can think of two. One is that is because they are. For some people, their psychology of self, their individual, in individualising psychology that defines who they are, is the be all and end all of who they are. They think that our whole sense of who they are and who they were to be in the world, their happiness, is tied to their psychology. And so they are constantly psychoanalysing themselves, constantly kind of rearranging the furniture in the mind and so they don't. And in doing that, they don't take it beyond a psychological level. The psycho, this the psychological level that's biographical, has to do with things that are unique to you.

Another way of saying what the talking of the psychological insight is biographical insight that is unique to you. When I was five, my parents did X. Somebody else's parents did that when they were five. So they didn't, you know, that didn't kind of set those conditions into place. And it can be very helpful to realize what my parents did X when I was five. Therefore I do Y now. It's something. It's unique to you, perhaps. So it's biographical insight. And some people will just stay swimming in that biographical world, the maze of bio biography, autobiography, and never really see the way out.

And there's a way in which people can think they're always solving some problems, always having some realization, and it is something. But it's kind of like you're trapped inside a box that you never get out of. And so at some point, the practice has to go beyond the biographical or go beyond the psychological. And for some people, that's a very big step to make, because the sense of self, the kind of the narcissism or the sense of concern about self, is so deeply embedded, and so reinforced sometimes by society that there's no sense. It doesn't feel safe to step outside, or just seems blank outside of that. Why would you? It doesn't have to do with me, and so to step outside of me in the usual way is a very important part of the practice.

And for some people, that's where the practice starts becoming frightening when they realize you have to step out of a normal understanding of who you are. Some people, that's what

they're hoping for. They're just so tired of themselves, have the usual understanding. But then finally they get to the edge where to see the possibility of stepping beyond, and they want to pull back, I don't know. I want that. So anyway, some point, the practice has to go beyond the psychological. And then there's a whole series of things, again, that we can start understanding or seeing.

While the tradition talks a lot about the *ata* early, a kind of—No, it's always early, but tradition talks about being early and early, a kind of insight. It is an understanding about causality, cause, and effect. So you see that there's a cause and effect relationship to how things occur to us, that there isn't a spontaneous conception, immaculate conception in the mind. It isn't that suddenly you have a thought, Just where that comes from, just like that must have been in a spontaneous, miraculous conception. You notice, you just everything arises because of causes and conditions. And so you start seeing the causal connections between things.

You notice that. You can notice that you have a certain thought, and your shoulders tighten up a little bit, and you see there's a connection between your body and experience of your body, and certain thoughts you have. And then you might notice also that goes the other direction. You note a certain relaxation of the body, and with that relaxation, it changes the quality of the mind. So starting to see that there's a cause and effect relationship between things, it's very important. And when you start seeing that everything is a chain of cause and effect, it can also be a little bit frightening or disorienting, because if it's all cause and effect, one cause after another, then where am I in that? Where's a self in that?

You know, the one I'm supposed to be in charge and be responsible, and here suddenly I just—it's all a series of cause and effect. And so it can be very interesting to have that insight and see, and it's kind of like putting a magnifying glass at our experience. My teacher in Burma, he loved to make the analogy from a distance. You might see like a long black line on the sidewalk. It just seems like a solid black line, but if you get really close up to it, you see it's a row of ants, and it's ers, and it's segmented. It's not continuous, but it's segmented black things. But they look like them, you know, from a distance. They seem like a line. Or another image that of we take a torch, and you spin it around in the dark, and fast enough, it looks like a man in a circle. But you know, it's not a circle, and just that's the way the eye constructs it, because it's going so fast.

So normally how we experience things is little is not so accurate. We see things as more continuity, more solidity than is actually there. And so, as the mindfulness gets deeper, we start seeing more of the segmented or the detailed qualities of how things arise and pass. And then we start—one of the things we start noticing as the cause and effect relationships be-

tween things, especially the causes that are between the mind and the body. And it goes on. We see the consequences of our intentions, the consequences of how we speak and what we do. And we can see kind of the consequences, see the results much more clearly. And it's, as some people report, it is not so mysterious any more. What's happening to them, because it just seems very clear that things are conscious, kind of following this pana causal nexus.

It doesn't mean that we're the victims of a chain of cause and effect. What it means is that we can actually start engaging that and changing it for in wise ways. So part of the insight, another aspect of insight, our mind strong mindfulness is seeing what is skilful and what is not, seeing where the choices are of how we can act, and seeing that some choices are wise and some not wise, seeing that if I do, if I lie and steal and kill and, you know, deceive people, that it has certain kinds of consequences which are detrimental to my own psychological and spiritual health. If I am generous, or am kind, or speak nicely, speak truthfully, then it has beneficial consequences. And so even though it's everything's cause and effect, there can also be our contribution to that kind of stream of cause and effect. And we can take some responsibility for that stream, and luckily we can, because then you can actually take the stream of your life and begin moving in a direction that's more useful. It's kind of like our life, the unexamined life, is as a stream, is momentum going in a certain direction. As we bring the mindfulness to examine it, we can actually take the stream and direct it in a new direction, and directions that are more to our liking, are more appropriate or more helpful for us.

So part of the What's the Insight? part of the practice is to not only see the cause and effect relationship between things, but see where we have some ability to go in there and move things in certain directions. And now, sometimes we move things slowly, sometimes we make big changes in, make suddenly from one day to the next, you can make dramatic differences in how we behave and how we speak and how we see ourselves. And sometimes just by noticing that we can't take responsibility or being inspired to take responsibility, I've known people who woke up somehow in practice and realize that they've spent a lifetime of blaming other people, of being or being a victim, and hanging on to the victim world, or the wound, or the idea that I'm suffering me, and then realizing, Wait a minute, I don't have to do that. Where did I get that idea? And they just kind of saw through it, and then they didn't stop doing it. Isn't that a nice story? Then it sometimes it's like a—this no tide analogy is, sometimes I give an idea of a magic trick. If you see a magician doing a magic trick, no matter how, it can be fascinating to watch this amazing trick over and over again. I mean, it's pretty amazing to watch. The magician saw someone in half, right? That's pretty good. So, you know, it keeps

your interest, or you know, but then you see the trick, see how the trick is done, and then you want. You've seen how the trick is done, you lose interest. That's not so interesting any more.

Recently my son has a little kids book, Little Kids Magazine, and for the first time in my life I learned how you saw someone in half, how it's done. He had a diagram, if you know the box, and I have no idea how they did it, but now I know. So if any of you want to come to my house, and so now if I see this thing of sawing, the person's half trick you don't like kind of boring. So the same thing with the mind. You can understand something how the mind works, and suddenly you can be freed from this, you know, very quickly. But sometimes the change we make can be very slow. And sometimes it can be very wise to set an intention towards making a change in your life, and not expecting it to be overnight, but to set in a direction that will bear fruit and strength, and over time.

So just as if, for example, if you find yourself getting in trouble a lot with your speech, you find your speech is not very helpful to you or to others. Some people make the intention to practise wise speech, and it can be hard to kind of do that overnight. You suddenly can change a whole lifetimes of patterns of how you speak, but having an intention, sitting self in that direction, and looking for the opportunities of trying. Remember, as often as you can, start studying your speech. And slowly, over time, your speech might improve more and more and become what we call wise speech or right speech. So then, as the mindfulness gets stronger. Another form of insight that can happen, and this is what we call what I call an insight with a capital I because these are the insights which the deposit traditions put the most emphasis on. These are the core insights, and these are the insights into things which are considered universal. So they're not biographical. They're not unique to who you are, not your own particular psychology and autobiography, but they have to do with things that are universal, true for everybody.

So the insight into universal aspects of our life, or universal aspects of our experience of being a human being, and these are usually called the three characteristics, and then they are called the insight into impermanence, the insight into unsatisfactoriness, and the insight into not self. And all three of those needs some explaining. The insight into impermanence is something that, in all, as far as I could tell, all spiritual traditions that I know, of all religions that I know, and all cultures I know, I seem to know, have some emphasis on impermanence. It's kind of obvious insight, you know you can't step in the same stream twice. We learned from ancient Greece, and so it's not unique to Buddhism to know, realize that our life is permanent, and that to live a wise life you have to contend with and understand the imperma-

nent life we live.

When the insight into impermanence is an insight with a capital I. It's not just noticing that people die and we get old, or our cars get old and change, and not obvious things. But it has to do when the mind focuses concentration is very strong, so that the mind no longer has a tendency to settle anywhere or to fixate on anything. So I'm thirsty, which I am. A little bit. I might be thirsty, and then I might be constantly kind of glancing down at that wall. I like a glass of water, kind of concerned about Make sure it stays there. Make sure none of you take it from me, you know. I kind of know I'm fixated on it somehow, and so the mind has this kind of fixation with the glass. In very deep mindfulness practice, when the concentration is strong, the mind doesn't fixate on anything.

But actually, its very mind is very fluid, and without fixating on anything, doesn't in some ways, doesn't settle. It doesn't freeze. It doesn't reify anything, doesn't reify or solidify things through our concepts. And because the mind has this kind of very soft but very penetrating ability to see. What it begins seeing is behind the illusion of fixidity, the illusion of permanence that we often live by, live with. There are moment to moment experiences of life in the very kind of precise details. Some teachers will talk about the cellular level, or atomic level, or something very deep level is it? All our experience is arising and passing very quickly, very quickly. And nothing in our experience in deep meditation has any solidity to it, or any permanence to it, any constancy to it. It doesn't stay constant, but it's constantly arising and passing.

This is very helpful insight. Sometimes very obvious that it's helpful. I've had situations where I fall into the illusion, the delusion of permanence. A common one would be, I'm feeling kinosad or depressed or bumped out, This is it. I'll be this way forever. That's it. You know, this is it. And I've had that at home with my kids, you know, where the kids are going through something, and I, Oh no, this is it can be this way forever, you know? They be yelling and screaming, bouncing up the wall. This is the way it is. Then I remember once when I was falling into the delusion of permanence with my kids. My wife looked at me and said, We're having one of those days. And then that kind of broke the illusion. I saw them. I saw that magic, how the magic was done, and I thought, It's just one of those days. Tomorrow'll be a different day. So, you know, that's one form of delusion of permanence. We start seeing things being impermanent. Then it can break up that solidity, and can be very helpful.

It's helpful sometimes with physical pain, because there's a very strong tendency you know. I don't know what percentage, but a huge percentage of physical pain is psychological in nature. You know, has to do with our interpretation of the sensations of the body, our feet.

A lot of us fears. The more fear a person has, the greater the pain is. The less fear there is, the less pain they feel. And So the Indra: You know your pain until you go to the doctor, and the doctor tells you something, and then pain goes away. And I don't know all the reasons for that, but some of it has to do with the fact that maybe the fear has been lessened. So the delusion of permanence is often applied to pain. But if you can get the mind soft and not interpreting or conceptualizing the experience of pain, and you bring the attention very carefully into the pain, the tremendous detail. What you'll see is that pain is not solid. The pain is arising and passing and flux, its lowest intense vibration. And it's a whole different game to be present for pain. If you feel it is arising and passing of vibration, then if you see it is something that's solid and permanent there.

But one of the very interesting things about seeing everything arising and passing very closely, very, very in great detail, very, very kind of fine way is that it's very hard to cling to things which are rising and passing. It's kind of like, if you try to cling to water. Now you have it, you know. You put your hand in a site, a waterfall, and you put your hand in the waterfall and grab the waterfall and pull with it with you. You know the water just goes out through your fingers and the waterfall doesn't come with you, right? So you try to grab sand. You now, the sand just kind of pours through your hands. So the same way, when your experience seems impermanent, then the attempt to grab it, hold on to things which are constantly shifting and changing, are not going to work. And that can be, again, another phase in practice. People get very afraid because we always want to have some place. We want to stand on something. We want to hold on to something. We want to rely on some sense of self that's permanent and reliable. We've spent, you know, some so much because people have spent, you know, thousands of thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars on therapy to have a strong sense of self. And, you know, you see all that money disappearing in front of your eyes. You know, I can't find any in there. It's all times it rising and falling and disappearing. I can't hold on to it. So you know, it's very frightening and very frustrating, a variety of reasons. And it's very important to learn to relax and let go of the clinging around self or clinging to the concepts and ideas. And so it's harder to cling. When we see things being deeply and permanent, there can be some still that remains, but it's harder. And part of the function of this deep skinned seeing is it allows us to loosen up a very deeply held clinging, the kind of clinging that's got a latent kind of so deep we don't even know why we cling or where it is, and that you not care. The Part The function of deep Buddhist meditation practice is to get the attention, your awareness, down into that part of the mind that in the West may be sometimes called subconscious or unconscious, latent, the part that cannot really deeply. You don't normally see how it operates and functions. So

the impermanent thing, seeing impermanence, is very beneficial for this process.

Then sometimes the insight into unsatisfactoriness and this is the idea that if all things, everything, is arising and passing, then it's unsatisfactory to take it as a permanent self, for it's unsatisfactory to cling to it, hold on to it, or depend on it in some absolute way. And the sense that all our experience is unsatisfactory for the purposes of lasting happiness. Permanent happiness is considered a very important insight, and it's considered to be a very mature one, no mature thing, not to kind of put all our eggs in one basket, and not to depend on our bank account, you know, my bank, and managed to get a good nest egg behind me. And I know now that's going to make me happy. And you know, you know, I don't expect it's got. I don't really expect it's likely to happen. But I wouldn't. I wouldn't be too surprised if I woke up one morning and found that all the banks decided to close shop or something, you know, and all the money nest, e.g. You know, just where is it? It's gone. And part of the reason why I kind of think it's not completely unlikely is it's happened sometimes in commerce. And it happened when I was in Burma, where the Burmese government declared overnight that much of the currency, the paper bills they had, were now no longer valid what you mean. You can't do that. I mean, until then, I thought money is real. Money is like money. You know, money is like real. It is more real than anything, right? Then and you can depend on money has got trust. We depend on it to it. And so, you know, something it was really you could count on. And to wake up and be told when you woke up in the morning, Oh, by the way, all your bills in your wallet no longer, you know? And the Burmese money is not even as good quality as paper as that toilet paper. So it wasn't so bad for me because I hadn't converted that much money. But a part of the reason the government did it was that they were Burmese people who didn't trust the banks, which were run by the government, and so they had stored all their money under the mattresses. But also they were using it for smuggling, and smuggling was big time in Burma, so they were go outside the bank system so they could, and so they were. Part of the rational was the kind of get those smugglers, and and so just, you know, stay here. Rather than take all their money away, their ill gained wealth away, you just declare that their money is invalid. So I don't know if you know that'll happen here in America, but you. So the idea of permanence, I do think we can rely on things permanent now, for permanent happiness is ultimate delicately. This is it. I finally found the right relationship. This person is going to do it, you know. I am sure this is the right one. I'll be happy now. I'll be happy forever. The delusion of permanence has set in, and then eventually you'll learn that you know successful relationship is something that's recreated every day. You have to make that new intention discover it every day. You can't rest on your laurels, and this is how it goes, fixed and done. So the key, so very important insight, is the unsatisfactoriness of all

things in order to provide you with lasting and permanent happiness. It's not a negation of things. It's not saying that things can provide happiness and well being in their own way, but, you know, it's a very mature thing to not give ultimate dependence on things.

And then one in one things we don't want to, things we don't give ultimate dependence on is some permanent sense of self, the one of things. It does the delusion of permanence also applies to self, and I know that somehow I am the one who continues through time and or some fixed self concept. And this is a big topic in Buddhism, is a very important one. But this is also one of the important insights, the insight into not self, into it. Nothing in our experience qualifies as a permanent, stable, in control self. So with nothing, no thing as being ultimately reliable, and no sense of self which is also ultimately dependable, what else is there? And what else? With the other thing, there is, is there some part of reality which is not a thing? Everything is a very vague, untechnical word. There is, partly, there is a dimension of consciousness or dimension of the world or something is very hard to talk about, which is unconditioned, which is uncreated. And that unconditioned experience is what the is. The ultimate insight which the mindfulness is trying to go towards is, can we see or experience that part of life which is unconditioned? And to have a taste or experience of the Unconditioned is to have a taste of freedom and liberation. The Value Part of the value of seeing the three characteristics is that seeing it very deeply sets the stage for the mind to let go of its clinging in such a profound way that the mind opens up or drops into this unconditioned dimension of life.

So with that. That's a good sagata. Next week's talk, we may be all talk about liberation since we covered insight to day. So do you have any questions or comments or confusions about what I've said? Yes, Rainbow, you refer to that as a third thing, and no self, and sometimes not self thing. I just lost it. Yes, sometimes it's called no self, and sometimes not self. And the distinction is very important, though. Some people say maybe it's, you know, a splitting hairs. The idea of no self is the idea. It's often translated the word *anattā*. Mister Pāli word sometimes in English translated as no self and and and is popularly understood that Buddha, the Buddha taught there is no self. The Buddha never said that. What the Buddha said is that not self characterizes the things of the world. The thing, the things, whatever it is, hints of the world, including you, that no matter what you can point to, that thing can be said accurately to be not self in some ultimate, permanent way. That's permanently who I am. So the not self teaching. It should be, it should be translated as not self, because all always qualifying some things, all describing some thing which is not self. If you say, There is no self, that's a kind of absolute statement. There is no self. And then you say, Well, are you going to peep for me?

You know, the or I'm the one who peace for myself and, you know, I'm not self then. So then and we get so confused. The whole teaching of no self is so confusing and is not accurate, is not what the Buddha taught. So I don't think that makes sense. So some of you, even more confused in me, were when you came here today. But that's the distinction.

Yes, nāma Yes, *anattā* becomes *anattā*. *Anattā* means no soul. Yes, that's not. That's a very big debate going on. That in Hinduism, Vedānta believes in soul. Yes, and where Buddhism said no soul, and the question arises, if there is no soul, what reincarnates? Because Buddha believed in the incarnation, right? So how do you answer that question? So it might, you know, it's here in the West, the *anattā* or not man is usually translated as not self or no self, and it might be much more accurate to translate as no soul. But I think that, and in fact, you say, Ananda, who was a great Burmese teacher who was teaching in Half Moon Bay, he that's the way he translated it. Was no soul. And then you don't get confused with his oldest Western psychological understanding of self, and building up a strong sense of self, and, you know, having a self and all that, because it's a soul. Might be more accurate, because if you look back at what the Buddha was negating, it's probably closer to the concept of our Western concept of soul than our Western concept of self comes of some kind of kernel, absolute, essential kernel that is permanent in every abiding or something. So the question is, what if it gets reincarnated if there's a First of all, there is no The Buddha didn't say there is no self. So some people say if there is no self, then what gets reincarnated? The Buddha didn't say there was no self, so that's not an issue for the Buddha. What he said is that my body cannot be qualified as my self. My feelings, my emotions, don't qualify as my self, the self, the soul. My eyes are not the soul. My perceptions are not the soul or the core self. My mind is not the self, or this core self, or the soul, my intentions, my consciousness. So all the things you can point to that is not so. What do they get reincarnated? Buddhists don't like to use the word reincarnated. They talk about rebirth, and they say that things there, there's a kind of rebirth, which is a kind of continuity that continues beyond death. And that continuity is said to be a continuity of consciousness. Even though that consciousness cannot be said to be the self, there is an integrity to that flow of consciousness over several lifetimes, over many lifetimes, infinite lifetimes. And the way that the continuity is sometimes described, if you try to get into the physics of how that continuity happens between lifetimes is that it's a momentum that's got set in motion, that continues. So it's like waves in the ocean. If a big wave gets formed in Japan and gets sent east towards California, you can actually watch the waves moved, and you can say all the waves moving east towards us. But if you actually look at the particles of water in that wave, the part no particles are moving across the ocean. What's happening is the particles of water are going up and down, and they're vibrating in. They bump into

the ones next to them, and they go up and down. And just like the wave that they have in stadiums, there's no hands moving across the stadiums. But you look. It looks like motion. So there is a cause and effect relationship that moves through time. And so a same thing with consciousness. That consciousness, not a poor, permanent thing, but it's more like a wave. It's a vibration or particle that's vibrating, and it is. It is a spin, so that when we die, then the conscious has a certain spin, and then somehow it bumps into another consciousness that's just about to get born, and then adds that spin to that. It's not a very satisfying explanation to me, but that's the best I could come up with to try to explain the physics of how Buddhists believe in rebirth without depositing it. There's some soul that's moving through.

So a last question here. You said that it goes to another consciousness, so it means that too. Then what you said that after, because that consciousness goes to another consciousness, I was on to something like that. Yet it's very hard now try to look into this. And I don't think Buddhism has a very and I might be wrong about this. So, you know, hold what I say lightly. But the physics or the mechanics of how rebirth happens, and how the continuity from one life to another is supposed to happen, it's not something that's a the science. Buddhism doesn't have a science behind it. So I can't tell you exactly. No one really knows. As far as I can tell. But the best way I understand the Buddhist concept of it, it's more like this idea of the wave. There's a spin that gets happened on that. Consciousness also isn't permanent in rising and passing. It's not permanent consciousness. So because the conscious is not permanent, it's a rising of passing is kind of spin, like a particle that's vibrating a certain way, and somehow that spin or that vibration moves, er goes into a new life. Well, you know, when you do, when you die, then upon the rebirth of that, they say, the rebirth of that consciousness. But at some point, that's so what is about that? The mechanisms. We don't know, but I'm suggesting it's kind of like at the moment you die. In the caravan tradition, there's a spin in your consciousness, and that's that spin. That momentum doesn't just fade away, but it has to go somewhere, like an energy. And so that energy somehow is the energy, or the spin of that energy is somehow translated or moved over to the next life. Now, is it? Is it just because it's bumping up to the new consciousness, which is blank and kind of vibrating a certain way. And that vibration in contains the sum total of the of your karma. So you, all the intentional actions of your life, are stored in that spin, and that affect how you're going to be born in the future. So for me, it's not a very satisfying explanation, and maybe some day there'll be science behind it. But it's a pretty basic teaching. And in classic Buddhism, this idea of rebirth, that there's a rebirth. And the question is, we often say, you know, you know. So if you get reborn as an earthworm, is it that you, a person, happens to be reborn as an earthworm for a life as an earthworm or as a person. Now, are you actually the rebirth of an earthworm in

a previous life? You is a reborn earthworm. Who are we? I don't know the term. Now, in this deep practice of insight, that's the topic of today's insight practice, for the most part. This issue of rebirth and a and past and future lives is of no interest at all, doesn't have any role to play, does in very deep insight. Well, I shouldn't say that complains clutter. For some people, it does in the strength biography of the story, the story of the Buddha's life, the experience of his enlightenment. The night he was sitting under the Bodhi tree getting enlightened. Part of his experience that led to his enlightenment or built towards it was a memory of past lives. And so then you can't really take out the idea of Buddha, of rebirth, from the stories of the Buddha's enlightenment, because it was such an intricate part of that story, as were told, as is told to us. So it's But for the most part, the way I was introduced and taught the posture practice in Asia, there was never any attempt at all to try to teach or argue about rebirth. I was taught that the posture practice in Asia was really independent of the teachings of rebirth that existed in Asian Buddhism. And I've been quite content to leave it that way. And when people ask me questions, I'll do my best to try to represent a tradition, but it doesn't really interest me that much. Does it? I can see that I see hate practice can function quite well without much emphasis on this part of Buddhism. And by saying that, I'm sure it can be. I'm sure I'll get in trouble. So So I hope this was understandable enough to day and come back next week and we'll do something with liberation.