What's In the Way Is the Way

Dharma talk by Diana Clark

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Good evening. Welcome.

There can be this way, when we're meditating or just in daily life, that we might have this idea—whether it's explicit or implicit—like, "Dang it, if only this thing wasn't here, then everything would be fine."

"If only the neighbor's dog wasn't barking." [Laughter] "If only this discomfort in the knee wasn't here." "If only I had a better boss." "If only my relationships were perfect."

We have these ideas like, "If only this little difficulty—or big giant difficulty—weren't there, then everything would be fine."

But there's this way that if we're able to meet whatever this perceived difficulty is with presence, with awareness, with attention—instead of the way we often have this subtle hostility like, "Dang it, if only this thing weren't here. Go away"—then what's in the way becomes the way. We might not even notice we have this subtle aversion or hostility towards it. But if we can put that down and just meet it with presence as best we can, then the perceived obstacle becomes the path.

It is the path, in fact. It can be a trap to think that we just have to get rid of this "something" in order for our practice to unfold the way we would like our meditation practice or life to unfold. Instead, actually, it is the path. It is the practice to meet difficulties that we meet along the way. Hindrances don't block the path; they are the path.

If we want to develop mindfulness or concentration or *mettā*[1]—whatever your meditation practice is—then of course, in order to develop or cultivate or strengthen or learn about it, you have to learn about everything that "gets in the way." Learning about what gets in the way is how you find the way. It is the way.

I'm hoping to unpack this a little bit. But one thing that might be helpful—I appreciate Joseph Goldstein, one of the esteemed elders of this tradition, one of the people who brought it from Asia to the West. He describes practice as making the mind our friend. He's pointing to this shift in relationship where we kind of think we have to beat the mind into submission sometimes, or we have to get rid of certain things that the mind likes to do. But he's talking about, "No, it's about making the mind our friend." It is shifting our relationship to our experience.

So we could say practice is about seeing, again and again, that those very states, those very experiences we feel like we don't really want to have, are in fact the exact way forward. They are the on-ramps to more freedom, on-ramps to more peace and ease.

One way this works—and I'll talk about the hindrances. Some of you will be familiar with this word, "hindrance." Traditionally, it points to this group of five energies, mind states, or experiences that the Buddha talked about. I appreciate that this is something the Buddha talked about thousands of years ago. So countless numbers of individuals have had these experiences since then. These experiences that "hinder"—quote-unquote—our mindfulness or our concentration or our being present. I'm not sure that "hinder" is the right translation of this word, but it's the one that we've inherited.

So some of you will be familiar with this list of five. The traditional order is:

First is sensual desire. This sense of, "Oh, I want more," this kind of leaning in. "I want more of pleasant experiences." Desire alone is not the problem. It's this thinking that just pleasant sense experiences will make us happy. They're not sources of lasting happiness. So leaning in, sense desire.

Leaning away—"Nope, I don't want that"—that's aversion or ill will. That's the second hindrance. This thing of, "Get this away from me. I don't want it."

The third one is often translated as sloth and torpor, which is just kind of this really low energy and sometimes falling asleep. You know that experience. It's not uncommon in my role as a Dharma teacher to be seeing this happening. We all have this, right? Sometimes it's just the end of the day or whatever it is. It's quiet, we close our eyes, and often just drowsiness or sleep arises. So low energy is the third.

High energy is this fourth one, restlessness. This fidgety, "Get me out of here" feeling. Like you just want to run out of here. For me, I often experience that in my arms and legs, like I just got to go somewhere. So that's the fourth one, restlessness.

And the last one is doubt. It's often experienced as this vacillation or hesitation or confusion. Like, "Yeah, I'm not sure. Should I be doing this? Or maybe I should be doing that? Or well, maybe this practice is better? Or I heard this teaching too..." And then we just get stuck and go round and round in circles, not really going anywhere but kind of in an eddy of some sorts.

So these five hindrances, sometimes we could talk about these as weather patterns that arise and pass away. But one way in which we can turn them into "what's in the way is the way" is to notice how, when these weather patterns arise, when they arrive, they color our perception.

It's not just that we have a little bit of desire. It's the way that it really impacts our experiences and how we interpret experiences in ways that we often are not noticing. This is an example

that I've given many times, but it had a big impact on me when I saw that, and I think it clearly demonstrates this.

I was sitting in a retreat, and during the meditation, I was noticing there was a lot of desire coming up. I don't remember exactly what it was, but I can imagine on some of these retreats I'd be designing more comfortable *zafus*[2]—cushions—in my mind. "They really should have a cushion like this or that," because the body starts to hurt after meditating for so long. Or I don't know what it was, but I remember a lot of desire showing up. And then having in my mind, "Oh, this is desire," and being able to just let it soften. And then it would come up again. Sometimes it shows up as a little going forward, or like the chin going up. Sometimes it's a little like this. So the felt sense in the body—maybe it's not even so clear in the mind.

So then I noticed, "Oh, here's desire," and it kind of abated. And then this happened again, and then it abated. And then finally there was a settling down and some really pleasant just calmness, just sitting. And then the bell rang. "Okay. That was an okay sit."

The next thing was lunch. This was before lunch. So I went to the lunch. For those of you who haven't been on retreat, it's a buffet, right? And we stand in line and we have our plates. And I get up to the buffet table. I'm like, "Oh, this looks good. I'm gonna put some of this. Maybe I have a little bit more. Oh, wow. I need this. Absolutely. Put this on." And then the next thing, "Oh, wow. This looks really great. Put this on." And I had this huge amount of food on my plate. Way more than anybody could eat.

And I just hadn't noticed this desire was just showing up as the next thing was food, and I just had all this desire. So there's this way when we have this hindrance, it colors so many things in ways that we don't even recognize. It's like if we have desire, then it almost wants to find things to land on to want. It's fascinating.

Same thing with aversion. If there's a lot of discomfort in the knee or whatever it might be—somebody next to us is breathing too loudly, whatever it might be—then there's a way in which, "Oh yeah, and that's kind of irritating. They shouldn't wear those socks with that outfit. What are they thinking?" The temperature is too hot, it's too cold. You know, all this aversion just shows up. There's this general mind state that gets applied to all these different experiences.

Usually, we're thinking it's the other way. "Those socks are wrong, therefore I'm feeling aversion." "The temperature is wrong, therefore I'm feeling aversion." It's actually going the other way. But we don't notice that. And part of practice is to help notice this. Is to help see that when these hindrances arise, they color our perceptions.

So maybe this notion that these obstacles become the path is that when we believe this coloring of the perceptions... Desire and aversion are the obvious ones. Doubt is one too, where we can just feel like we can't quite come to a decision or find the way forward or land on an

answer. We just kind of feel like, "I don't know," this kind of feeling. We find that showing up in so many areas of our life.

But when we recognize, "Oh yeah, this is desire," then maybe we're on the alert for the way it colors our perception. That there's a way that it's going to influence us, and things are going to be met with this flavor of wanting. Or it's going to be met with the flavor of not wanting if ill will is there. Or if there's a lot of restlessness, maybe there's a way in which things will just feel agitating, just kind of feeding this.

But it's so helpful if we can recognize, "Oh, restlessness is here." And then maybe just remember that it colors our perception. It influences our experiences.

So that's one way that "what's in the way turns out to be the way." Because if we can recognize, "Oh yeah, this colors my perception whenever this is here," then there's a way in which this can open up different perceptions to arise. A different way of interpreting our experience. A different way of recognizing what's happening. And it turns out it doesn't matter so much what this *other* way is. It's more about just recognizing. "Oh, I wonder if actually my perception is being influenced by desire?" "I wonder if my experiences are agitating; maybe it's just because I have a sense of restlessness?" To be sure, some things are agitating too. But to recognize the hindrances present, to remember that it colors our perception—all our perceptions—and then to introduce a little bit of space, a little bit of questioning. "Maybe what I'm perceiving isn't entirely accurate. Maybe there's another way that I could be interpreting this. Maybe there's another way that I could be perceiving this."

And that leads to more freedom. This idea: "There's another way this could be perceived." Even if you don't know what that other way is, just that little space, that little question of "Is there another way?" This is a door to freedom.

So there's this way that not only is it questioning the current perception we're having in so many different things, it's also a way that it can support the sense of freedom because we can notice that the way that it colors our perception often is impacting our view of our self.

Instead of "This is restlessness," it's "I'm restless." And then all this story-making that goes on after this happening. Like, "I'm a restless person." And then this suffering doubles, triples, quadruples, gets bigger and bigger. It starts to turn into, instead of an uncomfortable experience, a whole big story about ourselves getting created. "I'm always restless. I'm never going to calm down. And look at those people over there. They're sitting quietly. They're probably already in the 28th *Jhāna*[3] or something like this. In the 47th level of awakening, clearly. I'm not, though." Or something like this.

So there's this way that not only how we perceive what's "out there," but how we're perceiving ourselves gets impacted by these hindrances. So we could say that the Dharma invites a kinder,

more spacious frame: that these are human energies. This is what it means to be a human, and it's passing through a human system, instead of feeling like it means something about us as individuals.

As I said earlier, I just love this that the Buddha talked about this thousands of years ago. This really highlights how many people—it's countless people—have had these experiences. It's just a human experience. "Sloth and torpor is here." It's different than, "Gosh, I am so drowsy. I'm always drowsy." It's a very different way to just hold our experience.

The Buddha's simple instructions we can find in the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*[4] is just to recognize that a hindrance is happening: sense desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness, and doubt—one of these five.

So there are maybe two general skills we could say then about the hindrances that maybe can have this hinge from which "what's in the way becomes the way." Maybe I'm milking this a little bit too much. Right? "In the way is the way." I just kind of think it's cute. I kind of like it.

So, one: just recognize as best you can when a hindrance is present. Name it if you can. This is a way that maybe makes a little bit more space.

And then, can you change the relationship to it? To change the relationship is to no longer be seeing through the lens, the perception. Maybe you can just recognize, "Oh yeah, it's here."

And there's often a way when we first recognize a hindrance, there's this subtle way in which we say, "Dang it, I wish this weren't here." And that actually is aversion. And so when we recognize that there's this aversion to whatever the hindrance is—often there's aversion to aversion, but there can be aversion to sloth and torpor, aversion to ill will—can we recognize the aversion? And that maybe is the *new* hindrance and just recognize, "Oh yeah, I'm probably seeing many things with aversion now."

So to shift our relationship is to notice most likely there is aversion there, and can we be okay with that aversion? That's just the next hindrance that's shown up.

So maybe I'll just say a little bit about these hindrances.

We could say that desire colors our perception. Can we recognize that or remember this, and then let this recognition maybe let us learn something about the experience?

For example, maybe you're at home meditating or maybe you're here meditating, and maybe just after a few minutes sitting the mind says, "Oh, maybe I should check the phone. Maybe I got that email back from so-and-so, or maybe I'll get an update on something or other."

And there's this way that practicing with sensual desire just highlights that our imagined sources of nourishment—what we think is going to be helpful and supportive, to check our phone and

see if maybe something new or maybe some connection with somebody—we think that this is going to be a source of lasting happiness. Even that is just helpful to see.

And then instead to say, "Oh, can I just stay with this desire? Not check the phone. Recognize that I'm probably having a lot of desire now." But then as best you can, just to stay with it. And then notice, "Oh yeah, there can be some ease and some contentment that can arise just by being with that desire and it not needing to be different."

We're learning something here. That this novelty and connection that we thought would arise by checking our phone—when we *don't* do it, we can see, "Oh yeah, there's a way in which recognizing the desire and just allowing the experience to be there and not wanting it to be different, then a sense of contentment can arise, a sense of sufficiency can arise."

Or let's say that there's this way that ill will has arisen. And there's this way that maybe ill will and aversion sometimes is associated with heat. Sometimes there can be like heat in the face or just heat in the body. And there's this way that it can distort our perception. And then when we're angry, it's easy to believe this storyline of why we're angry. "This person, they shouldn't do that. Those people over there, don't they know? They shouldn't do that." Maybe we're angry at ourselves. "I don't know why I keep on doing this. It's not helpful."

But is there a way that we can remember that our perceptions might be distorted? And even a drop of kindness, a kindness towards recognizing, "Oh yeah, ill will and aversion is here. And I don't have to have aversion to the aversion. I don't have to have ill will to the ill will." And instead, to just meet it.

And then we can notice that if we can meet it as best we can and we're no longer feeding it with more ill will, it starts to calm down. This is the nature of hindrances. When we meet them, not only do they arise, but they also pass away. And then not only is it diminishing, but we're learning something, too. We're learning that we don't have to act out all of our aversion or ill will.

And then it reveals this way in which the mind does kind of tend to contract. Or sometimes if we're annoyed at somebody else, this experience of contracting and "othering"—making... there's a way in which we just turn other people into more like objects. They're just "that person that does that thing." They're not... the fullness of their humanity isn't available there.

So when we can meet the ill will or aversion as best we can with some care—just meet it how it is—we'll notice that it starts to abate because we're no longer fueling it. And we'll also learn about the way in which we treat others, or what's with anger that we start to kind of get disconnected from others and start to think, "I'm angry at this person," instead of recognizing the way in which we are connected and not so different. Other people are humans too. And this way, maybe some care can show up and maybe a wider and more spacious frame can arise.

Or maybe there's dullness, drowsiness, or maybe restlessness—these energy imbalances. Part of the art of practice, part of the art of meditation, is experimenting with different ways, with our amount of effort that we're doing, the amount of energy that we're applying.

And when we recognize, "Oh yeah, there's really not a lot of energy here." Maybe there's a way we can play with: Can that be okay? And can we just get curious and play with this whole notion of what does it feel like to almost fall asleep? And then chances are you will fall asleep, and then chances are you'll have this kind of jerk thing that the body does when you wake up.

This can be fantastic. This can be amazing to learn that, oh, we have these ideas that mindfulness can't follow us into this falling asleep, but it can. It can be really amazing to notice how the hypnagogic, how the images get kind of wavy and the mind starts getting dreamy. So we start to learn that we have these ideas like, "Oh, I can only be mindful here; I can't be mindful there." Instead, we start to learn, "Oh, I can bring this to all parts of my practice."

And this way, it also exposes—if we are noticing the energy imbalances—it probably is showing us some ways in which we can train wise effort, in which we can train how much energy we're putting in towards our meditation.

Also, during one retreat, I had this idea—I don't remember where I got this idea—that I wanted to track the hindrances. I thought it would be helpful. So I very dutifully, as a person who loves graphs and tables and Excel spreadsheets—I love this kind of stuff—I had made this chart. And [snorts] I very discreetly put a little notebook under my *zabuton*[5]. On retreats, you're not really supposed to be doing journaling, but you can take notes.

So the bell would ring at a sitting meditation, and most everybody leaves. I was sitting near the back, and I would wait till the people behind me had left so they wouldn't see. And then I'd just immediately pull my little notebook out. And I had this little chart, and I'd write down the time and then each hindrance on a scale of 1 to 5—how was it?

This turned out to be so helpful, I couldn't believe it. Because it helped me to recognize, "Oh yeah, two sits earlier in the day I had tremendous restlessness, but actually it was only a one this time. And this time this is a four." And I just started to recognize, "Oh yeah, these things are changing. And sometimes they're there and sometimes they're not there."

And then it became also interesting during my meditation to be meditating and say, "Oh, okay, here's desire. It's a three." But even just to say "it's a three" is a way to shift your relationship. It's instead of like, "Oh, I got to get rid of this thing. This is a problem," just to get curious about it and to notice what is the experience of it.

And so there's this way that these "obstacles," quote-unquote, these hindrances—we often are thinking that they have to go away or have to be different. But can we just notice them and can

we shift our relationship with them? And these two movements of noticing and shifting our relationship—we can learn so much about ourselves. We can learn a lot about the nature of meditation. That sometimes maybe just applying antidotes, or just holding the space like, "Yeah, okay, this is what not having a lot of energy feels like," and just feel it and just be with it—and notice that things shift and that if we don't get tangled up with them, that we can just learn and maybe find the greater contentment there.

And then I'll talk a little bit just about this fifth hindrance, doubt. Because I used to sometimes have this feeling like I'm not sure what's happening. Like it'd be a little bit of confusion. And you know this idea: "You're supposed to be mindful of everything." And I had this sense of, "I'm not. I'm just a little confused about what is this? Or getting tangled up: Is this restlessness or is this aversion?" They both have this "up" energy sometimes.

Until a teacher told me this—I can't remember who—but I recognized if I said to myself, "I'm confused," then I wasn't confused. Because I *knew* that I was confused, and that's not confusion. And that was really helpful. Like, "Oh no, that's a moment of clarity right there. I'm not confused. I know that I'm confused. That's not confusion."

So there's this way in which just meeting what was happening just helped me to learn like, "Okay, yep, sometimes confusion happens and it's okay." And it's okay because there's a way in which so many of us have this feeling like, "Well, we need to know everything. We need to know the way forward. We need to know what's happening. We need to understand everything." And then this trying to figure things out and know turns out to be a trap. Then we just get disconnected from our experience and just lost in the mind trying to figure things out. But instead, if we can just be with our experience and learn from what's happening, then what we often perceive is in the way actually is the way.

So maybe that was... I don't know. Sometimes I feel like I'm trying too hard with these. Like, it seemed like a good idea when I was earlier today thinking about this talk, when I have an idea and I stretch it out.

But something that I like about this, though, is that it's a way in which we often disconnect from our practice or disconnect from being present for our lives. Sometimes because there's a way we can kind of feel like, "If only this thing weren't here"—whether this is in meditation or our life. And then there's a way that we kind of maybe are getting a little more passive with our life, or we're not engaging, or we're just feeling overwhelmed and collapsing. Maybe that's the word. We're kind of just collapsing with things because we feel like that other person has to be different or we have to be different.

But this practice is not asking us to be anybody other than who we are. And it's trying to show us that we can meet everything. We can meet everything. And I would say especially those

things we don't want to meet—it is absolutely the way forward. And that is a practice, right? It's a habit often of just bouncing off of the things we don't want and avoiding them.

But absolutely the way forward, as best we can in any setting—whether it's in meditation or in daily life—can we meet those things exactly that we don't want to meet with presence? Maybe that's all that's needed. Maybe that's all that's available, just to recognize and say, "Yep, a lot of aversion is here right now." There's a way just recognizing it helps to kind of provide enough space that maybe we don't get carried away with it.

So I'll stop there and open it up for some comments and questions. Thank you.

Q&A

Participant: What you talked about reminded me of 12-step groups. I have some experience with that path, and it's like your addiction is your practice.

Diana: Nice. Nice. Very much so. Perfect. Thank you, Matt.

Participant: Thanks for the talk. When I was hearing the talk, I was making the connection between the hindrances and conditioned thinking. And I don't know if there's a natural connection, but it's giving me kind of an idea of how to be more curious. Like if a hindrance comes up, for example, "I'm averse to something," I can be curious about where does that come from in my conditioned thinking. So I don't know if the suttas say anything about that or these are just two very different concepts. But that's one of the things it made me think of.

Diana: Yeah. Thank you. Can you say a little bit more what you mean by "conditioned thinking"?

Participant: Yeah. Or maybe that's not the right phrase, but the idea that from early on we have certain patterns, thoughts, or behaviors that we didn't necessarily control. So they're just kind of applied. And it made me think about when we have hindrances, we can be averse to something or we can have desires for things, and those may come from these conditioned patterns. And so I thought it might be interesting as a meditation practice to be curious about, you know, not just noticing, "Oh, there's a hindrance here," but "Where might this come from?"

Diana: Oh, I see. Well, I can appreciate it's not fantastic to recognize things don't just magically appear necessarily, right? That they're due to a process. But then we could spend our whole meditation period going like, "Oh yeah, I'm averse to this because there's that time I fell off my bike when I was eight and then there was that time that my uncle said this." And then we could just spend all our time kind of going down memory lane or trying to figure it out.

But I think what you're pointing to though is really important. This recognition like, "Oh yeah, there's a reason why it arose. We didn't make it happen." Let's maybe say that. It's not like you chose to have that particular hindrance arise at that time. It's arising for a reason and it's going

to pass away again. Whether we know what that reason is or not, there is one. Maybe that's helpful if we're trying to figure it all out. We can spend our whole meditation period trying to figure it out.

Participant: Yeah. But then that's kind of the balance. It's easy to go overboard.

Diana: Yes. Yes. We can get lost to that. And then lots of stories and stuff. Anybody else have a comment?

Participant: Yeah. I was wondering if there's a connection between the hindrances—or what the overlap or intersection is—and emotions. Do you have a sense?

Diana: [Laughs] No, I feel a little confused. That's so great. I love that.

So it's fascinating how in the Buddhist literature there isn't exactly "emotions," right? They're not talked about in the way that we talk about them in the contemporary West—after Freud and all this kind of stuff, we have this different idea of emotions than the Buddha did. But what's similar is this idea of mind states that can hinder or get in the way. So in that way they're the same.

I mean, there can be a way in which sadness is a perfectly legitimate, healthy response to loss or something like this. And so that it's not a hindrance. It's just a healthy expression. But there can also be a way in which we collapse into sadness as opposed to feeling anger, for example. Or—I'm not a psychologist so I don't know all the reasons why—but there could be a way in which our collapsing into sadness is a way for us to disconnect from our experience. And maybe that hinders, quote-unquote, the fullness of our life.

So I do not want to say that emotions are always in the way because they're not. And I would say that part of what this practice enables us—when I'm pointing to meeting hindrances—is this practice points to increasing our capacity to be with the whole range of emotions, the whole range of a rich human life. But there are times in which some emotions can be a hindrance. But I would say our practice allows us to even meet that. Even when sadness is... we're collapsing into sadness just for example as a way to not be with anger. We can meet that too. Is that helpful?

Participant: Yes. Thank you.

Participant: Mostly I just want to say thank you for sharing that little bit about your little secret. That notebook I had about the hindrances. Because I think it's very beautiful when teachers share with us how we ourselves find our little ways to work with the Dharma and to make it come alive for us. And I love charts, too. And so I so get it. I never thought to do that. It could happen now. But I just wanted to thank you for that. I found it very beautiful.

Diana: Great. Thank you. Thank you.

Participant: Hi. Thank you for the talk. I'm curious to hear your thoughts on working with something like trauma or clinical depression and how that gets met in a way that isn't damaging or flooding for the person practicing in the way that turns towards.

Diana: Yeah. Thank you for bringing that up. So there are sometimes in which maybe mindfulness practice—sitting with in a meditation posture with eyes closed—is not the best thing. Because sometimes with clinical depression or trauma, relating to other people is really what's helpful instead of just being alone and meeting things. Because we can get into overwhelm. This happens all the time. Whether you have trauma or clinical depression or not, there's a way we can meet things in meditation and if we don't have enough resources—a feeling of stability, a feeling of safety, a feeling of enough well-being—then we can get into overwhelm.

I would say mindfulness can be a support but it needs some care. There's a way that when people go on retreats or they do a lot of meditating, if we're not witnessed by others, then we can have ideas in our mind and they can just grow and grow and grow. And then we can kind of have these ideas, catastrophizing or these ideas about ourselves that aren't very healthy or supportive.

So meditation can be helpful. We can meet whatever is arising, but that's particularly if we are resourced. And if we're in the midst of processing a lot of trauma or clinical depression, it's better if that's done with people and talking and something like this as opposed to in a long retreat or something like that. It reminds me a little bit of Peter Levine's work and the titration.

Participant: Yes. Okay. Yep. I could have just said that word and that would have been so much easier. [Laughter] Thank you.

Participant: I was sitting here thinking as you were talking of my own experience of being hungry at the moment and desire to eat. So I was thinking, well, all these aversions seem like somehow they're related to being afraid of dying.

Diana: Oh.

Participant: And I always wondered if like there's something about that... like being less afraid of dying is kind of what you're talking about.

Diana: Being less afraid of dying.

Participant: Yeah. Like or if any of these things aren't met, that we'll be okay. Like it's like you're creating space and maybe the space feels to me like...

Diana: Oh, maybe it's like reassurance. Like just that simple...

Participant: I like this idea—reassurance that things are okay. I'm okay. It's okay.

Diana: It's okay.

Participant: It's okay. Yeah.

Diana: I remember Gil Fronsdal saying this sometime. This is like just everything. It's okay. [Laughter] It's okay. But it turns out to be very helpful.

Participant: Yeah. Thanks.

Diana: Okay, we're at the end of our time here. So, uh, thank you all. Thank you all. I wish you a wonderful rest of the evening and safe travels home. Thank you.

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1. **Mettā:** A Pali word usually translated as "loving-kindness," "friendliness," or "goodwill." ↩
2. **Zafu:** A round or crescent-shaped cushion used for meditation. ↩
3. **Jhāna:** A Pali term for a state of deep meditative absorption or concentration. ↩
4. **Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta:** The "Discourse on the Establishing of Mindfulness," a foundational Buddhist text on mindfulness meditation. ↩
5. **Zabuton:** A flat mat or cushion that is placed under a zafu (meditation cushion) to provide comfort for the knees and ankles. ↩

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