

2019-06-03: Foundations of Mindfulness

Part 15 - Mindfulness and Liberation

Mon, 5/25 8:46AM • 49:12

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

awareness, mindfulness, attention, practice, attachments, mind, people, free, liberation, caught, talking, baggage, hijacked, refrain, concern, world, tires, meditation, learning, moment

SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So since January, I have been giving, giving talks on the primary instructions that the Buddha gave on mindfulness practice. And it's a one of the longer texts, and probably the longest text or scripture in early Buddhism, that gives meditation instruction. And when I was first introduced to this text many years ago, I found I found it deadly boring. And probably fell asleep reading it probably didn't have a very high opinion of it because of the formulaic kind of way in which was written and style and things like that. But as I then was introduced to the mindfulness tradition that my mindfulness practice that we do as part of insight meditation, then slowly this text start to come alive for me. And now I find it immensely interesting. And I find that it has all these nuances or, or depths or different aspects to it, that continue to come alive for me. And I find it quite a quite a wonderful, inspiring text. And so I've been giving a series of talks for these months on this text and going through it systematically. And today will be the last talk in the series. And one of the themes I presented as I did this, was to view the or interpret the instructions as describing a journey, that journey of mindfulness, and maybe I could give in my own life, I could, I'm quite happy to call it the Adventure of mindfulness. It's been a journey and adventure, a wonderful discovery. The process of mindfulness and having my life open up to life with the world opened up in wonderful ways through this practice. So what this is using, what mindfulness uses is our human capacity for attention. It's completely ordinary capacity to be aware, but we're using it kind of intentionally, and we're using it in such a way that the awareness over time is set free. The mindfulness practice is a practice of liberating our awareness. So what does that mean?

This afternoon, I went on a few websites to look at car tires. The car tire, we talked with the front tires of my car are getting pretty worn down. And when last time I checked the oil they looked at me and shook their head. You know, you should really do something. So I then got interested in seeing where in Redwood City I could buy kite car tires and what was available and where's the good deal and brighter things. And it was relatively relaxing to do but it involves a certain kind of attention. I think I

was not required but I had a certain kind of focused attention. Attention that was trying to understand the details of car number a car tire numbers and sizes and thread types and I don't know all kinds of things and then trying to hold it in my mind, to be able to compare it to other merchants what they're selling, and do, you know and try to decide where to go. And it was a relatively common thing to do. But I was very aware of my attention being very focused, very directed. And I would say that I had some attachments involved. So I'm concerned with getting the right price in the best place and little bit, you know, kind of, kind of, in the little teeny bit of the mind advice, of concern about this little mundane topic and to do this well. So that's just getting tires, right. So I think that some of us will have other things which are much more pulls pulls us much more strongly into its world where there is much more attachment and concern and some people go around all the time. With concerns that their attention has been pulled into, does it need to be a little bit louder the sound today? Can we turn it up a little bit? So is that better? Okay? And if not just go like that. So the so some people and I've certainly had this happen to me, where hours, maybe days, maybe lifetimes, the mind is really fixated and concerned with certain things. Some of that stuff can be just habit or conditioning or that's really been built in from a young age. Some people grew up in or horrible conditions, and they grew up with fear and their attention is hooked into maybe fixated into the mind vise of it is grabbed the attention and it's concerned with how to be safe, and it's scanning the horizon, scanning the room, the situation and, and it's always kind of caught in the vise of being afraid and wanting to be safe and it's a, you know, it's probably a very important thing to do at some point in their life, they probably maybe even save their lives. But to always have the mind in that vise or to have a say deliberately, if awareness is always being put into that channel of fear and concern and looking for safety. The awareness is not is not free, if it's desire, I've had desires of various type when I was very young I had caught in the grip of lust I remember with doing things that you know, that was kind of really captivated by this, like a woman or something girl and forgive you. I've told the story before give you an example of a preoccupation of the mind and how intense may can be kind of, you know, just like the attention was really drawn to. I met this woman, the girl, I was 14, so I was a boy. And, and all I knew was her first name. And I'd kind of walked her home, I think something like that. And all I had was I had the first name and I had the street she lived on. And so I went with a friend. And then we had two telephone books. That's all we had back then to look people up. And I went from the front of the book and he went from the back of the book. And we called every everyone who lived on that street and asked for her name. So I would say that that 14 do That my attention was not free

it was in this you know mind vise of concern about whatever that 14 year old mind is concerned with there you can use your imagination or not. And, and so, you know can be all kinds of things. So, it can be chronic these concerns they can be serious concerns one after the other. And, and the mind is kind of in a some people talk about the mind getting hijacked by these currents concerns. And we see somehow that the mind the attention the awareness is not so free when we start to meditate, because we sit down the instructions might be to sit down and meditate and let go of your thoughts and focus your attention and your breathing. And people discover how difficult that is that the mind wanders off. And when the mind wanders off, the attention wanders off gets lost in something you In a sense, the attention has been hijacked in a sense, something besides your own conscious volition has grabbed

your attention, your attention is caught in that concern, whatever it might be, it might be a fantasy, it might be an aversion, it might be a conversation, it might be a memory, so many things that get pulled into but and sometimes being pulled into it is quite intense. And some people it's very hard to get out or something you will get go into that world and we talk about being lost in thought. That's a quite powerful expression. I was lost in thought, you know, sitting in meditation, I was lost the whole time I was lost in thought and luckily they rang the bell and, and so then that kind of, you know, where was I? And so the attention is not free. Something has the attention as we begin consciously waking up consciously Waking up to using our attention, engaging to notice what's happening in the present moment, we begin a process of liberating our awareness. So the awareness is no longer held captive by our desires, our fears, our hates, our preoccupations are all kinds of things that you know, grabs it. And it's a phenomenal thing to begin to just begin to discover what a free awareness is like a liberated awareness is like an awareness which isn't not been caught by society's attachments to what society thinks we should be concerned with or what society kind of throws at us is not concerned about our own. What our own inner life throws at us and grabs our attention, and for the awareness to become free. I liken it sometimes to if you held your hand in a fist for 35 years. And you never knew was possible to open it up. And then finally someone said, by the way, you could open it up. And so Oh, wow. Not only is it pretty good, it feels good to finally have it relaxed and open. But the sensitive part of the hand is now available to feel the world to be in touch with the world, that it's not if you make a fist. So the same thing with the mind, the mind the attention can be held in a kind of a fist and a preoccupation be caught in things. And to start feeling the fist of the mind open up. Not only is if you're really good for it to be relaxed, lo and behold, the sensitive part of the mind or the heart becomes available to connect to the world and connect to oneself, to be for the attention to be caught in the grip of its preoccupations. The That there's a kind of disconnect or loss of sensitivity and narrowing of attention and narrowing of our way of being connected to ourselves and the world and what goes on.

And as awareness starts becoming free, then we start discovering we can use it in different ways. And we can use it in ways that are useful. We can use it in ways that are specific to different circumstances, in ways that bring ease that meets the situation properly. And that can help us understand what's going on. So part of the mindfulness adventure is an adventure of understanding. And in terms of meditation practice, a lot of that is understanding ourselves, understanding what drives us understanding how we get caught, understanding our our beliefs that we have that grab us and hold us understanding how emotions work for us, and we're learning a lot about how thoughts and cognitive world works. And the more we start learning about this, and understanding how we work, we have more information about what's going on in here. And that gives us more choice. You don't have much choice about things you do, if you don't know you're doing them. And so, there's many times that people say things without even being aware of what they're saying. We think things without even thinking about we have beliefs that are operating that are, you know, underneath the surface, we have unconscious bias that goes on the subconscious, I like to say because it became it can become conscious, and all this stuff that's going on inside of us, that can be quite unconscious or subconscious or not known. And then you have no choice. But if you see what's going on, you begin to be able to exercise exercise choice, and one of the most important forms of choice we have, partly so we can

keep it really simple. is we have the veto power. You can necessarily decide and choose, you know, what's the wisest tire to buy? You know, all these decisions, but you can decide, you know, right now I think I, I don't want to make the situation worse, I'm going to be quiet. I'm not going to speak, I find my mind is going down some thought drain where I have a version towards someone. I'm not going to do that anymore. I've done that for 35 years. And it didn't lead anywhere. It did no good for me. I'm not going to go down that track anymore. And so it's this idea of saying, No, I'm not going to invest in this. I'm not going to do that anymore. I'm going to hold my mouth, I'm going to hold my body and not give in to that kind of thing one more time. That's a powerful thing. And the early Buddhist tradition, the Buddha stration puts a tremendous value. In our human capacity to have the veto power. What that allows is allows our awareness to continue become freer, our inner life becomes freer, because we're not being hijacked, or pulled into all these drives and forces and that are operating that sometimes pull us into them so quickly. And so there's a freedom to be said, No, I'm not doing that. So that comes from understanding. And that's a choice that comes greater under self understanding, great choice we have. One of the things we begin seeing is you start seeing how we're how attention is in fact, influenced or caught in our attachments. How we get fixated and to see that really clearly is the beginning of a path to become free of the fixation

One of the things we see when we start paying more attention, and also if the attention is more free to see what's really going on, one of the things we see is we start seeing our suffering. And one of the things that Buddhist practice specializes in, is not suffering better, because that doesn't do any good. But rather, understanding seeing our suffering better. And, and looking at it directly and being very honest about it, and not sliding away from it, not avoiding it, not making it pretty, but really an honest look at what's really going on with my suffering here. Now, if we're doing that, with this eye towards awareness being free, we'll discover how when we suffer, we're not that free. Many times we're caught in our fear being running away from it or preoccupied with it or taking it personally or having self pity or Having anger or having blame and all kinds of secondary things arise. And they happen so strongly in such a automatic pilot kind of way, that awareness kind of gets sucked into its kind of demands or its needs. And that our suffering prevents the awareness for being free. As we begin discovering, to be aware, I'm suffering. It's bad enough to suffer. Let me see if I can not lose my awareness in that process. And to be able to step back in a sense, and look suffering right in the eye. But suffering, staying free, suffering, not being reactive to what we're seeing. The awareness not being reactive, the awareness being open, kind of, in the sense maybe spacious, maybe relaxed, maybe clear, maybe receptive, but in some ways, it's being it's kind of like if the if the door is open and someone throws a ball against the door. It doesn't bother the door. It just goes right through. If the doors of awareness are really open, no matter what happens, even our suffering can be experienced as if kind of, it's kind of like, doesn't touch anything in the freedom. There's, there's, there's space there, there's openness there. And so, as this mindfulness journey continues, and we start to understanding nature of awareness and how awareness operates and awareness starts getting freer and freer. We start seeing our reactivity much better, we get more more sensitive to the subtleties of it. We get much more aware of what it feels like to be free. We get much more respectful of our lives, because respect has a lot to do with taking a deeper look. Their literal meaning of words Expect in Latin, this Latin based word is to

look again, to take a deeper look. And when it when awareness is caught, and is forced to kind of go in certain directions and think certain things, awareness is not that free to look again. But to really be free, allows a deeper and deeper look. And as we look more deeply, we see the deeper forms of attachments of suffering that we have. And we find ways to free it and liberate it. And so this path of mindfulness is a path of learning how to use attention. And there's different kinds of attention that we learn to use. Sometimes we learn to recognize what's happening there. clearly recognize and study investigate what's happening here. Other times or we're learning and awareness. That's kind of like an awareness is kind of metaphorically like leaning up against a tree in a nice day. Have no concerns and problems whatsoever, and just kind of having a beautiful view of the park in front of you. It just kind of relaxed and at ease and open, spacious, wide observe observation. Other times we discover that awareness is a deep, deep intimacy, with the experience where we really feel and sense, the sensations, the physicality, the embodiment of what's happening the moment in a very sensory way. And it's just fantastic sometimes to feel like you're right in the middle of the sensory world of the body and the experience we have, and making space for that world to open up and to reveal itself.

So as this practice deepens, awareness gets more and more liberated. As as awareness gets liberated, there's less baggage involved in being aware. And what less baggage involves. What that means is, we don't Bring along with awareness, a lot of our ideas of what should be what shouldn't be our judgments of things or history with things, we're able to start seeing things much more simply for what they are. And in some situations in life like in meditation, that opens up deeper and deeper doors, to have awareness with not without any baggage. One of the ways the meditation tradition talks about this awareness with no baggage is that awareness is no longer colored or filtered by a lot of concepts, abstract ideas of something, the idea of right and wrong, good and bad, is usually not a very useful concept with which to see your experience when you're meditating. To see your experience when you're meditating through the lens of me myself in mind, so Sitting here meditating and my mind drifts off in thought, and thought, you know, that's to just simply see that, oh, my mind just drifted off. That could be very simple and clean moment awareness to see that, versus my mind just wandered off. And I am a lousy meditator. I just blew it. I did the wrong thing. I didn't follow the instructions. And I hope no one noticed. You know, that's a lot of baggage that comes along with the awareness. And so we're learning to make less and less baggage. It's simpler and simpler. And this idea of seeing things as we meditate in a simpler and simpler way actually allows us to see things much more clearly. And as as clarity comes along, then the mind becomes freer. It's just this wonderful reciprocal relationship that Clara we can see the free awarenesses The free awarenesses that clearly can see and we can go further on that journey. One of the consequences of this as a meditation journey is the inner life tends to become more and more peaceful. It becomes a greater stillness, beautiful sweet stillness and quiet, quiet within the mind becomes quiet are still there, the mind becomes more equanimous more peaceful nonreactive all in the service of looking and seeing more carefully on the surface, I think having awareness be set free. And at some point, the equanimity, that peacefulness, the ease, the non reactivity, starts feeling like a home. The Buddha called Mindfulness, our original home, I didn't actually use the word home he called it our native land. I like the word home, but our native you want to go to your native land, you go to mindfulness mind Next is our native land. The kind of awareness

attention that mindfulness is to rest in awareness to feel at home in it to feel like you're really you know, you're you're in your you're in a true place and you're at ease and awareness has not hijacked, not caught by anything. And you can rest in that means that you can carry your home with you anywhere you go. It's a phenomenal thing to discover. So as the mind feels at home in itself, awareness feels at home in itself. It's not caught in anything anymore. Awareness is at ease, it's addressed, it's free. It can be looked at different things. It can be used in different ways. It gets more and more economist more peaceful. And as it gets peaceful enough, at some point, the last remnants of attachment letting go at some point, the last ways in which the mind tries to actively do things and make things and fix things and solve things it put to rest. And that final movement of being put to rest or the final movement of the, the ropes of attachment finally being worn thin and just snapping free is one of the descriptions of where this path of mindfulness goes. And it's called liberation. So I'll read you the, the last paragraph of this text that I've been doing this last month.

So he's just finished talking about this practice of mindfulness. So that's the this that you'll hear in this. So it was with reference to this That I said, the Buddhist is according to Buddha. So in reference to this, that I said, this is the direct path for the purification of beings, for their surmounting of sorrow and limitation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true method. And for the realization of Nibbana. The binos are probably waves hitting Nirvana. This is a phenomenal promise or phenomenal, kind of the good news of this tradition of this practice. And it's described one way so it's not talking about cosmic consciousness is not talking about some very deep insight into the nature of consciousness or, you know, some true nature that we have. It's tough, it's but it's talking about something that I think phenomenally significant. If you can attain this, you live happily, you know, with or without cosmic consciousness, or something like that talking about some big bang experience of meditation, you know, some big kind of insight into Satori or something. They're talking about a transformation. And the practice of mindfulness, his journey of mindfulness is a journey towards a transformation. And the transformation happens all along the way. But then at some point, it turns there's a kind of a quantum leap in the transformation. And this is the Quantum Leap leads to this. So I'll read it again. This this mindfulness is the direct path for the purification of beings for their surmounting of sorrow and limitation, for the disappearance of pain and grief, for the attainment of the true method, and for the realization of you Ivana, namely, the four foundations of mindfulness. That's been what the whole thing has been about this four areas of mindfulness. And so then how long does it take to do this? And, you know, this must be really hard right? There take a long time. So the Buddha says this

if anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in this way for seven years, one of two fruits should be expected. Either they'll retain final knowledge for liberation here now. Or if there is a little bit, little traces of clinging left, they'll have attained something almost as good That's a paraphrase. Seven years. But who has seven years there's important websites to visit and books to read and let alone seven years. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness for as in such a way for six years, and then dot is equals to fill in what I just read before, for five years for four years for three years for two years for one year, one of two fruits should be expected. Either final

knowledge here now, or if there's some small traces of clinging left, something almost as good. Then the Buddha said goes on. But let alone one year. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way for seven months, six months, four months, three months, two months, one month. See why I was bored before when I first read it, but now I think it's exciting. Scott, were we going for one month, for half a month, one of two fruits should be expected either final knowledge here and now or if there are some trace of clinging left something almost as good. Then let alone half a month. If anyone should develop these four foundations of mindfulness in such a way, for seven days, one of two fruits should be expected either final knowledge here and now or if there is a trace of clinging left, something almost as good. And so, seven years, seven days to seven days, they get good. To this usual interpretation is that yes, it can be done in seven days, but you have to give yourself over to those seven days, on to the practice of mindfulness all your waking hours. And people who do seven, we teach a lot of seven day retreats. And people practice well and good, but it's very few people who really do it, you know, 100% for those seven days, so I think that he has to really give yourself over to it. Otherwise, it takes two weeks or a month, or, you know, seven years or something. And there was a wonderful teacher named Sylvia Borstein. And she practiced for a long time. And I think she was, I think, I think I think she tells a story. She was kind of just kind of coasting along and maybe a little bit complacent in their practice. And then she heard this little teaching and Think it was teaching came from the Buddha. And, and that is that if a ship boat might have a really thick rope that's maybe holding something up, you know, maybe mooring rope or so holding sail up or something really thick and strong. But you know it's at sea, it's yours there and the weather and all that stuff. And slowly it begins to wear away and wear away. And at some point then no one can really know. It'll become thin enough, it'll just snap and break apart. But you never know, when you're getting to that point.

It just kind of simply just happens. And so she heard that this is how it works with this mindfulness practice. You're wearing away your attachments, you're clinging, the ways in which the mind is caught, and those are wearing away. But you might be just One day away from the attachments finally, just proofing. You might you never quite know, it might be really about to happen. It might be you know, and isn't it supposed to be waiting there like a mouse or the cat door for it to happen? That doesn't work. But, but that inspired Silvia to no end, okay, I don't know how close I am or how we're close. So she then really gave herself over to the practice, and was no longer complacent and lackadaisical in her practice. And that made all the difference for her. And then her practice, were fruit for her. So the end of the book and the instructions, talks about how this practice of mindfulness is the practice that leads to liberation, to spiritual liberation, that Buddhism champions what made the Buddha an enlightened person. And the remarkable thing about this is that the key element to This liberation is your own normal ordinary capacity for awareness. So you have the tool. It's not like a foreign tool to you, but you have to learn to use that tool and develop that tool and to free that tool from the ways in which gets caught in or hijacked or caught in preoccupation, that concerns and that can be done. And it's a you know, it's a grand goal, the goal of liberation, Nirvana and Nirvana. The path the very best way to do this is to value or appreciate enjoy every step on the path to that. It's a fantastic way to live a life to live on this journey, the adventure of mindfulness, and everyday you do it

is a good day is worthwhile. No amount of money. fullness is ever wasted. And ideally, as people are learning to do this mindfulness, each moment that they awareness is felt to be a little bit more free. Or we use mindfulness to use a freed awareness. I'm here I'm aware of my suffering aware of this difficult situation. But let me be mindful of it. And in that recognition of mindfulness, there's some freedom there. that's worthwhile in its own right. That's a life well lived. So I say this because there is this grand goal at the end of the tunnel, end of the rainbow or end of the tunnel of liberation. That is a real goal. It's valuable. It's, it's a, it's a noble direction to take a life. But enjoy each step along the way. Each step along the way is worthwhile is valuable. Doesn't really from the point of view of the value of moment by moment, it doesn't really matter if you get to the end of this path. It just matters you're on it. It's a beautiful thing to be on this adventure in this path. And I think that it tends to bring out the best in people. And to the degree to which the best that you are, is still laying dormant in you. You will find that if you The more you practice the mindfulness and free your, your awareness that what's best in you will become available for the world as a gift. And hopefully, in doing this, you'll make a world a better place. So that was the final talk. And we have 10 minutes before the usual ending. And if any of you have any questions, comments about this, I don't know how many of you have been through, you know, been along for the whole you know, It's been like five months of talks now to what that's like to have gone to it or anything you'd like to ask.

Test.

I like this idea of attention baggage. Often I can see myself responding to a phenomenon in the world. And I can see myself responding in that response and not like it and then I very quickly without without words, just avoid it or get angry or frustrated with that response. get afraid of that response without anyone words, it's like a meta level of responding to initial phenomenon. I feel like that's a might. That's a tension baggage that I carry with me a lot to give any tips on how to

get out of that kind of, yeah, great well described, I think one of the best things you can do is get to know it better. That's your turn your mindfulness. If there's a, if there's a so called problem of how you operate, how what you do, turn your attention to look at it more carefully, get to know it better. And the freedom comes from seeing it clearly. in two ways. It comes from actually learning how it works and learning the tricks and what how can you get caught in it and what's really going on what the emotions are underneath it and what drives it. But also, what you learn is that awareness itself can hold it the problem The so called problem and see it in such a way that you're free while you're looking at it.

Does that make sense?

Think about

look no Think about it, look at it

over there in the by the windows.

Right? So the analogy of the of the rope that slowly gets worn away and then you have some moment breaks, sort of suggests that the sort of moment of liberation is is a is a moment.

Yes, it's usually under usually understood to be a particular moment. It's something something something gets released. And my favorite translation into English of the word Nirvana is release is that there's a release that happens

and so is is that Non reversible. So like once the release happens, does it ever go back in

the full liberation is non reversible full liberation, there's no more clinging, that what's being released is the clinging so the clinging doesn't come back. Generally, the first dramatic experience people have of the hand opening up is memorable, shows them what's possible. And for the five fingers still want to close up. But now we know what's possible. And that makes all the difference because we know the direction we know what's possible. We didn't really even though we've heard about and read about now we really know for ourselves. That's what they're talking about. And so now we're inspired to practice more, and it might take a while for the other fingers to begin opening up for metaphoric Right. So generally that first traumatic experience doesn't do all the work, but it really shows the way

I go.

So, you talked about this whole teachings like the journey during okay? And in the past five months, you said there's a 13 steps, yes, each step. So there's so much of it. And when we practice, do we go step by step? Or there are so many things for example, sometimes we focus in the body. The feeling will come up Yes, the thought will come. So I just wonder what's the best way to

practice I think that most people who teach out of this text will not teach all the exercises. And usually they'll pick the pick a few of the parts of it that they specialize in. So some teachers will mostly specialize in the first Foundation, the body, some will specialize in the third foundation among the mind. Some will specialize more in the fifth, and in the fourth foundation. And the so there's different choices people use, this is more like this is like the grab bag of practices. And so it's very few people I know who go through these 13 exercises systematically, the way it's laid out. It's possible it could be quite effective. But I've never known anyone to teach that way, except in Dharma talks, like here and so it's It depends who you're who you're studying with how they will teach this. And so, for me, the way I like to teach this in the way it was, I was taught this when I was learning this in Burma, is is, is that if you focus on the breathing, and if any of the other foundations come up, and are more predominant than the breathing, you let go of the breath and turn the attention to that phenomena. So it's not systematic. It's not like you have to memorize these steps and know where to go. Reality tells you where you bring your attention. So you have to you don't even have to make a choice except it's time

to leave the breath and now focus on the emotion or now. Now it's time to leave the breath and focus on the body or, or the mind or whatever it might be. And then when this long, no longer compelling, we come back to the breathing and the reason I like teaching it that way There's other ways of practicing. They're quite good for not not no one practice is right for everybody. But one of the reasons why I like to teach this is that it keeps the attention coming back to the breathing, which is a practice that also develops concentration. And it really helps to have a lot of concentration to do this practice. So the more concentration we can build up, the stronger the mindfulness and clear the mindfulness can be. So stay with a breathing until something else

about the referring you talk something about that refrain is that you said is repeated 13 times a little bit louder. The referring the refrain? Yeah, you said it's being repeated 13 times Yes. Sorry. Yeah. Is that a setup Principle, we suppose to use with to apply that use to apply with each step or whatever we're practicing.

I think that the refrain has a number of functions. But one of the functions is a little bit of a map of what isn't what is kind of important to notice. So one of the one of the things that says is, notice how things come and go. And not everyone is not every mind is tuned into rising, noticing things arising and disappearing. Because when we're many were involved with our concepts, or ideas of things, there's a funny way in which concepts and ideas can lend permanence to work with concerned with, we know it's not permanent, but in the moment we're sitting here, it might feel like this is it. You know, like, I mean, there was a many years ago I I came to the conclusion that I was depressed and I'd never not be depressed. This is how it's gonna be. This is the I'm stuck. This is the this is it. That's and I was operating emotionally from this point of view that this is it this I'm gonna be depressed forever. But if you if you really if you if you know and my awareness was held hostage by that depression I was I guess I surrendered my awareness to my depression that kind of let it sink into it and be taken over to learn how to pull the awareness out of something like depression and really see it like, step away, turn around, really look at that's depression and see it and then start looking at it more carefully. And not with the baggage of ideas and stories and time and all this. After a while you start seeing actually you're not depressed all the time. It's actually it's actually coming in and out of existence, continuously, but it's not always there. There's little flash moments, it's not there, flash moment is there. And that's a whole different game. It's a whole different world I live in, as opposed to the idea. I'm stuck. This is it. And so and so the way that refrain talks about, it's kind of like saying this is important to notice the coming and going of things. And at some point, as people meditate to have that as a guideline, can help them kind of deepen the meditation further. The other thing the refrain says is that is it kind of, it's another description of the goal of practice, or where we're going, it's kind of like the this is the North Star. This is what we're, you know, kind of being guided by this goal. And that goal is a wonderful way to end this whole series now at nine o'clock and that goal is to do is to live without clinging to anything in the world. That's where it's going to dwell without clinging to anything in the world. And to use the language of this talk today, to dwell without awareness attached to anything whatsoever. And what in the world is awareness that has no attachment to what it's aware of. And you might want to reflect on this and ponder and imagine and visualize and what it would be like for you to have attention. And

whatever attention knows, the attention itself is not attached to what it knows. awareness that is free
What it knows? Maybe so. So thank you very much