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**Speaker 1** [00:00:00] That's right. Lhatong says he's going to do it now.

**Speaker 2** [00:00:07] I'm not shocked about defense spending.

**Speaker 3** [00:00:15] So one thing we didn't mention earlier is just to announce that Pat Parker is in the hospital. And it started, apparently with really overwhelming pain in her back. And then she actually had to be put in an ambulance to take him to Providence. And they've done an MRI and probably more by now, whatever they're doing, and they have not been able to locate the problem. So just there you are. So anything in particular

**Speaker 4** [00:01:25] that you

**Speaker 3** [00:01:28] would like to raise, John? Yeah.

**Speaker 5** [00:01:32] And as you know, I was here this morning also and I've been wanting to come back because I've been really stirred up about the conversation this morning that stirred up just a lot of questions about it. And I really like you. I thought a lot about the comment about equanimity and that none of the other Immeasurables can be possible without ambiguity and thinking a lot about that. And then I was thinking also about the comment about joy and. I'm not really sure what Joy is,

**Speaker 4** [00:02:22] but

**Speaker 5** [00:02:22] you know, it's easy to see somebody who's happy like people say, my wife is the happiest person they know she's the happiest person on the planet. And I say, I compare myself from that, you know, I think that that's all. That's joy. Hmm. I don't feel that way. And you know, the fact that I cheated, cheated, death. You know, I should be living my life in joy.

**Speaker 2** [00:02:58] You know,

**Speaker 5** [00:03:01] a lot more contentment and a lot more equanimity. But I wouldn't consider myself a joyous person. I'm not sure what it really looks like. That can be pretty grumpy,

**Speaker 3** [00:03:23] Tom, you ever noticed haven't been heard stories, I usually hear about it.

**Speaker 2** [00:03:38] Well, one one

**Speaker 3** [00:03:41] thing to keep in mind with all of the every practice that we engage in, so we can say the joy is actually in practice. It's not just something that happens to us. So it's an actual practice. So that's the first thing and that puts it off. And for us, it puts it in a in a different perspective. And like, we can think we can practice compassion and we can practice loving kindness. It gets a little more difficult when we think about individuals who we don't want to practice compassion for. For example, when it's like this, like the joy thing also is it's not about just you should be joyful. You have so many things that other people don't have, and therefore you should be joyful, which implies that if you're not joyful, there's something wrong with you. And and there may be things that are wrong with us, but but we're not going to find them through the should. And if we can't find them, then we can't work with them. So joy is not really, in this case, just the natural outcome of doing good things, though doing positive things could give us a sense of satisfaction and joy. But this joy was really more a kind of thing where we don't use the word rejoice, the verb. There's a little I'm a little better than the noun, you know, so. So there you don't need to wonder so much. It's obvious that it's something that you do, not something that just happens to you.

**Speaker 4** [00:05:41] Rejoice.

**Speaker 5** [00:05:42] That's pretty good, huh? See that last part again.

**Speaker 3** [00:05:45] It's something that you do, not something that just happens to you. Like John, John is a joyful person is in a certain way of characterizing who you are. But it doesn't say anything about the practice of joy. You just happen to be or not. But in this case, it's an issue of celebrating. Maybe when when you said, rejoice, this is year like celebrating, celebrating, what are that? We should be joyful?

**Speaker 2** [00:06:20] Not really, because

**Speaker 3** [00:06:26] there's times when it's really hard to be joyful. But, but in a situation, let's just say where it's really hard to be joyful that there's a lot of negativity or you've you've been in some area of the world where there's a lot of suffering and and it's really hard to imagine being joyful, especially when people are killing each other. But if one person rises above that milieu and does something that feels helpful, that looks like they are willing to do something for others, not just look out for themselves, then you might see that and you might easily be able to generate a sense of celebration, a sense of rejoicing, not in the flamboyant sense of like, it's a birthday party. But but more as opposed to just feeling the grief. You could rejoice internally, at least. And having seen the seed planted of something different. So I'm sure you can think of some examples of that.

**Speaker 5** [00:07:51] And it's just kind of comes and goes, then it's not a state that

**Speaker 3** [00:07:56] you mean it's not permanent.

**Speaker 2** [00:07:57] So yeah, I

**Speaker 3** [00:08:08] mean, it comes and go. And if it didn't come and go, why? Why would we have the practice of joy? And if it only came and goes on the basis of what appear to be circumstances that are entirely have nothing to do with us, then there'd be no reason to rejoice. So it would come back to the thing of rejoicing sympathetic or empathetic joy, which sometimes it's called is a practice. It's something you do. So the question?

**Speaker 4** [00:08:44] Yeah, how do you

**Speaker 3** [00:08:46] how do you do it in

**Speaker 5** [00:08:47] practice, joy?

**Speaker 3** [00:08:49] Well, we can take the opposite, which we use this morning, which is you see somebody do something which is positive, but generally speaking, you don't associate that kind of activity with them. And so you're likely to engage in a different practice at that point, which we might call cynicism, the cynicism of, well, that person did something good, but I've never seen him do anything good, so I don't give them anything for that.

**Speaker 4** [00:09:23] You know,

**Speaker 3** [00:09:24] it just happens accidentally. But the practices to see the good and rejoice in the goodness because in the larger scope of things, somebody who consistently brings harm to others or even not consistent. But let's say they consistently do that. They will ultimately reap the karmic consequence of that. And so this is not even about rejoicing in the person who has done something positive. It's bigger than that. We rejoice in the practice of the Dharma. For example, someone who is stingy practices generosity. So maybe you've only known them as a miser. And so and then one day you see them actually help somebody. And there we can. We can go with the cynicism, or we can rejoice in the change. Rejoicing, the virtue which will bear positive fruit, not just for them, but for every one they touch. Is it makes sense, I mean, given the sense of an eye catching it to her, it's an active, it's an active thing. It's not for you to feel good, though it's a little hard to imagine how you wouldn't feel good. But that's not the point. The point is, what do you do when you encounter certain circumstances? And this is really what the entire path is about an enormous series of prescriptions for do this in this circumstance. Try this in this circumstance. George just happens to be a very important one, along with the other three Immeasurables. And Bill pointed out this morning, you might say something about a bill. However, it is true that you cannot accomplish the form Immeasurables without equanimity. Yes, but

**Speaker 6** [00:11:35] you are talking about this a little bit at the end. And I think I made the observation that actually you could start with any of the Immeasurables and going deeply into it. All the other three would be the unavoidable consequence of having gone deeply into any one of them. So he went deeply into equanimity. You would find that kind of deep sense of connection would find a deep sense of appreciation for the yearnings and well-being of others in that connection. So that sense of basic warmth towards others could be nourished with that really going into into it deeply. And the same thing is true with with the rejoicing going deeply into that, then starting to feel some sense of basic wellbeing like like Eric was talking about this morning when he was in his deepest dimension in nature, this sort of zero point at depression, not joy. And the person he was talking to saying, Well, check here, check there. See you actually do experience some well-being. Touch into that and really beginning to touch into that, that aspect of well-being that we experience in cultivating cultivating ability. That's also a practice where we can be cynical about others. We can also be cynical about our own experience. So, yeah, you know, I'm doing pretty well, but and then you know the story of that, but goes on and on and on and on. But it's of, you know, here I am doing whatever it is. You know, I'm surrounded by some very nice people tonight. Mm hmm. Oh, that's nice. I actually feel some sense of well-being in this. The deeper we go into that, the more we can tap into a place where we are actually when we see other people in a situation of suffering. We have some kind of internal resource. We have some ability to deal with the situation and sort of share something from that point of view, from that hearing, that sense and personal, that that wellbeing experience. So it touches it. It makes compassion grow. We don't have to shrink from situations as these kind of basic who which is to build. And that sense of actually, if this this sense of well-being is not dependent upon circumstances, the more it grows more. You can see that that naturally feeds kind of an equanimity being able to be in all kinds of situations. So that's just if you look at any one of the Immeasurables carefully and really look into it, we start to cultivate it. You can see that the others or to others will flourish. Even if you don't try. But it's actually very helpful for us since we have all kinds of little blind spots to spend some time on each of them because we might we might cultivate equanimity and just from wound up by virtue of our propensity to mind up sort of and kind of trying to flatten everything to make everything sort of going to fit into this kind of some kind of narrow band of I won't get too excited. I won't get to too distressed. So it sort of makes everything kind of flatten everything we might. It might come out like that. But then if we go to the joy and rejoice in compassion, the warmth, that vision of equanimity will fall apart. It will be there. It will become larger. It will become something deeper. And as you say, the same thing about loving kindness. We can just get, Oh, I feel very warm and loving, except for

**Speaker 2** [00:15:55] me, it's just

**Speaker 6** [00:15:59] so

**Speaker 2** [00:16:02] I've actually end of

**Speaker 1** [00:16:08] the meeting tomorrow morning. Yeah.

**Speaker 6** [00:16:11] But then then when we. Actually sit down and really contemplate equanimity and what we share in common with all beings, that warmth naturally extends, so it goes like that. But that's the sense of the all these things are cultivations as opposed to kind of moral principles. I think it's really important. And thou shalt equanimity, thou shalt use shall be compassionate in all circumstances. That's that's a recipe for not ever getting

**Speaker 5** [00:16:54] out of the way of the western mind. My western mind kind of goes with, you know, should be, you

**Speaker 6** [00:17:00] know, should be that I talk about this quite often. That seems to that these things, these things are practices, not kind of moral laws. And it's it's very it's a very big distinction and it's very hard for us to actually catch ourselves when we've gotten lost in the tissue and in the feeling depressed about.

**Speaker 1** [00:17:30] And for me, what is helpful at that point to work with this is really to know it is money, good training and mentoring. So when I'm training my money toward joy, I have to watch what my mind can be like. For example, owner Michael Karmapa cynicism about a person who looks like this suddenly and be do something good. That's not my hook. Line Hook is a jealousy thing and jealousy competitiveness that comes up. Someone's doing something really good, and I start comparing, maybe I could do it better. I wish I could. I wish I could do that. You know, and then I'm unhappy right away. So we have to see in our own minds what's what's my particular schtick about this? What what glances off actually is really bright train, really seeing, Oh, I get some competitiveness, I get some jealousy. I've got some comparing going on and then noticing that, you know, that's the one that pulls me off of me showing my joy in often practicing joy. Mm hmm. And then really, really committing to I will practice joy if I see something I that the suffering that diminishes suffering, I'll rejoice and I'll just sit there. I'll have to take a little time to work through my nonsense. Hmm. Right. Habit patterns and practice some rejoicing. And then it's like building a muscle that really got used to. And I think in this culture, we're really still actively critical, cynical, jealous, competitive. You know, I mean, not directly, but indirectly through school jobs, et cetera. It's kind of the result of trying to be self-reliant to get the top grade of that or so we don't rejoice in whenever people do well. Yeah, right.

**Speaker 6** [00:19:47] Yeah, yeah. So there's the dance practice that we're talking about, which is

**Speaker 4** [00:19:56] in

**Speaker 6** [00:19:58] sort of something that we're striving to do. And, you know, like when we're, you know, centered and we can, you know, we see something that's, you know, that's like, truly good for the world. That's something I will I will rejoice in and I'll try to cultivate that feeling. And then there's like joy of like just kind of like spontaneous, uncontrollable joy that you feel. And it's kind of like. And that's like. And that just comes and goes, you know? But it seems like there it seems like we should strive to make a connection between those two feelings. Somehow, to make the joy for that, you know, is a practice to make it sort of a more very visceral experience and like a stronger rather than like a very cerebral practice. I mean, I don't know, what do you think about the relationship between those two experiences?

**Speaker 3** [00:21:20] The cerebral and and the visceral and the visceral

**Speaker 6** [00:21:24] like,

**Speaker 4** [00:21:25] I like

**Speaker 2** [00:21:26] them both. I mean, I guess, you know, like,

**Speaker 6** [00:21:33] you know, this visceral is generally it's like, I mean, I don't know if I'm talking about joy or this, I don't know. It's a rocking out of it good show.

**Speaker 2** [00:21:43] And it's a very and it's a very

**Speaker 6** [00:21:48] elusive, you know, and transitory experience. But it seems like like an experience like that. Maybe it's like kind of that sensation is the basis to refer to to try to cultivate the feeling that you have when you see somebody who you don't really like, but they're doing something good and you, you know, you should feel good for them, so you

**Speaker 3** [00:22:19] should

**Speaker 2** [00:22:22] get with it. No, no, that's exactly right.

**Speaker 3** [00:22:28] You know, the the cerebral has a role here, actually. I think it's in that one of the roles of the cerebral here is to contemplate the way that these four Immeasurables are connected because you can't, as we were talking about earlier, at least we were dancing around it. You can't actually take one of them and say, Well, I think I'll do this one first. That doesn't work. It'll feel like it works for a while and then you're just left with nothing. If you take all four of them and you keep in mind, that immeasurable equanimity, for example, is about equanimity in relationship to all beings. So the practice there is to relate with equanimity in relationship to all beings. Well, that's. You think it's a challenge to feel joy

**Speaker 4** [00:23:36] and

**Speaker 3** [00:23:38] feel any of those Immeasurables for all beings. It's hard to not also feel like you're just totally faking it. Where are they? Who are these people? Do I want to feel compassionate for them? I don't even know where they are. I have to visualize them. I look around. This room is hardly Immeasurables sentient beings here. So you know what? There's so many ways in which you can step out of the engagement in it, and merely being engaged with practicing these four Immeasurables with a few people is not enough. We have to keep the leverage in and out. And so that was a piece this morning when we talked about kind of the unbounded perspective of beings who we who we have some connection with, who aren't even alive anymore. We knew them in this life. Now they're not there and others who we don't know yet, but we know they're there and and that our own actions and activities travel beyond the boundaries of this life. People are affected by things that we did a long time ago. And so when we sit down and look at all four of those Immeasurables and we and we start to contemplate, we don't have to get, we don't have to hit the nail on the head. We just have to like get a growing sense of the connection between them. And then it can start to feel like an organic kind of uprising in one's being. You just kind of like trigger it a little bit and it starts to happen. Joy can come from that out of the compassion we see suffering and suddenly we feel, Oh, I feel the connection to this person suffering who actually, you know, maybe some time ago or what it felt like they deserve that. And now suddenly I'm feeling something different. You might feel joy about your own relationship with it. So it's not really it's not really one thing. These practices are

**Speaker 4** [00:25:54] really

**Speaker 3** [00:25:56] the bedrock of the Mahayana entire tradition, my Buddhism. So one could make a case for other things, also being the bedrock. But it's definitely the case everyone would say for Immeasurables are definitely bedrock like you need to work with them, you need to work them until you find out like what it is that you're really doing with them. I think one of the really important elements of equanimity is not just about equanimity in relationship to other beings, but in relationship to our own experience.

**Speaker 6** [00:26:39] Herself or herself?

**Speaker 3** [00:26:42] Yeah, yeah. So we generally don't have much equanimity in relationship to our own experience. I want to feel joy. I don't want to feel unhappy. I want to feel I don't want to give up my anger that person.

**Speaker 2** [00:26:57] You know,

**Speaker 3** [00:26:59] so it's is the equanimity of our own experience also gets in the lack of the acronym. It gets in the way of our equanimity to our own experience, as well as equanimity in a relationship to others. And the same thing is true of the other three loving kindness, compassion and joyous. And they're all connected,

**Speaker 6** [00:27:27] deep equanimity in relationship to our own experience. It's actually, if you look into it really carefully, you can see that that's actually a door into a sense of profound wellbeing. Profound wellbeing. S. sympathetic to it. See joy? OK. There is something about being with our experience just exactly as it is and being able to lose a sense of aggression against it, either wishing for more of it or wishing that it would go away. Losing that, that fight with our experience and having that disappeared, there is a kind of deep well being that's possible. Yeah. And in that deep well being than in, we have something when we're with others, we have we have a basis for equanimity, a basis for compassion. That's something that's different than than than going in and trying to fight with a situation that somebody else is going to try to fix this or having to have some big turnout, certain where according to our people, something we have something that we can share there some possibility. And I don't know how many people have had an experience being with somebody when they're really distressed or ill and have somebody come who who just brings with them some sort of sense of complete stability and well-being. And, you know, just you kind of it. It does something they hope to settle and relate to to this situation. There's some kind of peace that comes from that. That's it's a very it's a very, very simple thing, and that's one of those situations we look deeply into equanimity and start to find structure for these other things that. But that equanimity about our own experiences. That's very profound practice that goes really, really deep. But it's and when you start, when you start looking at that, then it becomes very obvious this is not a matter. It just should just get over it, buddy. It really requires the ability to sit very carefully to see very carefully what's arising in our experience to kind of what Michael was asking us to do at the beginning of practice. That kind of sitting things utterly fresh, utterly precious moment to moment.

**Speaker 5** [00:30:36] One thing that came up from this last question was kind of thinking along the same lines like what is the relationship to the practice of joining the practice of joy versus the everyday kind of joy that just comes out of our natural proclivities for liking certain things and just liking other things? And I think you were kind of asking about using that everyday type of joy as some sort of gateway like, Adam said, the practice of joy. I wonder if that is attempting to grasp at the everyday kind of happiness. I don't know.

**Speaker 3** [00:31:25] And why would you think that?

**Speaker 2** [00:31:29] Because.

**Speaker 3** [00:31:41] I think I think if you when you find a way to authentically relate to these practices by authentic, I just mean that you feel clear about what about what it is that you're you're meant to do and not do in relationship to it. That's helpful, then to use those. So there is nothing there is nothing wrong with the normal sense of joy that occurs just spontaneously from seeing a bunch of birds fly out of a tree or something. There's nothing wrong with that, but that is also not the practice of of joy. The practice of joy really is, and it's an activity, something that we do. So it's important to to work, to work that until we get a sense of like, I know what it is, I know what it is that I do and I don't do here. And it's not also about just becoming joyful, being joyful. You could say, Well, isn't that helpful? Because if people see someone who is joyful, it tends to be contagious. So, so the answer can be, yeah, that's that's it's a piece of it. But but I suppose the real measure of it is, is what about in situations where there's very little in an ordinary way that would make anyone feel joyful? What do you do in that situation that would constitute sympathetic joy or joy? We know what it means when we say compassion for someone who's suffering is an activity, but it's also just a response. But the response normally is not really what we call compassion from a deep sense. So in the same way, if somebody comes in and it's their birthday and somebody starts singing, Happy Birthday to them, we can all feel joyful about it. But that is not the profound joy that we're talking about, and yet it's not entirely separate from it. So the same with compassion and loving kindness. Some of these things, in order to really get it, what's going on? We need to come up to the threshold of addressing the question of what are we actually doing here? What is the real benefit to this? It's clearly not just about feeling a little better than the than the average Joe.

**Speaker 2** [00:34:39] Hmm.

**Speaker 5** [00:34:41] You can see how the practice of in the practice of equanimity are kind of they are they seem to me to be kind of the same thing because it's practicing joy in situations which don't naturally necessarily bring you joy, but also in situations that do naturally bring you joy. So you're bringing equanimity to all situations and practicing joy in every situation, not the ones you like.

**Speaker 3** [00:35:12] The heart of the matter is the the aspiration bodhicitta. So this if we if we remember that we can't drift too far from what it is we're doing and the aspiration bodhicitta really is a kind of magnificent aspiration is what we aspire to attain enlightenment. But we don't know squat about what enlightenment is. And so we're aspiring to accomplish this thing, which is the kind of magnificent flourishing that is said to arise when one recognizes the nature of mind itself. And and we work with that in our practice and occasionally we get a glimpse of it. And so we start to have this sense that maybe what is taught is true. That is to say, if you actually recognize the nature of mind and stabilize it, the wisdom that comes with that will result in an ability to act skillfully and wisely in relationship to all situations. It's the actual antithesis of dysfunction, which some people sometimes think. I think that actually if you attain in your dysfunctional, you don't care anymore. If looking at certain aspects of the confused world disappear and we feel like there's a hole there, it isn't just that that's dysfunctional. It could be that we're also on the threat threshold of super function from another perspective. And I think the four Immeasurables really rests on those that aspiration to benefit others. So we might feel a sense of joy, but we might not. The issue here is what can we bring to unbounded beings? And that, of course, the benefit of that, of course, comes back to us. Sometimes we say good to keep in mind that when you do these practices for others, the first beneficiary is yourself.

**Speaker 1** [00:37:26] It's like our practice for when you just feel joyful as you were talking about this. Spontaneously arising that the practice, which is not exactly in this group, but is a major practice, it is a sense of then wishing using that moment to then wish that all other beings would have

**Speaker 4** [00:37:59] this

**Speaker 1** [00:38:00] similar experience. And so standing as a way of that extension is, I think, very much in the flavor of the equanimity in the sense of including all beings and, you know, but slightly different practice than the rejoicing. But but it uses that joyful experience to just go outside of yourself and make it connect, connect with all others in that experience, that gives it much more. It gives it a meaning power.

**Speaker 6** [00:38:42] You brought up the question of, well, couldn't this, could this kind of joy just be sort of grasping after some people with the answer is quite obviously yes. But I think it's important not to be kind of too too clever about kind of figuring out how everything would work in the end and never doing anything that would be inconsistent. We really do have to go step by step. There's kind of as long as we kind of approach it with a kind of a gentle, honest immediacy, I think it's it becomes self-correcting over time. And when we're feeling the feeling that some great joy, whether it's from listening to music or whatever, and we immediately go, Oh, that's just ordinary

**Speaker 2** [00:39:35] people missing the

**Speaker 6** [00:39:39] point, it's kind of it would be much better to to use that moment than to do what doro was suggested to include other beings to open our hearts and connect in that way, as opposed to act with some kind of a progression holding ourselves. Yes, go ahead.

**Speaker 2** [00:39:59] Yeah. Yeah.

**Speaker 6** [00:40:01] As as if that was the only time we were actually grasping

**Speaker 2** [00:40:09] for without, I'm feeling really good.

**Speaker 6** [00:40:16] Democrats are also being like, be mindful of equanimity in a moment like that. And I just thought, you know, empowered to use that energy to good. Feel good about your entire experience, you know, not just this pleasant experience that is happening.

**Speaker 3** [00:40:38] There's a wonderful teaching on on the Dharma in general, which which sounds kind of inane on the first hearing of it. I remember having that experience anyway here, hearing Kalu Rinpoche who never really should have been experienced as a name. But he said the dharma is good in the beginning, good in the beginning and good in the end. In the middle, in the middle of good, in the middle and good in the good, getting good in the middle of winter. Yeah, yeah. And it seemed to me like a puzzling statement, like sort of in the so one

**Speaker 2** [00:41:15] bucket, you know, and

**Speaker 3** [00:41:21] and so it actually took I worked with that a long time. I kept bringing it up and

**Speaker 4** [00:41:29] and

**Speaker 3** [00:41:29] it little by little, it became very clear that what he was referencing and what others in that teaching is that it's good in the beginning. Like you come in, you get instruction for shamatha and and you sit down and you practice shamatha. And the first thing you discover, of course, is you can't do it. And little by little, there there's this kind of cur lecteurs. I can't do it. I can't do it, I can't do it. I will never be able to do it. And then and then it kind of comes up and you realize, Oh, actually, I had

**Speaker 4** [00:42:01] I had

**Speaker 3** [00:42:02] like some clarity there a little bit. And then you start to discover, like if you do enough practice, you start to get this more. And so you're moving in a direction, which we wouldn't say in the middle of the path, but the small middle for that practice, you could say it has a good in the beginning, good in the middle and good. In the end, it wasn't that they all had the same quality. No, it was really in the beginning. There's a certain goodness about it. There's another goodness in the middle and another goodness in the end. And so what it really was was kind of it was a teaser like, you know, you need you need to understand that there is a quality that goes with each of the stages along the way. And it isn't just three, but there's a quality there, and that quality arises naturally, depending upon certain things coming together. And so it's more interesting, more dynamic, more kind of thorough about the process than it appeared in the beginning. In the beginning, we have this thing of I need to quiet my mind. My mind needs to get quiet. I don't know. You take care of yourself. And in the middle, we have this thing of looking after other beings, which also feels in a certain way, not very fruitful,

**Speaker 4** [00:43:35] like

**Speaker 3** [00:43:36] making aspirations for all sentient beings. But but really, what? We're what is this for all sentient beings? What can I do for all sentient beings? And and what you can do, of course, is have the aspiration that all sentient beings would actually discover the causes of happiness and experience it. That's not bad. And pouring that into your mind over and over all day long also bears some fruit. And so whatever the practices that we're doing, we discover some things about the beginning, the middle and the end and how it is that this flowing is actually kind of a marvelous stream to

**Speaker 4** [00:44:19] get into, even though we don't know

**Speaker 3** [00:44:23] where the other end is. But we can make fantastic and actually fairly advanced discoveries along the way. And like the continuous expression of the nature of mind or, as we say, the dharmakaya from sometimes is it's just continuous. Like all of your, all of your experiences are that expression of the nature of the mind. So whether they're good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant, they're still just the expressions of the nature of mind and not inherently good, not inherently bad. So you can also then connect all of that with a sense of equanimity in relationship to one's practice. So the understanding continues to spread and also go deeper at the same time

**Speaker 4** [00:45:13] if

**Speaker 3** [00:45:13] you're open to it. We have to get out of our self judgment out of our sense that we're not good enough, we can't do it. Most of the path sometimes seems like it's a matter of getting myself out of the way so that it could happen rather than accomplishing something that would make it happen.

**Speaker 1** [00:46:14] OK, well, how much time do we have left to? What? I I guess I don't know how to. I mean, I just get so overwhelmed by my emotional response. That I just get so depressed and I don't know what to do with that. I mean, and I think the thing is for me is saying, OK, I'm about giving you the benefit all beans. I mean, on this intellectual level, yes, that works for me, but that also seems like I'm just being a fake. I'm just saying that because it feels good at this,

**Speaker 3** [00:47:26] we wouldn't want you to feel good.

**Speaker 2** [00:47:28] So, no, but I mean, it's not working and it's not working. What about now? What about

**Speaker 3** [00:47:40] now? What am I now working?

**Speaker 1** [00:47:46] Well, I'm not being depressed right now.

**Speaker 3** [00:47:48] Well, that's what I meant.

**Speaker 1** [00:47:50] Yes. OK, so it's working.

**Speaker 3** [00:47:52] So what happened?

**Speaker 1** [00:48:05] Well, what's happening is because what's what's happening around me is all very fine and not reacting to it.

**Speaker 3** [00:48:12] Yeah, it's great.

**Speaker 1** [00:48:16] Mm. But then that means I need to put myself in the situation all the time, so I'm not reacting.

**Speaker 3** [00:48:21] Why not just be here instances where you are?

**Speaker 1** [00:48:32] Well, you're right. You know, I mean, it's an OK.

**Speaker 4** [00:48:48] And, you

**Speaker 3** [00:48:51] know, we've spent some time in the past admiring the qualities of faking for which, for which there are many, many positive things to be said, especially when we discover so many things about ourselves that we would like to see transformed in some way, in some positive way. So if faking brings about that transformation, then we can, you know, say a lot of good things about that. And I think any spiritual path involves a lot of that. You want to change. You have to do something different than what we did before. And little by little, it works or it doesn't. And I actually think you're an example of a working like many others, hard to. Sometimes, and I think Eric's from his comments today also were poignant on this score. The truth is is that when we really heard we start to really do something, we really try something and that trying doesn't necessarily very quick fruit. Maybe because it's so imbued with a sense of I need relief. I need to be out of this place somehow. And and if we if we somehow manage to stay in it and work with the various tools that we have, sometimes we actually end up feeling like the best thing that happened to me was what I thought was the worst thing. And I don't think that's that's never, you know, that's fine for Eric to say about himself. It's not really helpful for someone else to say about Eric or about you or anybody else. But but I do think there's there's some truth in the struggle and the struggle is always personal. It's never codified in the teaching. Somehow, it's always personal. No matter how you try to make it a profound teaching, it's always personal in the end. And I think when we're having a difficult time, we don't want it to be personal. It's kind of like you're sick and you go to the hospital. And they say whether or not this works depends upon your attitude. Thanks very much, but I'm not sure that's what I was looking for while you're cutting me open. But really, really, it is personal. There's a lot of power and being personal. I mean, a lot of people in my I would include myself, and I think Eric Eric speaks very eloquently and poignantly about his experience of depression. We have a long period of time. And of course, he's able to do that because he actually had those experiences and he has worked with them and struggled with them. And then at a certain point, you, you know, climb out of that swamp and you may feel like there is something you have something good to bring that I think I think Eric is a great example of that. So we're talking about joy and joy, and rejoice, I rejoice that you come and sit here and talks about it because so many people are depressed and he's so easy to relate to when he talks about that, you know, he's, you know, he's speaking from his own experience. And so it rises to a level which is really just unbeatable.

**Speaker 1** [00:53:14] And I do have to share the the thing about equity has been very, very good for me to hear today and I was here this morning and this evening and because I knew part of it is just beginning to have equanimity with my own experience.

**Speaker 3** [00:53:30] Yeah.

**Speaker 1** [00:53:33] And I'm obviously not one to do that too much.

**Speaker 2** [00:53:42] You are not alone. Yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:53:47] So that's the thing is it is when you're it's easier to have equanimity with unpleasant experiences, when you also have a healthy dose of pleasant experiences, when it starts to lean heavily in one direction and you begin to wonder whether you'll ever have any of those other experiences. There's really a lot more difficult.

**Speaker 6** [00:54:12] I don't know if it's more difficult. If you have any personal experiences and you have no reason, I won't say the word. But you have no reason at all to even bother looking. Why would you screw up things over your honor roll? Yeah. Don't mess with it.

**Speaker 5** [00:54:34] Sometimes just take the difficult times or the fact that we suffer being like inspiration in that way. It's like it's the other side of the coin. It's something that inspires activities, and it's not something that necessarily has to be holding you back. It can be used as inspiration. I guess.

**Speaker 3** [00:55:15] Was nice discussion seem.

**Speaker 6** [00:55:23] It is very true, and I quickly realized my memory

**Speaker 2** [00:55:32] care and establish games without exception and a.