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**Speaker 1** [00:00:29] And. You.

**Speaker 2** [00:01:35] But he. That's. This is for some reason I just thought I'd break out of here. And Michael may arrive, I have not heard that he's not coming. And I would like to know if anybody has feared.

**Speaker 3** [00:02:31] I have

**Speaker 1** [00:02:31] not heard, but I did

**Speaker 2** [00:02:32] hear that Tara Sullivan is not feeling well and kind of went to take her to the hospital. So this could be something she under her own cognizance. She just recognized there was something going on and she needed the media attention with Sissoko just before we got here, really? So Michael may be involved in that process, but could he maybe get results were involved? He just walked, just walked in the door. Well.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:23] Scientists. So. So, first of all, good morning to all of you. So just a little emergency this morning, my wife had to go to the hospital. Not life threatening. So I'm sure Tara will appreciate your prayers as I also will. And today's are all day set, as is our standard on the first Sunday of the month. So for those of you who are not familiar with

**Speaker 3** [00:11:10] the

**Speaker 1** [00:11:10] program on the first Sunday. We have three periods of meditation now with breaks leading up to a lunch. And it's our standard also that during the breaks on

**Speaker 3** [00:11:56] the

**Speaker 1** [00:11:56] morning's sessions, we observe silence up until the lunch break and then following the lunch in the afternoon at 1:30, we come back together and we have a open conversation about the Dharma in general and the practices that we will engage in this morning in particular.

**Speaker 2** [00:12:30] Amy.

**Speaker 1** [00:12:47] Today, our practice is the practice of calm abiding. But I thought to raise also a few things around the way that we begin our practice, which is that we first turn our minds. Away from all of our worldly concerns.

**Speaker 3** [00:13:30] All of our

**Speaker 1** [00:13:30] world, the refugees, the things that we rely upon in this life. And we exchange those worldly refugees for refuge.

**Speaker 3** [00:13:48] You know,

**Speaker 1** [00:13:49] our own inherent awakened mind, which will come back to in a moment. And then the teachings which

**Speaker 3** [00:14:05] you

**Speaker 1** [00:14:06] describe and prescribe,

**Speaker 3** [00:14:11] the

**Speaker 1** [00:14:12] path by which we come to recognize that awakened the mind. And the support for that path, that practice, that recognition, the exalted song

**Speaker 3** [00:14:33] or

**Speaker 1** [00:14:34] community of practitioners who we recognize as having accomplished

**Speaker 3** [00:14:45] the Dharma.

**Speaker 1** [00:14:50] So they become for us, hopefully and authentic support. So just take a moment here. Before we recite the liturgy together, it says until the summit of Enlightenment is reached. Until the summit of Enlightenment is reached. It's an interesting phrase, because. Mostly, we have no idea what it means.

**Speaker 3** [00:15:45] What is

**Speaker 1** [00:15:46] that enlightenment?

**Speaker 3** [00:15:54] And one of

**Speaker 1** [00:15:55] the ways we can think about it, which is just kind of conceptual, mostly

**Speaker 3** [00:16:03] is.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:07] That inherent awakened nature. At its core, as the ground of our being. That awakened mind, which is not confused, not thoroughly addicted to distraction. An open heart which knows no boundaries. So contemplating these things is helpful, of course. But also, of course, we must come to recognize directly that awakened the mind in our own being.

**Speaker 3** [00:17:14] Another way that we

**Speaker 1** [00:17:16] develop a relationship to that awakened mind that enlightenment is to meet great teachers who

**Speaker 3** [00:17:31] have

**Speaker 1** [00:17:31] accomplished the Dharma and who we can have some experience of their unusual way of being. And through listening to their teachings, their

**Speaker 3** [00:17:50] unusual

**Speaker 1** [00:17:51] manifestation of wisdom. And that is also helpful. So continuing with the opening prayer until the summit of Enlightenment is reached, till I've made that recognition, I and all beings go for refuge to the sources of true refuge, so we've just talked about the sources of true refuge. But what do we mean by

**Speaker 3** [00:18:26] I and

**Speaker 1** [00:18:26] all beings? Oh.

**Speaker 2** [00:18:44] And.

**Speaker 1** [00:18:57] So let's begin with the idea of AI and all the things. We begin with the practice and the experience of compassion. And sometimes I think maybe most of the time. We think of compassion as a nice thing to do. It helps our social interactions. And there's certainly plenty of suffering in the world to feel like giving rise to compassion is a worthwhile goodness. But in the context of aspiring to recognize the nature of mind itself, compassion is the very foundation of that path. The great teacher, Graham Shea has said. We all understand that without that compassion,

**Speaker 3** [00:20:55] we

**Speaker 1** [00:20:55] really do not have a path in the Mayan Buddhist tradition. So it's more than just a nice enhancement, though, of course, it's that 200 percent goes on to say some interesting things about what he calls. The dangers of partial compassion.

**Speaker 3** [00:21:39] Well, we all

**Speaker 1** [00:21:41] suffer from the dangers of partial compassion. And what he's referencing is our inclination as ordinary beings to give rise to really strong compassion for those individuals. We have close connection to

**Speaker 3** [00:22:12] our family

**Speaker 1** [00:22:14] sometimes. Friends on occasion. But not everyone. Those who we feel have harmed us, we find it difficult to give rise to compassion for them. Those who seem to us to be the perpetrators of great damage in the world, we feel it difficult to have compassion for them. And no matter how far we extend this, we can see that still, when we talk about all

**Speaker 3** [00:23:04] beings,

**Speaker 1** [00:23:06] we still are working with a small, tiny fraction. So strongroom room, she goes on to explain, I think very clearly. Partial compassion can actually undermine your path, because when we feel compassion for some, but not for others, we leave

**Speaker 3** [00:23:41] open

**Speaker 1** [00:23:44] almost an invitation. To hold negative. Wishes about those for whom we don't feel compassion if they suffer, we may think they deserve to suffer. And we ourselves may even

**Speaker 3** [00:24:16] engage in

**Speaker 1** [00:24:17] perpetrating that suffering. Under the rationalization that

**Speaker 3** [00:24:29] they

**Speaker 1** [00:24:31] apparently deserve to have that suffering.

**Speaker 3** [00:24:40] So when we

**Speaker 1** [00:24:43] think of all Sentient beings. Mm hmm. There is a functional, practical side to that imagining all sentient beings come into practice by virtue of their connection with you as the practitioner. It's not just wanting to be altruistic, to be kind to all beings, which is important and wish

**Speaker 3** [00:25:19] that,

**Speaker 1** [00:25:21] but it has a functional side, which is very important. Undermining our inclination to think that partial compassion is actually sufficient

**Speaker 3** [00:25:34] when

**Speaker 1** [00:25:35] it's kind of like

**Speaker 3** [00:25:37] a boat

**Speaker 1** [00:25:39] out in the ocean

**Speaker 3** [00:25:41] and

**Speaker 1** [00:25:41] it has a leak. But you think it's not a very big leak? Certainly, we won't sink for a few days. So in the same way, all the negative views about individuals and especially feeling like at least my compassion is better

**Speaker 3** [00:26:06] than nothing,

**Speaker 1** [00:26:08] actually, in a certain way, if you look, you can see it's not better than nothing. It might be better to have nothing sometimes, rather than leave the doors open to negative relationships with others and negative wishes. And so it's a very kind of functional thing when we say all sentient beings until the summit of Enlightenment is reached, I and all beings go for refuge to the sources of true refuge. And we are meant to imagine that in front of us all sentient beings gather by virtue of their connection to us. They gather because they

**Speaker 3** [00:26:53] are afraid,

**Speaker 1** [00:26:58] because they desire freedom from their own confusion, their own mental illness, if you will. And we make this aspiration and this visualization. Partly because we have a sense of its fundamental goodness,

**Speaker 3** [00:27:27] but

**Speaker 1** [00:27:28] we need to also understand that this is the heart

**Speaker 3** [00:27:32] of the Maliana.

**Speaker 1** [00:27:42] And so the question arises, how do we cultivate that compassion?

**Speaker 3** [00:27:54] The way

**Speaker 1** [00:27:54] we cultivate that compassion, while there's many ways, but one of

**Speaker 3** [00:27:58] the

**Speaker 1** [00:28:02] most often taught ways is to think about

**Speaker 3** [00:28:06] all

**Speaker 1** [00:28:06] the various realms of varying experience in this world where people we know and don't know

**Speaker 3** [00:28:17] wander

**Speaker 1** [00:28:20] sometimes hungry. Sometimes violent, bestowing violence on others and having it bestowed upon ourselves. When we see people not just thinking about them, but when we see people

**Speaker 3** [00:28:43] who do not

**Speaker 1** [00:28:44] have enough to eat enough clothing,

**Speaker 3** [00:28:48] they

**Speaker 1** [00:28:48] appear a little crazy or crazed.

**Speaker 3** [00:28:53] The only.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:58] Important response is to plant the seeds of compassion.

**Speaker 3** [00:29:09] And, of

**Speaker 1** [00:29:09] course, when we plant those seeds regularly. There's a natural development of the wish that we might be able to do something about it and not just think about it. But most of the things that we do for others in this life are. Helpful only in the short run. Even if we feed people and clothe people and even if we cure their illnesses. It's all very temporary. Thinking about how difficult it is

**Speaker 3** [00:30:16] to

**Speaker 1** [00:30:16] provide genuine, stable help for others.

**Speaker 3** [00:30:26] We more

**Speaker 1** [00:30:27] and more

**Speaker 3** [00:30:27] feel

**Speaker 1** [00:30:28] that we must do what's necessary in order to accomplish that. So we can see I can see you can see this is how we

**Speaker 3** [00:30:48] nurture

**Speaker 1** [00:30:50] compassion in our stream of consciousness. And not just for those individuals we like and appreciate, but for all sentient beings. One of the great evidences of this is when we meet great teachers. And most of the people in this room have met great teachers. If you work at holding compassion for all beings,

**Speaker 3** [00:31:39] you

**Speaker 1** [00:31:39] definitely come to recognize how difficult it is. It's easy to think they don't deserve it. When we meet Greg Beans, we see that they have a sense of equanimity in relationship to all beings. And sometimes most importantly,

**Speaker 3** [00:32:08] for

**Speaker 1** [00:32:08] those who appeared to deserve it the least. So I take that having met some great means

**Speaker 3** [00:32:25] and the

**Speaker 1** [00:32:25] old Kalu Rinpoche Zhinay and Bokar Rinpoche Zhinay and having spent some time with His Holiness Dalai Lama,

**Speaker 3** [00:32:33] the

**Speaker 1** [00:32:33] previous Karmapa,

**Speaker 3** [00:32:37] one

**Speaker 1** [00:32:37] of the hallmarks of their appearance is that they never seem to be separated

**Speaker 3** [00:32:43] from

**Speaker 1** [00:32:45] their compassion for other beings. It's just always there. They never divide the world into perpetrators and victims. If you're confused and unenlightened, you're a victim. So what more do you need to know?

**Speaker 3** [00:33:13] And so as

**Speaker 1** [00:33:15] we begin today's session, having witnessed in my own mind a certain sense of the

**Speaker 3** [00:33:26] ritual

**Speaker 1** [00:33:28] of giving rise to bodhicitta what we call giving rise to the awakened mind. As a kind of mirror ritual, you recite the words

**Speaker 3** [00:33:45] for a

**Speaker 1** [00:33:46] refuge, you recite the words for holding the welfare of others in your mind, then we move on to the next practice. It's kind of like you're walking up the steps. You don't really have any meaning. You just like, step this one and then you take the next step and then you're on the porch and then you go to the door and you're inside. And it seemed maybe

**Speaker 3** [00:34:13] we

**Speaker 1** [00:34:13] needed to

**Speaker 3** [00:34:15] really think about

**Speaker 1** [00:34:18] how important compassion

**Speaker 3** [00:34:23] and

**Speaker 1** [00:34:23] the aspiration to benefit all sentient beings without exception, how

**Speaker 3** [00:34:29] critical, how

**Speaker 1** [00:34:31] important it is

**Speaker 3** [00:34:33] to our path,

**Speaker 1** [00:34:35] not just to be good people, good citizens,

**Speaker 3** [00:34:42] but

**Speaker 1** [00:34:42] critical to our path. So in Trondheim, she said, it's dangerous. Partial compassion is not actually talking about dangerous in a worldly sense. Partial compassion is great in a worldly sense, better some than

**Speaker 3** [00:34:59] none,

**Speaker 1** [00:35:01] but from a deep spiritual perspective was better. Some than none doesn't work. You really need to imagine all sentient beings and think about the kinds of suffering that are in the world and how difficult many beings have, how much difficulty they have with their own personal suffering and their. So we often say

**Speaker 3** [00:35:38] we do

**Speaker 1** [00:35:39] include others in your meditation practice to imagine them there

**Speaker 3** [00:35:44] and

**Speaker 1** [00:35:45] practicing with you and. And so now I'm feeling a little bit like it's not good to include others in your practice. It's a requirement like you should never sit down to practice without that. And there is reason

**Speaker 3** [00:36:25] why

**Speaker 1** [00:36:27] we always say that. As aspiring for the awakened mind in order to benefit all Sentient beings is the heart of the

**Speaker 3** [00:36:38] path,

**Speaker 1** [00:36:42] you have to treat it as not just a ritual,

**Speaker 3** [00:36:45] but

**Speaker 1** [00:36:46] as really the heart of the path

**Speaker 3** [00:36:50] of

**Speaker 1** [00:36:50] life, the gas in the car, the wheels that it rides on. These things are not just rituals. You have to actually embrace them as the very thing that you are doing. And so we will begin by reciting the refuge prayer three times together and bodhicitta three times together, and let your mind kind of settle into the meaning and the importance of this. That is not just frosting on the cake, it's the cake.

**Speaker 2** [00:37:33] Well, you know, some of the in theories try and or be, we go for a refuge to a story that is true, that is now practice designer Sharon My by the to release all these from the particular suffering and establish them and lasting peace and happiness until this summer. And I didn't always go for Iraq instead of the sources of refuge. And I will now practice the assertion of calm and by being drawn to the release of these particular suffering and who gets to have them and lasting peace and happiness. And until some. And all the kids go for refuge, take us through refuge and now practice the absorption Karmapa in order to release all beings from particular suffering and I great and lasting peace and happiness. And.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:10] Generally and our meditation practices from the Mayan perspective. We divide our practices into two broad categories. The practice of calm, abiding and the practice of inside. Our subject this morning, then. And for most of today is the practice of calm abiding. Calm Abiding has

**Speaker 3** [00:41:14] one really big

**Speaker 1** [00:41:19] advantage over so many other practices and that the instructions for doing it are easy to understand. That's not always the case in this tradition. And Calm Abiding is also while easy to understand, it is also. One could say the most important practice we have. Calm Abiding is about developing the skill and learning how to

**Speaker 3** [00:42:03] allow

**Speaker 1** [00:42:04] the mind to relax. Still. Free of excess distraction. So I like that word access. That means I can have a

**Speaker 3** [00:42:22] little

**Speaker 1** [00:42:25] little distraction, a little compassion. It's another word that translated for stronger and used excess distraction sort of catches you in a way. Is there not an excess? Isn't any distraction in excess? Usually we might

**Speaker 3** [00:42:56] say

**Speaker 1** [00:42:58] any distraction is in excess. Good to have none. But distraction is not

**Speaker 3** [00:43:08] the main

**Speaker 1** [00:43:09] problem

**Speaker 3** [00:43:09] here.

**Speaker 1** [00:43:17] Like in so many areas of our life. Where we

**Speaker 3** [00:43:27] are

**Speaker 1** [00:43:28] tired of doing something and we wish we would or could or even wanted to do something else. The issue is habit. And so if you want to be slightly more. Blunt, we might say the issue is addiction. And this addiction is much bigger than any drug you could be addicted to. The addiction of distraction. The real issue is we love distraction. What could be worse and sitting still? The mines still want goods that. Not only that my legs hurt. The distraction is a little break

**Speaker 3** [00:44:44] from pain

**Speaker 1** [00:44:45] in the legs. Pain in the back, painful memories, painful projections. I want to be free of that. Happy to have a distraction. But this is a mistake. Our big job is to overcome. Our addiction to distraction. In order to overcome our addiction to distraction. Of course, because it is such a deep habit. Is there a deeper one? I don't know

**Speaker 3** [00:45:45] it.

**Speaker 1** [00:45:48] I am intimate with the addiction to distraction. I don't even care what the distraction is. Just give me anything. And so on a real issue here in common binding

**Speaker 3** [00:46:14] then, is this

**Speaker 1** [00:46:19] habit

**Speaker 3** [00:46:22] now

**Speaker 1** [00:46:23] in order to overcome this habit? We have to first investigate it. If our distraction is strong

**Speaker 3** [00:46:36] enough,

**Speaker 1** [00:46:37] we can sit still for hours. A little pain.

**Speaker 3** [00:46:44] No problem.

**Speaker 1** [00:46:49] And when it's done, we can feel a sense of accomplishment, which is OK. It's a first step. But more important is that we notice the distraction. Really, I think a case could be made that if distraction were a person, some of you might say it is,

**Speaker 3** [00:47:42] but

**Speaker 1** [00:47:43] let's just say it's not.

**Speaker 3** [00:47:45] But if it were,

**Speaker 1** [00:47:47] the worst thing you could do for a distraction is to see it

**Speaker 3** [00:47:53] and ignore

**Speaker 1** [00:47:55] it. Just see it. And don't take your eye off of it, because it has a habit of undermining your compassion, undermining your discipline, undermining even your willingness to sit still. So as a starting point, think sort of. In the sense that if you want to swim, you're going to have to get wet. And we can start with this difficult practice, but easy to understand. I'll just take a moment to outline

**Speaker 3** [00:49:20] the cycle

**Speaker 1** [00:49:23] as clear as possible, and then you see if you can do it and how to go through this cycle over and over again. We begin having turned our minds from refuge in worldly things. I mean, at least the intention to invite all sentient beings. To join us. In abandoning the causes of suffering. Embracing the causes of joy and happiness. That's an easy invitation. We imagine all those beans in front of us arriving because,

**Speaker 3** [00:50:42] hey,

**Speaker 1** [00:50:45] sounds good. So as we

**Speaker 3** [00:50:58] bring our

**Speaker 1** [00:50:59] awareness. First to our breath as a stepping in point, enter the practice through your breath by just bringing your awareness to the act of breathing settle, they're aware of the movement of the breath. No commentary necessary, no distraction is necessary. And imagine that by virtue of our intention to benefit all beings,

**Speaker 3** [00:51:43] that this

**Speaker 1** [00:51:45] means extending to the very limits of space as we turn our minds to our breath. They also turn their minds to their breath. We can feel almost the need. To be distracted. That kind of pressure. Which tells us how powerful the addiction to distraction is. So over and over, we reiterate to ourselves, reestablish our intention. Relax. Settle the mind on the breath. Imagine every one of these sentient beings does this. From time to time, unless you are very good at this, you will be distracted. Then you recognize you've been distracted and then the really hard part comes we like the distraction. We want it to be the good thing, not the bad thing. But it's OK, you can have the good thing, the good thing is to see the distraction. When you see the distraction. For at least a few moments, there is nothing to do, but just gaze at it or gaze at the experience if it's an emotion. And gradually, like a horse that's a little wild and has pulled itself away from the tether. You coax yourself back to the breath. If you had to hold your breath, you would do it quicker. Coax yourself back. Bring the mind to the breath, settle again. And this cycle of bringing the mind of the breath and settling and then discovering the distraction.

**Speaker 3** [00:57:14] And then

**Speaker 1** [00:57:16] gently coaxing the mind

**Speaker 3** [00:57:18] back.

**Speaker 1** [00:57:25] The horse does not want to be forced. Doesn't like to be forced.

**Speaker 3** [00:57:37] But if

**Speaker 1** [00:57:37] it's coaxed, coaxed gently back,

**Speaker 3** [00:57:41] little

**Speaker 1** [00:57:42] by little, it will develop the habit of coming back effortlessly. Train it with kindness. And continue like that for just a few moments, and

**Speaker 3** [00:58:14] then

**Speaker 1** [00:58:16] we'll take a short break.

**Speaker 2** [00:59:35] But I think it's very strange and very quickly realized and established all these requirements, such as state.

**Speaker 1** [01:00:18] So we're going to take a silent break. You probably need 15 minutes or so. So there's bathrooms upstairs and downstairs here and also in the back of the kitchen and in the kitchen. Also, there are things to make a cup of tea with if you'd like. So we'll ring the bell and 10 or 15 minutes to come back. Yes.