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**Speaker 1** [00:00:01] We're not

**Unidentified** [00:00:07] going to let anything happen here,

**Speaker 1** [00:00:16] as I've said in the past, that you. And on Thursday, if you did that, you did not get it's more of the same Africans.

**Unidentified** [00:00:52] So it's going to be nothing like this.

**Speaker 1** [00:00:57] OK, I just don't get it. Oh, that was that's a brilliant in comparison to the literature. You feel this kind of way. What's more, if we can all of this tell when you start to finish this very pretty process,

**Speaker 2** [00:01:20] we have said we weren't going to be right. But the reason is because they're

**Speaker 1** [00:01:32] so that's eight point that's one million. Yeah. Well, we agree with the excerpt. So, you know, instead of answering for the question because he asked me that. We will be really happy. So I thought, well, that's a good question I have in front of me, and I think that I think it's one of those things where a question of, well, family planning. So it's a good position to roll government so that they don't create.

**Unidentified** [00:02:17] Yeah, that makes for interesting.

**Speaker 1** [00:02:21] That's true. Her parents took her online retreat, but

**Unidentified** [00:02:28] I think it's just

**Speaker 1** [00:02:33] impossible. He delighted with them, but also it's an interesting place to be. Let's sort of frame that and then we're going to learn about that. So then the question of how is this likely there's no detail that stays in more than an hour. And yes, it is also fascinated by not wanting to know, are you going to have something that makes the world of sports drink? This has been tested today, and that means that we which have a good story where has already happened. So I think I told you, my friend said that no, no, no,

**Unidentified** [00:03:59] no, no, no, no, no. No. I said I would. After introducing the new revelations.

**Speaker 1** [00:04:12] Every now and then, when you're going to get what you said, made you

**Unidentified** [00:04:18] think that you were going to

**Speaker 1** [00:04:26] make some changes?

**Unidentified** [00:04:34] Well, I just find it was. And you know,

**Speaker 1** [00:04:40] I think what I'm doing, you know, I never went through it. I just couldn't. I didn't want that when I really can't describe it. I wanted to just go through the complexity. Whether they kid

**Speaker 2** [00:05:13] they were or did you did anyone announce that it's cleaning up, OK, good.

**Speaker 1** [00:05:25] Yeah, yeah. This afternoon,

**Speaker 2** [00:05:27] yeah, later this afternoon, coming up I and clean right through whatever didn't get them

**Speaker 1** [00:05:36] in this with. Cynthia, yeah, I

**Speaker 2** [00:05:52] have a question about what's appropriate to put on the shrine because there are often times when things happen in the world that for me seem tragic and I think, oh, I should put a picture of that person who was murdered on the shrine. And then I think, Oh,

**Speaker 1** [00:06:13] that's

**Speaker 2** [00:06:14] KCC. I'd probably have to put a picture of the person who committed the

**Speaker 1** [00:06:17] murder on the shrine. And then I

**Speaker 2** [00:06:21] think, oh, other people might see these photos and get upset for one reason or another. And maybe I shouldn't put anything here. So in a public shrine, what's appropriate?

**Speaker 3** [00:06:35] What's the what?

**Speaker 1** [00:06:36] What's appropriate, what's what's appropriate to put up there?

**Speaker 3** [00:06:49] It's a great question. So the question is on a on a public shrine, what's appropriate to put up? And I'll just I'll just leave it at that. But I want to say that this is actually something that even in Tibet, they struggled with this a lot with certain kinds of images that

**Speaker 4** [00:07:21] were

**Speaker 3** [00:07:22] kind of officially restricted to even be viewed by people who had done the appropriate practices and had the appropriate understanding,

**Speaker 4** [00:07:32] you know?

**Speaker 3** [00:07:33] And even today you go to monasteries and you'll see that there's like things over there, some of the paintings and things. Certainly they they can't be inappropriately viewed where people might think they're, you know, might have the wrong idea about what they are. So I think. But I remember once in Ladakh,

**Speaker 4** [00:08:00] you

**Speaker 3** [00:08:02] went into a monastery and

**Speaker 4** [00:08:04] they and they had like a lot of the

**Speaker 3** [00:08:08] paintings covered with cloths, you know, just draped

**Speaker 4** [00:08:13] in

**Speaker 3** [00:08:13] it. And they said, we only bring these out once a year during a certain ceremony. So there are appropriate ways that people can view images for a short time during during the ceremony, and then they'd be covered again. And so. So I think you might draw from that the appropriate conclusion, which is that it's not easy to know what's appropriate because, as you said, somebody could come and have this, but somebody means it's a question mark

**Speaker 4** [00:08:44] and

**Speaker 3** [00:08:45] and you never know

**Speaker 4** [00:08:47] what

**Speaker 3** [00:08:49] response somebody is going to have. So I'm not sure that the question can be resolved by virtue of a well thought out formula.

**Speaker 1** [00:09:04] How's that? You're on your own.

**Speaker 3** [00:09:15] You'll know whether it's appropriate by virtue of the rumors that are spread after the.

**Speaker 2** [00:09:32] So what's appropriate on the KCC shrine and who decides

**Speaker 3** [00:09:35] what's what's

**Speaker 2** [00:09:36] what's appropriate on our shrine and who decides? I mean, I think Cynthia's question is about, you know, if she particularly I mean, I don't mean to speak for you, but you've had ideas of things that you wanted to put on the shrine and didn't. Yeah. Dot, dot dot. And he. Good luck at the shrine and see what other people have done, and I'm feel. Well, if I stick with that, then it would seem to be appropriate to put up people who have died, but only ones that somebody

**Speaker 1** [00:10:27] knows, how are you? Not necessarily. More public figures.

**Speaker 3** [00:10:38] Well, shrines of shrines are funny, things

**Speaker 4** [00:10:44] is

**Speaker 3** [00:10:45] everywhere you go, people will do different things with shrines and. And the shrine that I mean, that's that's here, which was which was there exactly like that when I when I first came here and I never said it should be changed or anything, but it doesn't look anything like my personal shrine. I would never make it put a shrine together like that. But that doesn't mean that this one's wrong. It's totally good. But the shrine is meant to be a support for your practice, for your meditation, and if it's a group of people come, then it should be a support for the for the group's meditation somehow. And you know, if you go if you're going to India and going to a Tibetan monastery, you'll see extraordinarily elaborate shrines with things on them that probably most even most of the monks in the monastery don't know what they're for. Just like a really it's like a museum piece. And then if you were around when Shogun Trooper was around, what you got was a crystal ball and a

**Speaker 4** [00:11:59] candle, and the

**Speaker 3** [00:12:02] candle was in front of a crystal ball. It was always exactly the same. And and that the the crystal ball represented the emptiness of the dharmakaya and the candle was the appearance so clear, empty appearance of all things and that that formula was used widely in a whole world of places. I mean, he had thousands of dharma centers.

**Speaker 4** [00:12:32] So you know,

**Speaker 3** [00:12:34] there is there is something that you can at least easily understand it in the sense that you could say, well, it's the union of appearance and emptiness. But whether or not even the person who could say that would know what that was, there was another thing. But at least you had an easy way to relate to it. And it included symbolically every possible arrangement of the shrine that you could imagine because they all basically were fundamentally empty and clearly appearing.

**Speaker 4** [00:13:04] So, you know, it was

**Speaker 3** [00:13:09] wonderful at the time. I really appreciated it because I couldn't relate to the shrines in fashion at all. So I thought that was really,

**Speaker 4** [00:13:17] really

**Speaker 3** [00:13:18] nice. So also on like on this shrine, for example, this is like a three level shrine. So normally the level where there's candles and water on fresh air, that level is normally reserved for offerings of some kind. And and the second level, we normally put my pictures of teachers and other symbolic things, and at the very top are the Buddhas. So sometimes even a picture ends up on the top. So if somebody thinks that if somebody thinks their teacher is a Buddha, they may end up putting the picture of that person on the top, in which case somebody who doesn't like that teacher will be offended when they see. So, you know, if you think that you can avoid these complications

**Speaker 1** [00:14:16] by, we should make sure

**Speaker 4** [00:14:19] we give up. Yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:14:22] And even if we have a teacher come here, they may very well say, Yeah, you should move that and do this and that. And and another person would would say that indifferently. Quite possibly, it's, you know, that thing about hand grenades and horseshoes.

**Speaker 1** [00:14:42] You know,

**Speaker 3** [00:14:45] if you play horseshoes, you just have to get close. Same with hand grenades. So this

**Speaker 1** [00:14:51] is this is

**Speaker 3** [00:14:53] what it is. It's a matter of getting close to what it is and having a sense of what it is that it's for. So when you look at it, when you gaze at the shrine, you are meant to have a sense of

**Speaker 4** [00:15:06] the richness

**Speaker 3** [00:15:08] of the imagery, of the symbols of the pieces that are presumably and hopefully part of your meditation practice. So the teachers that are up there ideally would be teachers that, you know, if not teachers, that, you know, ideal. It depends if it's your personal shrine. I wouldn't. Images up on it that you're not familiar with, but if it's a shrine where more people come and practice than than having it, a little Richard is also appropriate and helpful. The idea is it's helpful. It's just helpful for your practice. You sit down and you gaze at it. You know, if you're if you've met the Dalai Lama, if you've met the Karmapa, if you've met great teachers, you know to have images of their pictures up, there can be an inspiration. You see it. You recall things and then you feel like it's great. I'm sitting here. I'm about to begin my meditation practice. And then and then you begin and you have that kind of support. I wouldn't just put pictures on my personal shrine. I wouldn't just put a lot of pictures out for the sake of having a lot of pictures. And many people do that, but I wouldn't do that. What do you think? And you're supposed to say that was great, thank you.

**Speaker 2** [00:16:48] It's a good food for thought,

**Speaker 3** [00:16:50] good food for that, yeah. Don't eat the don't eat the shrine. Thank you.

**Speaker 2** [00:16:56] Yeah, that made me think of something when you said food for thought, because if we're doing an advisory on a practice where we're making food offering and we put that on the frying, how long is it appropriate to keep that? I'm not sure I'm not normally.

**Speaker 3** [00:17:20] Normally, offerings made on the Shriners as food offerings are like gone at the end of the day. But but there's exceptions to that. Also like if you're doing a retreat and the shrine is a is an important piece in the retreat, there's some instances where you leave, you leave the food there for the duration of the retreat, except in the case where they, you know, would get moldy or something. But especially with raffle daddies, then sometimes you put something there and it's actually considered a good offering if it does get moldy. So it's it's really these are issues that are that are particular to specific practices that you're doing. And the only reason I mentioned is just because there's a wide diversity of what's appropriate to put on a shrine and what time and how long you leave it there. Normally we aim to the water every night, every day at the end of the practice time. At some point we go to the water, you wipe out the bowls, you turn them over and there's a lot of rubrik and reasons why one would do it in a certain way. But if someone doesn't know about all of that and does it in another way, it would be completely inappropriate to challenge them on that score. So that's all. By way of saying, the shrine can play a really big place in your practice and give you a sense of this is where I sit down to engage in practice and you know, and I manage the shrine in a way I clean it regularly and some people clean their shrine every day. Some people do it every decade, you know? But I think it's important for you to feel like the shrine is a support for your practice. And if it isn't a support for your practice, then make the changes and or get talked to people who know shrines and work something out.

**Speaker 4** [00:19:35] You know, if

**Speaker 2** [00:19:37] there's a ritual in person, I know interesting story about shrines is in this guru named group and who's kind of famous because he was such a mind training practitioner and his teacher in some high lamas were coming to his his place. And that day, because they were coming, he like, shined everything up and did all this. And then he started watching himself like, what's this about? And he realized that he was totally stuck on reputation is how they're going to think of me. And so he took a bunch of ashes and threw it on the shrine right before they came to speak his mind training stuff that come to the mind training every other Thursday before ashes on you. Yeah, well, we'll do that next time if you're pressed to throw them on ourselves. But you know, you see, I mean, it's about practice shrines, about practice. It's not about what do people think when they see it like that. But at the same time, I will say early in my practice when I was a very wild horse and I could hardly sit at all. I would go to my shrine every morning and set up the water and the food and the physicality. That physical thing got me grounded. It was like, I just at least went there, put the water up, said Refuge, ran away from it in the evening, took it down, dedicated, ran away. But pretty soon, you know its habit. And pretty soon you're there longer. So if it supports your practice, great. If it's supporting your praise and reputation, well, it's not going.

**Speaker 3** [00:21:43] To yeah,

**Speaker 5** [00:21:45] this is today about in the shamatha practice, you said a couple of things that that I wanted to to ask a question about. One was was similar to things that I've heard before about noticing when your mind has moved away from the object of attention. And I have said to other folks in this room right here about that, about how that's a common thing that we hear that noticing that your mind has moved is as is as important as anything else in Shamatha. And so I began to think that noticing has some quality that is like enlightenment itself, that it's I'm saying this to myself. I'm wondering if I'm telling myself a good thing or are untruthful thing that in noticing is like enlightenment. It's it has the quality of enlightenment because it is in fact awareness itself. So it seems like there has been an emphasis here since I've been coming here in Shamatha on and practicing noticing on folk on that as as a key element to Shamatha practice. So is that how does that seem to you noticing?

**Speaker 3** [00:23:21] It seems like a lot of things. I'm not noticing is noticing this is big word. You know, it's for example, here's here's a little thing I have to announce about

**Speaker 4** [00:23:43] cleaning, and I

**Speaker 3** [00:23:46] can see that I can see that. Maybe I just notice that when I sit down at the corner of my eye and I don't actually. That's it. I just see it. Is that noticing?

**Speaker 4** [00:24:01] Yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:24:03] Then what's not noticing?

**Speaker 5** [00:24:10] Well, when your mind wavers from the object of attention and you have no you don't see that at all just happens, there's no awareness around it.

**Speaker 3** [00:24:21] So I just see that on my corner of my eye. It's not noticing.

**Speaker 5** [00:24:25] And I say, I think it is business.

**Speaker 3** [00:24:27] Yeah. So let's not notice it.

**Speaker 5** [00:24:31] You are not seeing it or seeing it and not being aware of it, having no awareness about that.

**Speaker 3** [00:24:41] I think there's a there's a little distinction to be made with the awareness piece.

**Speaker 4** [00:24:45] And when

**Speaker 3** [00:24:47] when we are distracted in our shamatha, we're just

**Speaker 4** [00:24:54] we

**Speaker 3** [00:24:55] can have this sense of aversion to the thoughts and feelings and perceptions that arise in the

**Speaker 4** [00:25:01] mind.

**Speaker 3** [00:25:02] And then this morning, the point that I wanted to make was that the thoughts and feelings and perceptions are actually not a fundamental problem. That's that's where we go first, because we have the sense that Shamatha is about calm abiding. Yeah, you know, not hurricanes and tornadoes.

**Speaker 1** [00:25:24] But yeah. Oh yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:25:27] And but we're also familiar with, at least conceptually, the eye of the hurricane.

**Speaker 4** [00:25:35] Yeah.

**Speaker 3** [00:25:36] And and that's I think, maybe an important metaphor in this context because the real issue here is not is not about getting rid of the thoughts and the thoughts and perceptions and feelings and things that arise. Because because we hold this unbounded view like you're taking them to the grave with you and and they're not gone there. They continue. So, so so the practice of sitting in the eye of the hurricane is actually really important so that it actually doesn't matter how fast the wind of our distractions is blowing. If we can just sit there

**Speaker 4** [00:26:29] and remain

**Speaker 3** [00:26:30] conscious of what is going on without engaging in like this is terrible. This is great. This is like, I wish you would stop. I wish you would do other things. Whatever all our usual things, instead of all the usual things, we just sit and notice we want to use the word notice. That's fine. But I think bringing awareness to the noticing is important. OK, so I see this that

**Speaker 4** [00:27:00] it's

**Speaker 3** [00:27:01] I mean, how many things do I see every day that I do not name? I do not. I do not really consciously notice in any way at all.

**Speaker 4** [00:27:11] And I

**Speaker 3** [00:27:11] think really, when we're talking about awareness and more deeply awareness of awareness, now we're talking about an ability to see a fundamental function of the mind

**Speaker 4** [00:27:26] and what it

**Speaker 3** [00:27:27] what it sounds like if you conceptualize it is this is that there is another there's another being or there's another mind that sees itself seeing.

**Speaker 4** [00:27:37] Mm hmm.

**Speaker 3** [00:27:39] But of course, in a way, while that makes sense, when we write it on paper, when we when we try to work with it in our own minds, it's like that does not make sense because we're not actually able to find another mind. And if we do, we probably should get some help.

**Speaker 1** [00:28:00] Yeah, there's a clinical definition for that and goes into merely

**Speaker 3** [00:28:09] merely seeing and knowing that you're seeing and knowing that it is a clear appearance. Is a lot just a just a clear appearance, nothing else added on to it, so forget the emptiness bit, you know, just it's a clear appearance, period. That's it.

**Speaker 4** [00:28:30] No more.

**Speaker 3** [00:28:31] That is is very helpful. And that's that's you know, what we would call this is really kind of the high relative truth as it were. The relative truth is that things appear and they don't have inherent meaning or value. The appearances are just appearances. They're like waves on the ocean. One of one of them could knock you out. One of them could kill you. One of them could knock you free of a wave. It's like boat. But there's no intention. There's no. It's just appearances coming. So I think the same is true, even when we when we think I bodhicitta for the awareness of the suffering of all beings and the wish to resolve that suffering is also a clear appearance, though, when we think like that, when I think I will practice for the benefit of all beings, we generally think I need to drive my practice by virtue of that intention. And that's good. But an even higher good is that you do that without without too much thinking about

**Speaker 4** [00:29:51] it,

**Speaker 3** [00:29:53] like we do with all things most of the things we do. We do without consideration because we're just we're habits. I want to say like habitual beings, but but more accurately, you could almost say we are. Habits and habits are like rain, you know, they fall in. They do things and we don't notice too much as long as we don't get in trouble or cut ourselves or burn ourselves or something, we don't really notice that we're engaging in habit. So the idea of seeing certain things, I think, is really helpful. It's also helpful to note

**Speaker 4** [00:30:35] that

**Speaker 3** [00:30:36] I have seen I see that thing, but I also see it through the habitual eyes. And so when I look at this and I think God, I have to make an announcement just sliding under this. And that's a habit. That's a habit. So how do I deal with that habit? I put it there and I and I think this is my antidote to the habit, the habit of like, I don't do this. So now I do it. I don't like to do it. Now I have to put something there that makes me like to do it. So it's not that there's any value and not liking or liking, but there's a value in recognizing.

**Speaker 4** [00:31:23] Thank you.

**Speaker 3** [00:31:26] It's complicated in one sense, it's complicated. It works best if we can, if we can acknowledge if we can see one

**Speaker 4** [00:31:35] small

**Speaker 3** [00:31:36] thing about our practice that we can put really focus our dharmakaya on. So this is a piece of my training, right? It's like you. You find you find the

**Speaker 4** [00:31:51] thing that

**Speaker 3** [00:31:52] is is is most difficult. And then you just bring every one of the more entertaining aphorisms, every shamatha practice, everything else. You just like,

**Speaker 4** [00:32:04] call in, call everything in,

**Speaker 3** [00:32:07] you know, and just you focus on it

**Speaker 4** [00:32:11] and

**Speaker 3** [00:32:12] make that obstacle your entire practice. And we tend to want to think, you

**Speaker 4** [00:32:20] know, I'm not

**Speaker 3** [00:32:22] really kind of an angry person, but I do have a little bit of anger, so I'll put some focus on that a little bit. It's a dead end. It's a dead end because it's too easy, and it's actually also not that much easier than working on the big stuff. So the big stuff was an inspiration. The little stuff is not much of an inspiration. I mean, if you only have a little anger and you overcome it, nobody even notices, you don't even get any self-aggrandizement.

**Speaker 1** [00:32:59] So if you have a

**Speaker 3** [00:33:01] big anger head and that's really a big habit that you've got and you overcome that, people will start saying, Wow, you really made a change. And while that is not the purpose of the practice, it can also be translated as a kind of support, like a report

**Speaker 4** [00:33:21] card and

**Speaker 3** [00:33:22] people when they see me no longer run

**Speaker 4** [00:33:25] it.

**Speaker 1** [00:33:27] That's nice.

**Speaker 3** [00:33:29] And I mean, we laugh at that, but there are people who actually have that experience that

**Speaker 4** [00:33:34] the people run from them maybe not run,

**Speaker 3** [00:33:38] but they like they move away. They avoid. And that's a that's a terrible experience to have when you realize that people are afraid of you. So, so it's not like all self-aggrandizement is really terrible. A small amount could be an antidote to something. Let's see, how are we making progress? Can we do anything?

**Speaker 1** [00:34:14] So. I. But.

**Speaker 2** [00:34:25] So I've really been struggling with my daily practice recently, and I

**Speaker 1** [00:34:30] don't have to repeat,

**Speaker 2** [00:34:33] I've really been struggling with my daily practice lately. And so this week I thought, Well, it'll be like if I can't practice, I can at least try and look at why I'm not practicing.

**Speaker 4** [00:34:50] Yeah. And.

**Speaker 2** [00:34:58] It occurred to me that the reason I'm not doing my practice was not any of the obvious things that I thought it was, that I'm overwhelmed at work and tired and not sleeping well. It's not like I sleep in and get up at the normal time. I just do something else for that hour. And I realized, OK, if I go up and if I go upstairs to my training room and I sit, I cannot avoid myself like I'm there and my life is there and I don't really want to be there. I don't really want to be in my life right now. And I'll, you know, I'll set the intention when I go to bed or something, intention when I get out of bed and I'll still just find myself doing something else.

**Speaker 4** [00:35:57] You mean mentally? Or do you mean actually like

**Speaker 3** [00:36:01] physically doing physically like

**Speaker 2** [00:36:03] doing something else and not not going upstairs, not sitting down, not doing the practice?

**Speaker 3** [00:36:08] And you don't recognize that that's what you're doing or you do

**Speaker 2** [00:36:13] something about half the time. I do recognize that I'm doing it, but

**Speaker 1** [00:36:19] I still do the same thing out.

**Speaker 2** [00:36:22] And, you know, really, I've been trying to probe that thing and realize I've just I feel scared, which is kind of my my biggest thing. Like, I'm not an anger head. I'm I'm somebody who is afraid.

**Speaker 1** [00:36:42] Period. Yeah, yeah.

**Speaker 2** [00:36:45] And there's a whole bunch of stuff going on in my life that makes me feel I like security and the lack of comfort that I'm looking at that and thinking, Well, this is really bad, really bad, like my practices is supposed to be my refuge when I'm overwhelmed with fear. And if I can't, if I can't go to it, if I can't cling to it now, and it's just a bunch of disruptive stuff about my work and my financial life, how the hell am I going to do it when I'm dying, when I'm sick, when I'm by afraid of the destruction of this body? And I'm just wondering, like, how do I how do I make that jump so that I'm actually willing to work with the thing that's hardest?

**Speaker 3** [00:37:59] It's all

**Speaker 4** [00:38:00] right.

**Speaker 3** [00:38:07] I really appreciate your raising this issue. I think that it's so common. We all we all want to work. We all want to put more time into our practice than we do. And I think it's that's the case, whether you practice an hour a day or 12 hours a day. I want to because we have a sense of kind of even a confidence that that's how you that's how you get the promise is that you engage in the practice and you

**Speaker 4** [00:38:48] hear

**Speaker 3** [00:38:49] almost like a bulldozer like I move through it, whether I want to do it or not, whether I enjoy it or not. But that's also, you know, that's what that's what you read. That's what's in the books. And then we we can read like so-and-so was successful in the overcame all these obstacles because it just plowed through it over and over and over again. And I can't do that. And so therefore, my report card doesn't look so good. That's not an example, by the way, that's actually my report card doesn't go

**Speaker 1** [00:39:37] just like that.

**Speaker 4** [00:39:40] Well, I think I

**Speaker 3** [00:39:42] think that

**Speaker 4** [00:39:43] that

**Speaker 3** [00:39:44] that a significant fraction of my Madonna practice has been plagued over the last 40 years, even with wanting too much. And so. So we try to do too much.

**Speaker 4** [00:40:05] And and we.

**Speaker 3** [00:40:10] And the result is, is that it doesn't go well. I make this promise to myself. I meditate every morning when I wake up for half an hour. And then in the middle of the day, at lunchtime, I'll do a half an hour and I'll do a half an hour. So we've got about, you know, an hour and a half in there while we're committed to practice. But somehow it doesn't happen. And little by little, then we get kind of depressed about it. So we don't. We try all sorts of things. We go and get some teachings from somebody. Or maybe we go somewhere new because, you know, it's obvious that Jesus didn't work for me when I got sick.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:56] Oh, that work. And sometimes

**Speaker 3** [00:41:00] it does. It's not like it doesn't. And I and I don't think that it's phony. It's like, we're really honestly trying to get to the bottom of this thing. And and so that's that's why I come in this morning and I say, let's look at bodhicitta a little closer than we normally do so that we can have a relationship with it in another tool in the toolbox. And we all know

**Speaker 4** [00:41:27] that you really only need one tool

**Speaker 3** [00:41:33] and it could be one of dozens of tools. All you need is the tool. You actually use the rest of skill to count that. And you can't work with all of them at once. And everybody says you only really need one.

**Speaker 4** [00:41:48] Hmm.

**Speaker 3** [00:41:50] But also,

**Speaker 4** [00:41:52] we're

**Speaker 3** [00:41:52] Americans,

**Speaker 1** [00:41:54] you know,

**Speaker 3** [00:41:56] which translates into impatient. We get things done. So if we're not getting things done, then we feel that's not good. I'm not. I'm not living up to the standard here, and most of us will be cynical about Americans, which is a strength and a weakness at the same time. And then but then we get cynical about ourselves, which is not a strength that's actually really debilitating.

**Speaker 4** [00:42:28] So all of

**Speaker 3** [00:42:30] that boils down to when I really think is skillful is that we each need to find the tool or the very small number of tools that actually works for us. And and sometimes it's helpful to just explore those things like, for example, I have found, generally speaking, if I am. And you might find this weird, but

**Speaker 4** [00:43:08] leading

**Speaker 3** [00:43:09] and working with a three year retreat is not always a support for practice.

**Speaker 4** [00:43:15] Hmm.

**Speaker 3** [00:43:15] You know, it just isn't. People get into conflicts and then you help them with the conflict and you feel good about the conflict. They feel good about the conflict and you feel like, well, I was good and then you realize I didn't actually do any practice. And then there's things you have to do. And so then you do those things and then another day goes, it's just like, it's like real life.

**Speaker 1** [00:43:40] And the fact is the fact that it's,

**Speaker 3** [00:43:44] you know, this kind of holy

**Speaker 1** [00:43:45] endeavor to me just is not enough to ring the bell on that one.

**Speaker 3** [00:43:57] So what I find is go for the

**Speaker 4** [00:44:02] small, skip

**Speaker 3** [00:44:04] the big and go from the small

**Speaker 1** [00:44:06] circle.

**Speaker 3** [00:44:08] You know that I remember with somebody as an issue because they were having conflict and they were not able to deal with it in the way that they thought they should deal with it because they're in a long retreat and they have all the tools. They know the tools and they still are yelling at each other. And so I said, you need to take a piece of paper and write something on in the back of it. It's really honest. I hate my practice. OK, now there's something to work with

**Speaker 1** [00:44:42] in know, know,

**Speaker 3** [00:44:46] new starting points. No, no. It doesn't have to be all

**Speaker 4** [00:44:50] the time, but

**Speaker 3** [00:44:52] every hour or two is pretty good. And what it means is that

**Speaker 4** [00:45:00] instead of

**Speaker 3** [00:45:01] trying to resurrect. The Amazon River and the jungles down there,

**Speaker 4** [00:45:15] you

**Speaker 3** [00:45:16] can see

**Speaker 4** [00:45:19] just classy.

**Speaker 3** [00:45:21] So you say, for example, that person who I'm having a conflict with. They deserve

**Speaker 4** [00:45:28] enlightenment

**Speaker 3** [00:45:29] as much as I do. I actually believe that teaching

**Speaker 4** [00:45:33] that teaching, I believe

**Speaker 3** [00:45:35] they deserve as much as I do. No one of us is able to do it. Therefore, I can feel bad about both of us,

**Speaker 1** [00:45:44] you know, so

**Speaker 3** [00:45:46] it is a seed. I feel bad about

**Speaker 4** [00:45:48] my intransigence and in my

**Speaker 3** [00:45:54] ability to create conflict, and I feel bad about my inability to fix it somehow. I plan to. I mean, you've got a bag of million seeds

**Speaker 4** [00:46:05] anyway, right?

**Speaker 3** [00:46:07] You'll never run out of seeds. You could throw handfuls of seeds and you'd never run out of them. But what you really want to do is plant one seed once he's retired. In this moment, I do believe all sentient beings, even those who feel certain they're happy, are actually probably mostly engaged in exactly the things that are going to make them miserable. And therefore I give rise to the wish that I could do something about

**Speaker 4** [00:46:38] that done really that snap, isn't it? I mean,

**Speaker 3** [00:46:48] just take something that you feel confident in some small thing and just do that

**Speaker 4** [00:46:55] planting

**Speaker 3** [00:46:56] in this case, plant is you just planting a seed in your own

**Speaker 4** [00:46:58] mind?

**Speaker 3** [00:47:03] I wish that I could be around people that I'm conflicted with, who from time to time don't like me and have at least occasionally

**Speaker 4** [00:47:14] I

**Speaker 3** [00:47:15] wish for their well-being. And occasionally see them as as worthy beings who are troubled, like I'm troubled. And that's it.

**Speaker 4** [00:47:27] Don't move on.

**Speaker 3** [00:47:31] If you could do that, let's say 25, 30 times a day. My guess is everything will

**Speaker 4** [00:47:38] change and

**Speaker 3** [00:47:40] there's no there's nothing. We're not looking for anything. We're not looking for calm.

**Speaker 4** [00:47:45] The calm mind.

**Speaker 3** [00:47:47] You know that thing that never existed. Ask, Why do I want it since I've never seen it?

**Speaker 4** [00:47:57] So every

**Speaker 3** [00:48:04] time that we're meditating and we decide I'm taking a 10 second break, that's when we're meditating,

**Speaker 4** [00:48:13] you know,

**Speaker 3** [00:48:14] that's the truth. That really is that's where it's supposed to happen. The formula by which

**Speaker 4** [00:48:22] we

**Speaker 3** [00:48:23] meditate formally is a formula that leads us to the place where we let go of the formula and discover the actual meditation. So when we're sitting and engaging in the practice and it's not working.

**Speaker 4** [00:48:39] Whatever that means and

**Speaker 3** [00:48:42] we decide or we hear things about. Time for one minute or 10 seconds break. Whatever it is,

**Speaker 4** [00:48:49] we have to.

**Speaker 3** [00:48:51] What's the instruction? Let go of the meditation. Don't reject it. Don't hang on to it. Don't try and put a placeholder. So remember where I was in my series of distractions,

**Speaker 1** [00:49:05] which are really more important? You know, don't do anything,

**Speaker 3** [00:49:11] just

**Speaker 1** [00:49:12] stop for a moment.

**Speaker 3** [00:49:16] And if thoughts arise, well, of course, thoughts arise. So you're actually moving into a much bigger minded place than

**Speaker 4** [00:49:24] an hour or a little tiny

**Speaker 3** [00:49:27] pinpoint center of the hurricane. We move into the bigger place where everything becomes possible just for 10 seconds. So that's a pretty potent seed. Plant 20 of those a day,

**Speaker 4** [00:49:50] and you have a garden,

**Speaker 3** [00:49:53] it's so simple. Personally, that's what I have found in my own experience to be the most helpful. I can be totally offended by something that somebody says, and if I can just get three seeds out, the entire highway changes its direction.

**Speaker 4** [00:50:24] But I don't

**Speaker 3** [00:50:24] want to just change the

**Speaker 4** [00:50:25] direction. I want deep

**Speaker 3** [00:50:29] realization. And so I don't plant the three seeds and the rest of the day, I'm miserable. And not only that, because I'm miserable. I hold the person who I am trying to help responsible for my misery. And this is not the path. So the game here

**Speaker 4** [00:50:48] is how many seconds

**Speaker 3** [00:50:52] can you remain on the

**Speaker 4** [00:50:53] path?

**Speaker 3** [00:50:55] How fast you are going is irrelevant. The direction and all kind of irrelevant. How fast? How long can you just remain there? A sit down in front of your shrine and and you're distracted, so you just kind of like acknowledge that if you if you can't just put your awareness on the distraction, which is actually a very kind of exalted practice, in fact, because it's like you've never written a bucking bronco before and you decide you're going to ride one, that it really only takes intention. The next thing you're in the

**Speaker 1** [00:51:31] hospital so you

**Speaker 3** [00:51:35] don't get in the hospital. We just we just feel like I'm wasting my time. It's not working.

**Speaker 4** [00:51:42] And the

**Speaker 3** [00:51:42] thing is, is that we all we need to do is take one side of all the practices we've done and just engage in it for 10 seconds

**Speaker 4** [00:51:51] and then

**Speaker 3** [00:51:52] totally let go of it. Totally lack of it. Make a mark on the paper. It doesn't have to be. It's just the market doesn't point in anything. It's just a mark. But in that moment of crisis, I did it. I do what it is. Don't pay any attention to that. Somebody. You know, you just you just they kind of acknowledge. I brought my mind to the object. It rested there about as long as a marble resting on another marble rests. But it's OK because I saw it and it went by and is OK, and I'll have a thousand of those today. But 30 times today, I'm putting the marble

**Speaker 4** [00:52:36] on the marble.

**Speaker 3** [00:52:38] And that can just be. I bring my mind to the place of whatever my distraction is. Whatever my emotional state is, whatever my perception is, this memory going through my mind. I just bring awareness there just for a moment. I just kind of rested. And then I'm distracted. It would have been better start before we're distracted, but in the moment that put my mind there, I actually saw better to equip them instead of waiting until I was distracted. That'll be tomorrow. Today, I put my mind on it. That's it.

**Speaker 4** [00:53:19] So check.

**Speaker 3** [00:53:23] Don't put any description around. Check, just check

**Speaker 4** [00:53:27] and

**Speaker 3** [00:53:28] move on to another one. And you can. You can do this a thousand times a day. You walk in from wherever you are and you're walking by a window. You gaze out the window and you can hear yourself say, Oh, it's a beautiful day. Well, that's a little distraction. You just put your awareness on that experience on that thought. Another thought arises, You just put your awareness. You're just done like you want to stop way before you're carried away. You just want to do it a thousand times. It's like a boat going down Niagara Falls, you know, there's places where you could get out of the boat. But if you're if you can't quite bring yourself to because it's too exciting, then you get the big excitement.

**Speaker 1** [00:54:21] In this case, you know,

**Speaker 3** [00:54:23] when our meditation, we have to stop before it goes south

**Speaker 4** [00:54:30] or

**Speaker 3** [00:54:30] whatever direction it all goes, that's the trick. Bring your mind

**Speaker 4** [00:54:36] there and stop.

**Speaker 3** [00:54:37] That's what we're doing when we say, take a little break down here or go on agglomerate during the retreat he like. He like shorten the space between the breaks. You can shorten the space between the breaks down to a second. If it works and you actually get one second where you feel like that was it, that's now. Now you know what it looks like. So don't imagine that because you kind of mentally you need to catch a marlin. You just keep doing it like. Thousand times a day would be great. Ten times a day would be really, really good.

**Speaker 2** [00:55:20] So can I just. So what you're saying is if you're bringing your awareness all those times, every day I'm planting the seeds, then it isn't as important to be sitting on the cushion in front of your shrine. If you're able to carry the practice and I mean, if that's what it takes,

**Speaker 3** [00:55:46] planting the seed as a kind of carrying the practice, but it's very short. So not to lose track of what we want to do is we really want to stabilize it so so that it's just like we're there like a where like all the time. So I I find that helpful to remind myself as well. That's what we're really doing. That's what we really want to do. But that's not where we are. So I would like to have a garden filled with a multitude of vegetables and things too. But I can't have that tomorrow. I can't have it today. So for the next few days or the next few weeks, I'm going to have to go to new seasons and buy my vegetables. But at some point, if I keep putting seeds out there, the garden will be there. So if I keep bringing my mind back to my current experience just for a moment, like putting marble on the marble, it's not going to stay. I will have the experience of having put it there carefully, then let go of it and think falls off.

**Speaker 4** [00:56:50] It's OK,

**Speaker 3** [00:56:52] you put it there. You know how to put it there. You do that by putting it there and putting it there and putting it there and putting it there. And then at a certain point, you realize this can't possibly the stable marble on the marble cannot possibly be the actual practice. But the practice was learn how you put it, how you place it there. And at some point your awareness will remain stable while the marble rolls

**Speaker 1** [00:57:22] off

**Speaker 3** [00:57:24] and you'll be distracted, but your awareness of the distraction becomes the practice, which is actually the practice.

**Speaker 1** [00:57:40] OK. Like it or not. It is very clear to me. I quickly realized that and

**Speaker 3** [00:57:57] established all these discussions and

**Speaker 1** [00:58:01] date.

**Speaker 2** [00:58:42] Before we can, we can we can announce that written down. I'm Eric Promi and chosen movies are starting a class on death and dying. It's going to be Sunday afternoons. I'm looking at Ryan for concert starts October 2nd, which is next Sunday, next Sunday, and it'll go through six or eight eight consecutive Sundays, eight consecutive Sundays for a couple hours in the afternoons. And there's a flier up there.

**Speaker 1** [00:59:19] And there's also there's some new flowers that are planted on the bulletin board. There's that. There's a poster for that event. There is also a Mahamudra support group class, the last one in the series, which is the following weekend and Saturday morning, and focuses on the mind of the practice and training. And there's the main training so group, which is come up, which is second and fourth,

**Speaker 5** [00:59:51] second and fourth Thursday of every month. Yes.

**Speaker 2** [00:59:53] So that's going to pay 30. We started we had a delightful time in misleading that post with me, and we're having a good time. And the new book for it is out on the bookshelf called Essential MindTree,

**Speaker 5** [01:00:08] and it is posted on the

**Speaker 3** [01:00:09] website on the website.

**Speaker 2** [01:00:12] It is here now on the bulletin

**Speaker 1** [01:00:15] board and there is a children's blessing in Nevada within the last Sunday of October the 30th, I believe.

**Speaker 2** [01:00:22] Yeah, all children are welcome to that welcome.

**Speaker 3** [01:00:28] OK. Are you going to draw that line

**Speaker 2** [01:00:33] of your young adult paramita this Friday? Young Adult Group Friday at seven 17 and all the groups that see her? If you have questions and it's cleaning day. There's a lot of positive momentum to be gathered by cleaning our space. So out in the kitchen, there's a bulletin board with little caps on it. It is pulling off. Turn it over. It would do the task. There's cleaning things up there and if everybody does when it takes 20 minutes and it turns beautiful here. So I guess I just want everybody, everybody to my friend and neighbor Angela was really delightful. Typekit Thank you so much. Do you want us to all carry our actions out? Oh yeah, thank you. You help people with the idea that everybody carries their concerns out to the sports and thank them. And then you can clean the floors and bring them precautions back. So whatever kitchen you're sitting on, and if there's an extra one, got it to beat them lovingly on the porch, then I can thank you. Thank you. Literally.

**Unidentified** [01:01:56] Yes, you have. Are going to be OK,

**Speaker 1** [01:02:03] because if you.