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**Speaker 1** [00:00:01] Thank you. It's the first lady's turn,

**Unidentified** [00:00:06] 63 year old victim, justice sister.

**Speaker 1** [00:01:16] Yes, Pat,

**Speaker 2** [00:01:20] it seems like the the meditation that we did today, just you noticed your mind's, you know, chattering away and then you you just watch it. You're not buying into it. It feels a lot like shamatha with an object in a way because,

**Speaker 3** [00:01:46] um,

**Speaker 2** [00:01:48] what I notice is when I'm attached to whatever it is that my mind's thinking about. And so I'm constantly letting it go. So. And then with the when you have an object, your and your mind wanders, you're bringing it back to the object. So how is that any different?

**Speaker 1** [00:02:22] That's a good question. There are a number of differences. One is that in the case of. Just resting their awareness on the stream of consciousness unfolding and. You're not actually applying an antidote when you're distracted, so ideally you're engaging in the practice and you

**Speaker 3** [00:03:14] kind of have

**Speaker 1** [00:03:14] a sense what you're doing. You understand that there's nothing there's no antidote necessary. The stream, the mental stream is just unfolding and you're just witnessing it. Not even, you know, placing your awareness on it like you would on the car. Sure thing. But rather than that, you just see it happening. And there's another piece of it which is relevant also, and that's the. So the waves of settlement and coarse thoughts calm down in their own ground. They calm down their own ground for a number of ways, you could say. One is they never left, the ground never leaves the ground. And so it actually doesn't

**Speaker 3** [00:04:06] calm

**Speaker 1** [00:04:07] down. Calm down a little anyway. Anyway, it doesn't. It doesn't calm down from, uh, from one place to another. And I think it can get confusing because it can feel like there's a number of things going on here which you brought up that there are there's the mental content which is unfolding and I'm putting my awareness on it, which fundamentally means

**Speaker 3** [00:04:37] the

**Speaker 1** [00:04:37] mistake here is fundamentally means that you are putting your own minds on one thing after another, not on the stream

**Speaker 3** [00:04:44] that's unfolding.

**Speaker 1** [00:04:46] So if you find that your awareness is first, you remember something in your, let's say you're angry. So you put your awareness on the anger, then what actually happens is that does dissolve back into the ground. But then there's something else. And so you put your awareness on that pain. So it's one object after another that you're putting your awareness on. I think we all do that when we do this practice in the beginning. But the idea here is is not to bring your awareness to each of those objects, but to see how the things fold back in to the ground

**Speaker 2** [00:05:30] so you're not consciously letting go of anything, you are just kind of letting it run its

**Speaker 3** [00:05:36] course.

**Speaker 1** [00:05:39] Yeah, OK. Oh yeah, I would say it's not bad, but but the difference is, is that you're not letting it run the course in the sense that we always let it run. The course is to say I'm always agitated by the content of my mind. And so I must be doing it right because I'm afraid.

**Speaker 2** [00:05:59] So I'm aware of that.

**Speaker 1** [00:06:03] Yeah, and it's really not the the idea here is that everybody can witness, especially when there's something really difficult. Like, I had an argument with somebody that's really bugging me. But what you know is as as long as you are trying to fix that or trying to develop a better argument that will convince somebody of something as long as you're working like that with the idea that this is how I'll get rid of it. We all know it doesn't work. It doesn't get rid of it. So the idea here is not not to get rid of anything, but to discover that if I don't push it or try and stop it or do something with it, try to manipulate it. In broad terms, it will disappear. It will just dissolve. And and that's that's more fundamentally the point than the individual things that arise as objects that we might put our ideas on. But it's it's hard. It's more difficult, easy to understand, right?

**Speaker 4** [00:07:16] It's so many, it seems like to me, so many of the basic instructions like that cleaning and aversion create disturbances suffering in the in the urgings to accept what is and to love. What is this worth it all? And it all ties in to this of being the witness, because the more you try to get into that stream and question it or push it away or try to change it, try to manipulate it, the more disturbed that stream becomes. Yeah. So to be in being in the witness state seems to be what all of these other these things are pointing to to avoid disturbing the stream.

**Speaker 1** [00:08:03] Yeah, I think it's it's it's a witness that. Well, my own proclivity. And so there's there's a lot of similar teaching, some is not unique, but but I just pull the Karmapa piece out of the Mahamudra aspiration prayer and thought, Well, we'll just see, you know, this is a really nice, authoritative few lines here, so let's see where that goes. But I think, you know, the draw is that it's actually not difficult to understand. So conceptually, when you when you hear it, you can have an easy aha. Yeah, that makes sense. And then when you contemplated that can make sense. When you sit down to do it, then I think Pat's experience also becomes like, who? I got it. I got a piece of anger. I got a desire.

**Speaker 3** [00:08:58] I have a, um, jealousy.

**Speaker 1** [00:09:01] I've got this thing going on, that thing going on.

**Speaker 3** [00:09:04] Damn, I

**Speaker 1** [00:09:04] forgot my appointment tomorrow afternoon. Is I just one thing after another? And so it can become totally busy, like your awareness is going there and that's going on there. And. It's like a sideshow to a circus. Right? Things popping up and you're throwing things and throwing things down doesn't work here. Here, ideally, it's the whole experience that what are you? You don't need to figure out a way for it to dissolve back into the ground. You couldn't stop it

**Speaker 3** [00:09:42] from doing that.

**Speaker 1** [00:09:45] So the idea is, can you sit still and just watch it happen? Because if you get good at that now, now you really have something. OK. OK. All right. OK, so I was thinking of this river is the river of London loving kindness flowing into

**Speaker 5** [00:10:10] this whole ocean of shamatha and his loving

**Speaker 1** [00:10:12] kindness because it carries everything. It doesn't discriminate. So I'm wondering in the world, the reason we have so much strength is because there is so much discrimination, so much judgment, and I'm going to do this. I disagree with you. I'm going to, you know, and it goes on or not just like in our minds. So does that mean that in the world, if we were practicing, we shouldn't take science.

**Unidentified** [00:10:59] You know, the.

**Speaker 1** [00:11:02] No, I'm really struggling with this, really. And, um, you know, sometimes I think I do, sometimes I think I do, and it's a different answer.

**Unidentified** [00:11:12] Know, of course.

**Speaker 1** [00:11:19] Oh. It's a different practice. So let's let's divide the two into them, into their respective pieces. One is we have a practice here. It's common practice. This Karmapa combined practice, in essence, is a practice of no agenda. That's essentially it. So, so you're right to raise that question. Well, what about skillful means in the world activities, action speech? You know, all these things that we use to benefit others and hurt others, depending on which way we're wielding the sword? But but the idea here with the practice is no agenda. What arises is there's nothing in that that says you shouldn't do anything in the world. You shouldn't, because the extension of that is you shouldn't help anybody who needs help you. All right. If you do that anything, I'm not sure what that looks like,

**Speaker 3** [00:12:29] how

**Speaker 1** [00:12:30] I feel personally, that it's an impossible standard to meet and I contemplate it. I can't find why I would want to be there. So that should not be the case in this, in this example. I think we should be able to contemplate the practice and come to a clear conclusion that I would like to be able to do that. But see, there's no there's no moral injunction in that practice. What what flows down the river flows down the river. I'm not there to clean the river up. So I'm not engaged in any kind of eco ecology of anything, really. I'm just watching. I think this goes back actually to. That I've always liked in many paintings, ancient paintings is the same sitting by a river. And it's such a common image like spiritually and I and I tend to associate it with exactly this practice. Like, you're just watching it go by the river is just the

**Speaker 3** [00:13:44] metaphor

**Speaker 1** [00:13:45] for the flow of the mind. And then, just like the mind, the river is absorbed back into the ground. It may evaporate and come, you know, all sorts of things that that at some point may actually not be in accordance with what we're doing. But generally speaking, it's a pretty good metaphor. You're not doing anything it, but you are aware of what's happening. So I think we could also make a case once we once we get up from our seat. And then the issue is, so how do I help myself and

**Speaker 3** [00:14:24] others in

**Speaker 1** [00:14:26] this world? Then I think a case can be made that having developed the ability to abandon agendas. You are in a better position to give rise to a skillful one when it's

**Speaker 3** [00:14:41] necessary, but

**Speaker 1** [00:14:43] mostly all we have is agendas just continuously. And they do battle with each other, you know, it's like there are warriors, we send them out and they do battle and come

**Speaker 3** [00:14:54] back and report

**Speaker 1** [00:14:55] whether you lost that one. And then we say next time, kill them. Not quite to kill prisoners. It's not quite untrue. But yes, that happens next time. Kill them and you can see how it goes. So I think more could be done. This, you know, than the teaching on this is part of the Mahamudra system. It's also part of the Dzogchen system. This business of putting the mind on the stream and not trying to fiddle with it by becoming very clear and present with it is is, I think, the piece of all the piece. I don't want to say that it really is

**Speaker 3** [00:15:40] that, but it's a piece of

**Speaker 1** [00:15:42] all of the really advanced teachings on the advancement of. To be it, you have to be able to just see and let it be. Well, that's.

**Speaker 6** [00:15:55] That position and then, you know,

**Speaker 1** [00:15:59] there's always arguments. And it from other quarters. It just always happens like 10:00. And that's what's in that mainstream.

**Speaker 5** [00:16:14] And so even on so like you're saying, you have to maintain that equanimity in the midst of action.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:26] So this is like a practice of equanimity in excess of experience or whatever experience arises,

**Speaker 3** [00:16:32] I I work with that.

**Speaker 1** [00:16:35] And I think that there's three ways teams are also helpful in understanding it because you're right, there's nothing. There's nothing that cannot be conceptually undermined or built up. But one of the advantages of dividing the pieces of the approach into the three wisdoms is the first one allows you to have all the conceptual stuff you want. You work through that, at least to some degree. And then the issue of contemplation comes, which I always have to say most people appear to be quite good at the conceptual and not too bad at the meditation, but terrible at the contemplation, which is actually in the middle one. I think that's largely our culture. Also, you can go to college and get three Ph.D.s and never get any instruction in contemplation. You might even attend meditation classes, but contemplation is likely to not

**Speaker 3** [00:17:35] be there

**Speaker 1** [00:17:37] in the contemplation of peace is important because that's where you actually personalize it. You know, once you're in the meditation, the personalization is finished. It's like, you're just now you're doing it. You built the boat. You're out in the middle of the ocean. Contemplating what went wrong is probably not helpful. So I think that those three, those three wisdoms

**Speaker 3** [00:18:08] are

**Speaker 1** [00:18:09] a great prescription for how to approach these different meditations because we want to bring all of it in the end to experience, because in the end, it's the only

**Unidentified** [00:18:22] other matters. OK, so

**Speaker 1** [00:18:31] the contemplation

**Speaker 6** [00:18:32] is, is the British

**Speaker 1** [00:18:34] yeah, it's the bridge, yeah,

**Speaker 6** [00:18:36] and we can understand things up to a certain point because we're good at understanding certain kinds of things, but the kinds of things that we're setting the ground for here are kinds of things that we don't understand yet. So it actually takes some work to really sort it out and try the meditation and. See what to you. How did that relate to what we were learning and studying really think about it? And then in that act of contemplation, that act of contemplation can actually open into moments of meditation when you go, Oh, I could look this way. And then then you then you have that, it's more important. But there is one thing that you said about

**Speaker 3** [00:19:29] then we

**Speaker 6** [00:19:30] then we have to sustain equanimity and there is something. And the word that Michael used was cultivate equanimity. And there's something in the way that we often talk about this where there is it's kind of like the right way to do it. And it was almost implied in the way that you asked the questions that begin, Should I do it this way or should I do it that way, as though one of them would be kind of the correct way? And some of it is more. It's just really more a matter of trying and failing over and over again to test it out. That's what cult cultivation actually looks like that, you know, so we there, it requires a kind of courage and also a great deal of humility and honesty to do work in that space where we don't we won't have the kind of moral certainty. I've got it. I've got the right way. Nailed it. This is a really clear case for contemplation. Really, really helps the kind of review check. But understanding what it is that we're cultivating, how how would I how would I take the next step? In sort of opening my equanimity for what we might be, the thing that I can do today. That's that's uh, that's a more effective thing in the long run.

**Speaker 1** [00:20:59] What it can do is

**Speaker 3** [00:21:02] is

**Speaker 1** [00:21:03] taking a position and meeting opposition. Then what I need to hold on to is the aspiration for loving kindness, to cultivate loving kindness in every situation. My response is. You know, so that gives me a guideline. And, you know, so sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't seem to work

**Speaker 3** [00:21:44] and

**Speaker 1** [00:21:45] there is where the experimentation is.

**Speaker 6** [00:21:51] All cultivation requires a good experiment, yeah, exactly.

**Speaker 5** [00:22:06] So it's a little. The question is slightly long, but then you get to the practice that you did do so this year, I've I expose myself to, you know, the monkey

**Speaker 3** [00:22:21] cheeks and

**Speaker 5** [00:22:23] one came from a guy who was Theravadan monk. OK. And he he has, you know, he talked about he's written

**Speaker 3** [00:22:35] a

**Speaker 5** [00:22:35] compendium on them. Now the and then they add. The other exposure I had was Alan Wallace himself, you know, to get you up to the he talked on consciousness in both of the teachings. What's interesting here is that there are teachings on the mental factors, the 52 mental factors. I'm sure the public's right to be. Does this sound so? So now this is in contrast to the simplicity of what you talked about today. But anyway, the point is that these are mental factors that arise, and they say every moment of consciousness and the moments of consciousness that you don't want someone you know that I'm going with. This is that. When you do the practice of watching the river motion or river of consciousness

**Speaker 3** [00:23:48] and

**Speaker 5** [00:23:48] actually the way that Alan started many years ago, a decade ago, I think is, he said, don't look at the old six consciousness, you know, remove the five and only look at the mind and the mental objects. So he called it settling the mind in its natural state, which I think it's a practice now when you so today when you were teaching you. When when I do the practice, what I notice is that there are some type of phenomena that come up which I can easily identify and I'm not attached to. OK? Like, for example, a conversation or a song or a visual picture will come up in the river. Right? And I can see it come and go right. I can see it dissolve. I know issues there. But there is this there's a subjective, you know, all of these 50 to factors like, you know, have subjective aspects to them. I find those much more challenging to pick up. You know, I it is just an observation. You know, and um, so all of the experience, right? I mean that the experience that's unfolding when you've been, when you've taken, when shamatha is set on the mind, like the observe it, the experience that is unfolding. Some of it you have a sense of detachment

**Speaker 3** [00:25:39] to, you know,

**Speaker 5** [00:25:40] pictures and songs and visual images. But there are other aspects of it where I won't even see. And when I look at the list of 52, I've actually pulled myself and I looked at the list for the first time. I said, Wow, you know, there's some these, they just go by and I don't even have a sense of like, you know, lightness of body and mind and malleability and you know, all of the words in English, but you know, to to see them unfold, right? I mean, there's so much of the picture that is not clear. I mean, you know, only somebody like the out could have put that list together. But I mean, you you know what, what I've been thinking about and um, and it's just something that just passes by is that, um, the degree of clarity that you have. OK. Even on a good day, you know, most of the time I have bad days, but even on a good day when I can sit and feel I'm sitting on the side of the river, OK, even on a good day, I don't know.

**Unidentified** [00:26:58] Notice some of the things that they're mentioning on that list.

**Speaker 5** [00:27:07] I mean, your point would be I'm just sharing this with you and asking you, it is that.

**Unidentified** [00:27:14] I mean, do.

**Speaker 5** [00:27:21] Should should should there be anything more that you should take with us or you should just let the river go home and keep it simple, like like the Mahamudra, Dzogchen says, which has a lot of value. I love the teaching and you've always said this, you know, keep it simple, you know, I love that. And even to this day. But I you what? It's been very helpful for me to have a sense of victory of the victory like. I mean, and and and and not to simply take everything that comes along that says Mahamudra to be sacrosanct. You know, I'm not like that. You know, you put this movie on it. I'm not going to question it. I just am not like that. I'm not built like that. I would never be like that 100 percent straight. But I still love the teaching. However, there's a lot of value to knowing, Hey, there's a lot that you don't see. But what do you think?

**Speaker 1** [00:28:35] To I'm not

**Speaker 5** [00:28:36] thinking too much

**Speaker 1** [00:28:39] if it affects the. I think you're basically saying what I hear is my experience that that's the list you're talking about has been helpful.

**Speaker 5** [00:28:56] Yes, I think

**Speaker 1** [00:28:58] I think this is one of the great things about the in general and all of the different lineages and the turnings that the Buddha did, categories of teachings and segments of teaching. And all is is not that I don't I don't believe and I've never read anywhere that one should necessarily have a relationship. All that is that we are drawn to and find various things to be helpful. And whether one person finds is helpful another person may find actually

**Speaker 3** [00:29:31] very obscure in. In some way.

**Speaker 1** [00:29:35] And it doesn't mean that that person should abandon the other thing, get rid of the obscuring or do anything there. I think that, you know, when we're all Buddhists, all that will be really clear. But in the

**Speaker 3** [00:29:49] meantime, in the meantime, we've

**Speaker 1** [00:29:52] refined what we find with the various teachings and practices. Something's really give us a boost in understanding and maybe also in the stability of our meditation and other things have the exact opposite effect. They seem to obscure what we previously clearly understood and do not help us in settling into any meditation. So that's not a that's not a slam on the Buddha. It's just that there's so many teachings

**Speaker 3** [00:30:28] that

**Speaker 1** [00:30:29] that you can't you can't reasonably come to the conclusion that and I'm not saying that you have, but you cannot reasonably come to the conclusion that one even needs to master all of the teachings or even be interested in many of them or just. I can say from my own experience there, there are teachings of practices there, and I took the teaching on, I attempted the practice and some of them I tried for decades. And in the end, even Kalu Rinpoche thought it was interesting that one would spend so much time on something that wasn't bearing any fruit, and then it was very humorous. I may have just been that he found me slightly humorous, but I but I took it as there's parts of there's parts of the great breadth of Dharma teachings and and the teachers mixed in with it represent a whole new thing too, because everybody's each has their own flavor of every last thing. I think without any exception, it's not mathematics. In the end, it's experiential. So we each have a different experience of all the pieces of the. But I so I hear you saying that one, uh, like the 51 consciousnesses, you find that really useful. And I find it to be somewhat useful, but not very useful, which again doesn't say anything except about my experience

**Unidentified** [00:32:13] as life, I would rather have

**Speaker 1** [00:32:18] Marion Barry. There's a certain way in which there's a certain way in which we we approach our own spiritual

**Speaker 3** [00:32:35] path in

**Speaker 1** [00:32:36] that same way when something sings to us and we feel like, Whoa, this is really interesting that I think that the most teachers, I think, would probably except in unusual circumstances, perhaps regarding their relationship with somebody. Most teachers would would want to support what someone felt enthusiastic about. Just because they're enthusiastic, not for any other reason and knowing that. Well, very enthusiastic, they must have some connection to that. And if they follow that connection, just like all of the pieces of the government, any of them you follow would fuzzy. As we look, they're all going to each kind of bear fruit. It also seems clear we do not require. We do not require

**Speaker 3** [00:33:36] realization

**Speaker 1** [00:33:37] of any level in all of the different aspects of it. I mean, if somebody had said we did, I, I would have walked a long time ago once once it became clear about how fast the tissues were would if I was convinced that it was true, I would have that. This is not going to have any advantage whatsoever in this lifetime. So I've I feel personally convinced it's not necessary to have every teaching clear, maybe more necessary if you're a scholar. But speaking strictly from the standpoint of practice and experience, I think it's clear we don't need every practice in order

**Speaker 3** [00:34:25] to under our belt and, you

**Speaker 1** [00:34:28] know, really mature with it in order to have all of the experiences.

**Speaker 5** [00:34:42] But so, you know, I mean, if I've seen Niagara Falls, I don't have to go to Africa and see, what do you do?

**Speaker 1** [00:34:55] That's a different thing altogether.

**Speaker 5** [00:35:00] But I have to tell you the fact that there are things that are now just like, I mean, maybe other people are more familiar with this with this part of the teaching, right? But I mean, it's just something that you realize,

**Speaker 3** [00:35:17] you know, you

**Speaker 5** [00:35:18] just don't. I mean, your mind doesn't pick up those, you know, those those other, those are the frequencies, you know, and those other frequencies are okay when they are occurring. And you know, had you known, had you known about them, then you would have looked, you know? So sometimes you know what? Actually, my mind works. Yeah, but but. But but I mean, you are right. I mean, sometimes, you know, I just want to throw that whole list away. And I just want to do my simple practice, and I'm happy. So it depends, you know,

**Speaker 1** [00:35:57] it just depends. And occasionally, I highly recommend you throw

**Speaker 5** [00:36:01] it all away. Yes, you do. Yeah, I do. Yeah, yeah, I know. I know from the very fun forever you bin Laden. And I think that and I concur.

**Speaker 2** [00:36:16] And you're still you're pretty consistent. No, no.

**Speaker 5** [00:36:23] So so this no, I'm I'm I still believe that, you know, exploring and seeing what else that is. I mean, I actually open my mind, you know, even more this year. I'm very happy for. OK. Of course. Now come back and do exactly what what you've done, but instead, throw it away.

**Speaker 1** [00:36:44] Throw it as a kind of I think there's a kind of freedom in, actually just on any given day just to sign. You know, I don't have to do this. And once again, sitting back and saying, OK, once you say, I don't have to do this and maybe also I'm not going to do it now, you're faced with it. OK, so now what are you doing? And what are you and what are you going to do? And you may come to the place fairly quickly, depending upon your circumstances, and actually by virtue of pushing the whole antidote to suffering the side that the suffering became three dimensional. I can really have the experience. Can you really saw? And one would say one person might say, that's impossible if you've pushed the drama aside to discover how much suffering you had. But I think that's a narrow view of the. You can discover how much suffering you've got without any drama at all and just and just wonder when you're going to find an antidote. So I don't write off any of that. I think actually I've heard enough from from respectable lamas who are respected and great appreciation for that, actually. We divide Dharma up into various categories as we divide fifty one consciousnesses. But these things do not exist like that. Shamatha itself can lead to full enlightenment in any given moment. And one one teacher will say, well, the Shamatha will never lead to that because you need this thing. Also another team environment. But then when pressed, they'll say, but that thing can arise from shamatha. So you get you get these these interconnected things. And it might just be that I just have never been able to go there. And it's I can't. It's kind of like Sentient beings. We are encouraged and taught in very clear terms that are our love and compassion for sentient beings must be absolutely ubiquitous. Not for some and less for others. And the way that we sit and the way that we get there is by sea in a certain way, forcing ourselves to hold the view that from the most righteous saint to the worst human being, there are fully endowed with this capable with this potential. There are no exceptions. Now that's a view. There's no way to prove that. So it's an issue of what lens do you look through with your life and looking at all these those that irritate those that make us want to spend more time with them and you know, everything in between by holding that view and looking and gazing to humans and all of sentient beings really through that lens. We come to have a sense of appreciation not only for them, but also for ourselves that our own experiences are also part

**Speaker 3** [00:40:15] of that expression.

**Speaker 1** [00:40:19] And therefore capable again

**Speaker 3** [00:40:22] of complete

**Speaker 1** [00:40:23] awakening. I'm drawn to that,

**Speaker 3** [00:40:28] you

**Speaker 1** [00:40:28] know, just honestly like that feels to me like if you hold that view consistently, I'm not sure what inside couldn't arise in the midst of that. And we have hundreds of complicated practices. That that are renowned for bringing about all sorts of realization. But then there's also that little that little thing there where somebody who is renowned for having attained complete enlightenment in the practice of Shamatha. And no one would say that that's all that person knew was Shamatha after having attained complete awakening from that practice, we would say a fully enlightened being. And it was all there is to know about this subject that we're talking about. So they may have never studied it. So that also I find very useful and I find it as a personal antidote to my inclination, which has never been really big, but from time to time, I get really drawn into a very conceptual analysis

**Speaker 3** [00:41:39] of these things.

**Speaker 1** [00:41:40] And I and I recall, actually, that's not where

**Unidentified** [00:41:43] most of the fruit has come from.

**Speaker 1** [00:41:48] Targets, it always feels like you never know. And that's one of the things about the show using Shamatha as a focus, you know, you know, the river of consciousness, which is a little bit funny. Also, I just got to say consciousness is used in many different ways. I mean, this used in many different ways when we talk about the drama. Different schools, different times, different centuries and all the word consciousness, you know how many, how many words out of our consciousness? It's going to be double digits, for sure. You know, so we so that's another issue, is that knowing how much there is there and in order to conceptually work with it very clearly, we have to be able to make the some of those distinctions. Otherwise, the conceptual thing itself is a little bit faulty. And then our contemplation begins to rest on that thing that isn't quite right with our conceptual understanding. So. I think no matter how complex our practices, it's critical to be able not necessarily to do it for long periods, but able to come back to the most simple practice and engage in it. Clearly simply, we understand it. It's not puzzling. We're just clear about it and we can do it well. And if we find that we can't do it well and that we're confused by it, then it may not be that helpful to move on to other things

**Unidentified** [00:43:26] until we've got that. Peace, kind of. Thank you.

**Speaker 6** [00:43:36] I'm reminded of bird watching,

**Speaker 2** [00:43:43] of course,

**Speaker 6** [00:43:47] you know, I think most bird books are that pick the Peterson's Western birds, you know, hundreds and hundreds. Down down in California, we got this. It's the beach, we got this wonderful laminated card, it's just two sides from there, 30 shorebirds on it. It's like,

**Speaker 1** [00:44:11] OK,

**Speaker 6** [00:44:16] I can. Oh, yeah, that's a curlew. OK, yeah. It's like, is it a matter of that? OK, I can see it. It just it was simple enough and those were the birds that were there and the rest of the ones in Peterson's. Yeah, I might find something that's kind of rare, obscure that I might not actually even be able to tell the difference between something or I could study ornithology completely and or really go into it. But sometimes you just have to go back and forth with the thing that's actually quite appropriate for what you're doing and be able to shift back and forth resources. I was thinking there are 51 mental factors,

**Speaker 5** [00:44:59] in addition,

**Speaker 6** [00:45:01] but the 50 second is opening up the list of 51 to look for that. And you know what's on the list.

**Speaker 1** [00:45:08] So that word is back and forth for them.

**Speaker 6** [00:45:12] That's 50, you know? So I mean, I can I can relate to the piece of it where you said it. It's helpful to have something pointed out. So you can you can look for it clearly. Yeah, that that that's in that principle. That's it. That principle applies throughout all all the all of the dharmakaya. If something can be held up so that you can look more clearly that you have something that's really precious. Yeah. But then if you get down to it, but there are fifty three or here and I only found 12,

**Speaker 5** [00:45:46] I agree with

**Speaker 6** [00:45:48] that. You know, it's like, Well, I should have studied ornithology.

**Speaker 5** [00:45:52] Yeah, yeah. But and and and just to add to that, I mean, sometimes you're not even saying that you are sitting on the side of the river most of the time you're in the red. So I mean, you know, the days of which you can sit on the side and watch it. I mean, just just there's just happiness in just watching you, let alone how much, how much you can look for, you know?

**Speaker 2** [00:46:24] And yet, I wonder, I wonder. Captures something that your pure enthusiasm and joy while you're looking at those pictures, you're studying it, not in question, but when you're studying it, that's important. You're beating yourself. We lead ourselves. And when that joy just rises to me, that's

**Speaker 3** [00:46:54] it's so

**Speaker 2** [00:46:55] precious and it's fine. Don't judge it. Don't let. Well, everyone should study this. I mean, these are things I can do with it, but pitch it to everyone for me to study it if they haven't studied it, not getting it, or I'm wrong for liking it so much and I want it. Don't go there with it. Just enjoy it because something is speaking to you. And I just want to. Sure, I have the mirror experience of you not starting your own shamatha starting out with lots of study in the tradition years and the 54 nam tok factors I guess she wanted and to memorize them too. What are the five? The ever present minefield factors? The ones that are always there. You know, it's very, quite good at Cornell University. But, but but they aren't the experience of those nam tok factors, but more. I just wanted to share them. After 15 years of following my recruiting children and learning so much and be so happy one day sitting in another class on another classic text in maybe the seventh one and suddenly just going, Oh, I can't do this anymore. I don't know what I have to do, but it's not this. And it was so strong. It was like scary to me, like, whoa, you know, what's that? And then the opportunity of the one year retreat that came up very shortly after and everything in me just went, Yes, like boom. And I was afraid to go talk with my teacher about, I'm going to leave the monastery. I'm going to do this retreat. Can I have your blessing? And she did just what Michael said. She immediately said, I see your dharma joy. You must do this, which, you know, was not the easiest path because I have been very close to that person for a long time. So it's just, you know, it can come to me which way. But to follow that, let it be, you know, be there and do that perfectly. When you're pulling, we're out to. Yeah, it's very good. Well, thank you. It's a so called so called simple, which is not very simple,

**Speaker 6** [00:49:37] but join me to zoom in wherever we find that it's extremely

**Speaker 3** [00:49:44] precious.

**Speaker 6** [00:49:46] And the the this that you had for all those years up until the moment that it snapped would not have produced the shift and the openness. Yeah, it goes. The whole thing comes together.

**Speaker 1** [00:50:03] So was, Oh the great.

**Speaker 2** [00:50:13] Could it with the fact that we're doing today be one that we could do as a caring practice, just like one great solar power and we're just doing somewhere and looking?

**Speaker 1** [00:50:28] Yeah, you you could use what we did today as a caring practice. Um, it's likely that's likely to be difficult in this sense that. In comparison to one breath Shamatha, when you do one breath challenger, you just put your awareness on the breath for the duration of the brand. So it's a it's a short, easy practice that we can also feel each time we do it like

**Speaker 2** [00:51:03] I did, it can

**Speaker 1** [00:51:06] be said for I did it because when you do it, once it proves you can do it twice and so on. You can do it. Therefore, you can do it three or four times. Pretty soon, you're confident that you could do it continuously and and you may not get that same kind of immediate feedback from attempting to rest true awareness on the stream. On the fly. Yeah. On the other hand, on the other hand, with a good sign on trying to carry us as a caring practice is most of us during the day have numerous opportunities to do, nothing to stop what it is we're doing and do something else or do nothing. I mean, you have to go to the bathroom a few times every day. So there's something and you walk from one place to another. Even if you work in some big company, you still walk down the hall to some other room. Each time that those things happen, there's the possibility of stopping and just watching the mainstream, which is like watching the breath, right? It's very similar, except one of them is much more intimate when we're watching the livestream, that's like, we're right there with the source of our puzzles, with the source of our angst, for the sorts of our joys. It's like, we're like, right president. We're it's a it's a more intense practice often than the one breath is so nothing. No reason why you couldn't do it. I'm just saying and as it may or may not work well. Okay. Well, why not? It's not because of rule against this.

**Speaker 6** [00:53:03] Is there a downside to trying?

**Speaker 1** [00:53:07] Only if you have an abject aversion to failure

**Speaker 2** [00:53:11] and

**Speaker 1** [00:53:11] especially to failure that has no cost. There's so many failures that have no,

**Speaker 3** [00:53:18] no

**Speaker 1** [00:53:19] inferred or required cost, and we generate the costs and pay it in terms of beating ourselves up. Right. So if you do that, then you shouldn't do that practice. But if you can just let it go, then

**Speaker 3** [00:53:39] oh, no problem.

**Speaker 6** [00:53:42] It's just a mess, actually, though from that, you say, the only thing that you need to know is how to launch this. That's it. If you don't have to launch it, then you can just it's like, it's like throwing a ball, then yeah, you just throw it.

**Speaker 2** [00:53:58] So maybe you figured it out in the cushion and then, you know, be good at launching it.

**Speaker 1** [00:54:04] You actually don't need to be on a cushion. You can be standing at a window on the 10th floor of a building, looking out. And in the moment that you stop, you have an opportunity to see the flow of consciousness. And in that moment, you can intentionally didn't engage in that practice, of course, or you can intentionally walk up to the window or you can intentionally, you know, put your back to the window. And if you so again, if you can watch it, then then you have a possibility. You do need to know what to do to watch it when you did it today. How so many times.

**Speaker 2** [00:54:47] Actually, I just fell asleep multiple times to

**Speaker 1** [00:54:51] talk to you about that. Yeah.

**Speaker 6** [00:54:55] Did you launch it even for a moment?

**Speaker 2** [00:54:57] I have no idea. I was thinking, maybe if I just did like a little tiny.

**Speaker 6** [00:55:01] Yeah, that's the point. That was my point. If you can, if you actually know how to just. That's it. Yeah, then then we could say the failure comes because it's not just it's not sustained forever and ever. Well, you're going to get a pretty small violin from

**Speaker 2** [00:55:21] me

**Speaker 6** [00:55:23] complaining about that. Yeah. So it's better to do it over and over again. And then it actually kind of touches on on your your question, too, because when we do it over and over again in all kinds of different situations, we're more likely to notice different kinds of things. And then and then if we have this, this kind of a kind of an open mindedness about it in some sense of clarity about meeting our experience just just as it is we can. Well, that's I don't know which one of the 50 want it is, but it fits. That's one that usually doesn't fly through here. Very often that kind of birds. So, you know, it's only, you know, a day in the spring. So that's second, I think I think it's I think it's actually an excellent practice to do over and over. And if we do when we do it on the cushion, we can kind of increase her clarity and just that that becomes the thing that.

**Unidentified** [00:56:43] Brightness and clarity and more sensitivity.

**Speaker 1** [00:56:51] Yeah, I think we're good. The idea of repetition is like so critical, like in all of our practice, we got to keep doing it. And it's all kind of training. So I think that also gives us an opportunity to revisit that sense of if I like doing it and I can do it over and over again, then that's going to be through. Just has to, on the other hand, if you struggle with I don't know why I'm doing it, I hate doing it. So my teacher said, do it, but I'm not sure I actually like that person. And somehow you got to fix that. You can't just forever not like it, not get the joy out of it and continue. That's like a superhuman thing. Can't do it. So the joy is a big, big deal. That's a

**Speaker 3** [00:57:52] real that's

**Speaker 1** [00:57:54] a source of great diligence without the bad side of the diligence. Like, I do it because I'm supposed to do it.

**Speaker 3** [00:58:04] I mean,

**Speaker 1** [00:58:05] most of the religious traditions that we know, you use that approach quite a lot. And Buddhism does to to some degree, but. Personally, I don't find it useful personally for myself. Totally useless. I just I just can't. Once once I get into a funky state about something and I think I don't see the benefit and I have been doing it for years. I can't. It doesn't take me years before I'm off to see whoever gave me the structure and say, You know, we have to fix this thing. Why? Why? Why am I doing this? And sometimes you get it. Sometimes you get a great result from that. Like, Oh, I say, you're doing something. This isn't quite right the way you're doing this. But if you try this way, you see what happens and then you try it that way and you think, Oh, I see that. Actually, that's an improvement, sometimes just not an improvement. So I'm an advocate of like hammering on continually. I can't. I can't do it. I'm trying. If you can't, you can't go on what is very close to what we often call blind faith forever. At some point there has to be you can work on the basis of faith alone. But there has to be an underpinning of strong confidence,

**Speaker 3** [00:59:33] the

**Speaker 1** [00:59:33] confidence that this this I do this for whatever reasons other people may say, like, that's irrational. It's no good if it works for you and you can do it and you have the confidence problem. If you don't have the confidence and you just hate doing it all the time. There's something not quite right. At some point, you got to fix that. I remember moments on seeing a retreat professor and when I when I first heard it, it didn't. It didn't seem to me particularly that without confidence, there is no dominant practice. And saying just that without confidence, there is no doubt in practice. And and so I took that as kind of like a challenge in a certain way like, well, OK, I look and I see I have confidence here. I don't have it there haven't been over there. So then you start looking to see like, what am I confident about? Then you have the then you have the content for a conversation. I'm confident about this and this, but this piece of eludes me. I just don't relate to it at all. And then once once the instruction given to me was, don't do that piece. It's just was such a relief that suddenly there was Joy. But I think that's that's the relationship with not just our teachers, but also with with the teachers who are not our formal teachers, but other people in our in our spiritual community to talk with them about it and share those things. It's not like we should talk about all of my things with everybody. But it's good to have a few people that we have connection with that we can talk about things with. And then sometimes one person will be helpful

**Speaker 3** [01:01:35] and

**Speaker 1** [01:01:36] two people come to a certain point, and sometimes they both come to the place. So I don't get it. Well, now you have two people who can. That's sort of puts the teacher on the spot, you know, which is what maybe you feel afraid to do sometimes. But two people can do it sometimes. Yes. I mean, sometimes one person can even say, can lean over and say, it didn't sound to me like they answer the question. I, I think, I think, know mostly mostly teachers should be able to handle that if they can and where there's something a little off. And there's there's exceptions to that too. Like you go to somebody like the Dalai Lama or Karmapa or something, you know, very highly regarded person. That person may say something that most teachers would not feel like. They could say that, but it's it's helpful in those cases sometimes to take it on anyway. Just on the basis of that extraordinary authority. And especially, it's OK to say, if I have problems with this, I can come back and talk to you, right? But that's a must. That's almost. So you have to have a connection. Which is pretty much the entire power. Connections. Connections between practices, connection between students and teachers, students and students, teachers and teachers, connections like all over the place. We are not a certain way, a bundle of connections when we sit down to meditate about we see the mainstream view that is like a rushing river.

**Unidentified** [01:03:29] It's all connection.

**Speaker 1** [01:03:38] OK. It's two thirty

**Unidentified** [01:03:41] two, thirty seven or something, you know? If there's nothing

**Speaker 1** [01:03:48] else that I could.

**Speaker 2** [01:03:55] Matthew quickly realized this sentient beings strategy in the state.

**Speaker 6** [01:04:35] I was listening to old questions and discussions became my mind. I would be asked this question How would we ask a question related? Based on this

**Unidentified** [01:04:46] too? So you should also be thinking,

**Speaker 6** [01:04:53] how would you boil something down to ask?

**Speaker 2** [01:04:57] We just email you one. OK? Yeah, yeah. So are all the questions that you got all going to boil down to one question and somehow, oh gosh, you know, there'll be more opportunities

**Speaker 6** [01:05:13] that would be cool if it did. I don't think so. Maybe nobody else would be impressed. Yeah. People will ask

**Unidentified** [01:05:26] questions. You don't have to, you know?

**Speaker 6** [01:05:35] It's kind of an experiment, we've never done this before this way, but I wanted to try to kind of get reach out into the community and sort of intentionally draw people into the discussion and put some energy into it beforehand and really try to encourage us all as a community to kind of collect their energy and see how we can relate to and take advantage of this opportunity.

**Speaker 2** [01:06:04] I am connected to that this next Thursday is the training group where we'll be looking at questions from our training staff, so please come. So I just had a question related to his visit, and that was, will we have an opportunity to give comments or should we be thinking about that?

**Speaker 6** [01:06:32] I don't know. We just don't have that much time. The way things have worked out.

**Speaker 2** [01:06:38] But this it's also true that, you know, we're asking offerings or donations to the extent we can make them after the events, including the Q&A. And most of that is going to help us in offering to say

**Speaker 3** [01:06:57] why we have a

**Speaker 5** [01:06:58] goal of a substantial

**Unidentified** [01:07:00] group offering that we need to make.

**Speaker 2** [01:07:05] So that will be kind of doing that.

**Speaker 6** [01:07:10] I I have that it's it's in my mind I would like I would like to create this as part of what I thought of all the different things I would like to create on my list and them use this opportunity, she said. Basically, it's the kind of the equivalent of the personal kind of the personal handshake, the kind of the

**Speaker 2** [01:07:28] one to one people. There is probably that money.

**Speaker 6** [01:07:31] Yes. Yeah. Most likely in the evening. So you could have

**Speaker 2** [01:07:35] one in your pocket of images of Monday evening this place. So you might be able, yes,

**Speaker 6** [01:07:43] you will have to kind of crowd certain people up for card offering.

**Speaker 2** [01:07:50] You never know that it's hard to know. Yeah, I think it'll be just right for myself to work. And often they have a lot of patience and want to connect, so they sit and the line goes by very quickly. So is it over?

**Speaker 6** [01:08:15] You know, I think, OK, let's let's I'll put it in my mind, that is the most likely

**Unidentified** [01:08:22] to show up.

**Speaker 1** [01:08:25] Yeah, that's what we have to show. You don't show up. There's no possibility.

**Speaker 2** [01:08:33] Yes. Yes, it's

**Speaker 6** [01:08:33] true. And Wednesday this Wednesday evening, and for those who don't generally don't even know this, it's a well-kept secret that the Wednesday following first Sunday during Chenrezig practice after Chenrezig, we generally have a question and answer time that's more focused on questions and Chenrezig practice in particular. And this this Wednesday, we'll be doing the same thing in terms of talking about

**Speaker 3** [01:09:00] what questions we'll have for. Choose.