

2019_03_24_am1_Shamatha_LMC.mp4

bring a child's curiosity to our kleshas for they are a rich field to mine, taking care of mind & body so practice can be joyful

[00:06:20] Good morning to all of you. ... And so, this morning... we will have a... our usual recitation for going for refuge. And following that, a very short, less than five minutes... a short teaching. And then we'll finish by spending the remainder of our first period in meditation. So first, the recitation.

sangha [00:07:58] *reciting Refuge & Bodhicitta Prayer*

[00:10:46] Of the many... worthwhile things to contemplate and to meditate upon... probably... high in the list of worthwhile contemplations... are the... kleshas, or the emotional experiences that we have. And especially those that we end up... perhaps inadvertently... taking refuge in them, in those kleshas. The kleshas are... pretty much universal emotional states. And we often speak about them and teach about them from a perspective which puts them in a bad light. In a bad light, because often the emotional states lead to a sense of discontent... anger, jealousy, greed, pride. And those things for sure in our... practice... are considered troublesome at best.

[00:12:59] But there is another side to them, which is... '*interesting*' at least. And especially interesting, if you're... curious. When you feel... a minor or major surge of emotional states... that phenomena and your awareness of it can result in the most elucidating insight. In order for that to happen, we have to... not be carried away... by that klesha. But instead, to put our awareness *fully* upon that experience... without trying to eliminate the experience, without trying to encourage it, without identifying it, without rejecting it... and all the rest that could go on a very long list. The *best* of all... is to be overcome by the kleshas. And to just put one's awareness on that experience as it unfolds... with no ulterior... intention... but to observe... the functioning... of our own mind.

[00:15:10] We all know the downside of the kleshas. Intense anger. ... We've all experienced that. Nothing particularly special. Intense desire... for companionship... to have more friends. Desire to live, if one is dying. Desire to see old friends. There's so many desires. And the aversions! The hope... that we may not see somebody who causes us trouble. Worse. The *hope* that someone who causes us trouble... ends up... having something negative happen to them.

[00:16:31] When we look at these things as they arise, we are witnessing... the outcome... of all of the things that we have thought and said... actions that we have done... for good or for bad. All of those things, like in a long chain. Each thing that we have thought... becomes a force for another thought. Each thing that we've experienced becomes a thought... or becomes another experience. And for the most part, as ordinary beings, we do not pay much attention to all of this. But as meditators... this is the richest possible field that we could mine.

[00:17:39] The things that come to mind... that may flow out of our mouths as words... can be so helpful for ourselves and for others who are around. And if we're not careful, those strong feelings can become... damaging to ourselves and damaging to others. ... You cannot be a friend to others if you are not a friend to yourself. ... And the ability to be a friend... to others and to be helpful and to hold their benefit above your own... is a precious mind and a precious gift.

[00:18:57] So, as we... turn now our minds to the meditation for this morning... try to see those emotional states rise... spontaneously. And place your awareness on the experience as it arises, as it unfolds. Never still. Always changing. Kind of like one of those things you have when you're a kid. As you look into it with one eye and you turn it and all images change over and over again, driven by the position of that tube... with all the little colored pieces of plastic and glass. Our minds are like that. Now, if we could just have the curiosity of being five years old again... and watch our kleshas, our desires, our anger... our efforts to manipulate... our failure to do so and our angst and anger as a result. If you can place your awareness on these things as they arise... and fall away and rise again, over and over... if you can do that... consistently, your meditation will become... superb. And your ability to be a cause for good in others... will be natural.

[00:21:19] period of meditation

[00:35:58] Sometimes... when you're making an effort to meditate... for a period of time, which is longer than is comfortable... hopefully you consider it *okay*... to move your body. To get up and stretch. Go for a walk. Your practice, your meditation practice should be joyful. Not so rigorous that you don't look forward to it any more. Because if you do that, pretty soon, you won't do it anymore.

[00:37:05] So, if you're placing your awareness on the activity of the mind... then also recall that there is no... distinction to be made between the mind and the body. So, taking care of the body... is the same as taking care of the mind. ... If you find that your mind is filled with... unpleasant things... and if you find that placing your awareness upon those unpleasant things... causes *more* unpleasant things to occur... then with some intention... remind yourself of the things that are pleasant for you.

[00:38:30] The important thing... is not the quality of the experience that you rest your awareness on. ... The important thing is to do it often. Often enough such that it becomes... habitual in itself. And I know we normally don't honor the habitual, but in this case, the habitual... uncovers a prize... every time. Place your awareness on... a delightful recollection of some kind. And while your awareness is resting there, you can experience the delightful appearance again and again. The stability of the awareness is what is important. The content of what you're aware of is not important. ... So, we'll take a little longer and... finish after ten or fifteen minutes.

[00:40:13] period of mediation

sangha *[00:49:50] dedicating the merit*