

Dharma Talks



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Stuck in Thoughts: The Dzogchen Way Out

So here are some basic kind of stages that we can be at as meditators, right? They could even be considered phases because if you're progressing along some type of path, then you could consider them to be like phases. So these aren't to be reached for or achieved, necessarily, but this is kind of what happens during meditation.

So the average person is stuck in their thoughts. This is the age-old kind of issue. Even in the Torah, you know, even in Adam and Eve and Genesis, they talk about the thoughts—the thinking mind—being evil, right? Now, I'm not saying it's evil, and maybe that was a lack of words there that they had to articulate this point. It's not that they're evil; in my opinion, I think it's an immaturity when we're stuck in our thoughts. It's a kind of womb, it's a phase that we're in, it's like we can maybe have a kid phase and teenage phase, young adult phase. Well, spiritually or psychologically speaking, we have a phase where we're stuck in our thoughts.

And you know that this is serious because people end their lives and things like that because they're so stuck on their thoughts. They join extreme religious causes, political causes, you name it. Being stuck in thoughts is the age-old sickness. And many beings go from, basically, as they mature, into that thinking—because you don't start out being stuck in the thoughts, but you kind of end up in the thoughts—and they die like that. They die stuck on their thoughts.

So a spiritual practitioner knows that there's something more to it. Knows there's something outside of these thoughts, and we don't need to end our lives to break free of the thoughts, to have harmony with them, to where they're actually useful and nice. So even for a person who's primarily driven by thought, they will have moments of non-thought, of course, and those will be very special to them. But

meditators, practitioners, can access this world outside of that dense thought dimension. We can access it.

In Dzogchen, you access it by recognizing the nature of mind: the awareness, kind of the witness. That's pretty standard Dharma, but high-level Dharma. Becoming the witness of the thoughts is a pretty high-level Dharma. And that's the second stage or phase that you might be in. You might be able to witness your thoughts, but not just those—emotions... when you're having cycles and patterns of thoughts and emotions.

So there's this Vipassanā aspect then: the seeing. One can only see from the point of view of the witness. You can only see your mind from the point of view of the witness—you cannot really see the mind from inside the thoughts. So anybody want to take a guess what the next stage or phase would be then?

We have the witness of the thoughts. Or, if you're going all the way with the Dharma, then even the witness is not-self, right? So it's not only the thoughts that are not-self, not true, but then also the witness of the thought is not-self—it's also conditioning. So you have this point where even a witness is starting to soften. Thought cycles, emotional cycles, all the conditioning... so now, who is the witness of the witness?

How can the witness dissolve? Now the thoughts can... the thought karma, the momentum, the patterns, the plasticity, however you want to call that—that patterning can exhaust itself within the witness. But where does the witness exhaust itself? Anybody want to take a guess at that one? Real hard questions today, I know.

SANGHA I (CHAT): Witness-less mind. Primordial state and awareness, into nowhere.

DAWAI: But there's... even if we sit here witnessing the thoughts—let's say we're thinking of broccoli again, because we just can't stop—and we're witnessing ourselves, but don't you know that you're witnessing yourself thinking of broccoli? There's a feeling of me

sitting here thinking of broccoli. I'm aware of that. Yeah, this is very nuanced mind.

So that knowingness, that awareness permeates the witness, permeates thoughts and emotions, permeates the body and all appearances. So the four foundations of mindfulness. The nature of mind, what we call awareness for the sake of access, permeates not just the thoughts. So we're sitting here aware of our thoughts, that means that cognizance, awareness, is permeating our thoughts as we're witnessing them. But then the witness is also sitting within cognizance, you see? (*Dawai pauses*).

Yeah, I think you see. If you see, you can laugh, it's okay. It's great because the very taproot of saṃsāra, of all your troubles, is the witness—or it's being in the thoughts and the witness is then dragged around by the thoughts and the emotions. So you see, the witness starts out subservient, then becomes a silent observer, then becomes the master. Just like the nine stages of Samatha, where the monkey's kind of following this elephant, and then at the end riding that elephant. Okay? This making sense? Yep, okay.

And all of us here are able to access this on some level. You can say, "Well, I'm in my thoughts quite a lot, but sometimes I know that." So there you're kind of fluctuating from thought cocoon to witness. You're not even close to dissolving the witness at that point, if I'm going to be honest with you. Now, you may have, of course, you're going to have moments like everybody of no witness, that's the conditioned self, that witness. Many meditation paths stop there. If you haven't noticed, they stop there. They're okay with just teaching you how to be the witness, and many books are written about just that.

But Buddhadharma takes it one step further with the not-self teachings. You know, I want to be careful saying "no-self," because that does lean people into nihilism. We're talking about not-self specifically, right? When we talk about the aggregates being not-self; conditioned consciousness is in there. That consciousness that's in

the five aggregates of the Buddhadharma is the witness. That's the conditioned self. That witness has perceptions, feelings, thought formations, and a body.

SANGHA 2 (CHAT): The sense of self is a sense.

DAWAI: Oh, very nice. Yeah, a little bit tricky to articulate that, you know? What does that feel like? What does that look like? What is the weight of that witness?

So your mind has layers and layers upon deception that insist on you being stuck in thoughts, triggering emotional upheaval, and all kinds of other obscurations. This little ego combined with its thoughts, its thought power... you know, because remember, the witness, the ego, is subservient to thoughts at first. That's why they hack into our minds, right? That's why they use symbols and all this language. And now, I mean, culture is so obsessed with material—at least they're trying to continue to push materialism. You know, to push like being rich and having fancy cars and, you know, really all this stuff, mansions... and even spirituality gets mixed with this. So everybody's kind of feeling like, "Well, if I'm not very rich, then I must be lacking somehow." It's gotten to that point where you hold yourself up to that bar that my value is dependent on how much I'm making.

It is a very interesting culture we're living in, combined with the kind of brainwashing of the digital world like TikTok and Facebook; they really have these deep algorithms that are psychologically targeting people. So for that I say, when your thoughts have that witness on lockdown, "We need to go get that money," right? "But we need to have a this or that, you know, bigger house. Come on, man, 16 rooms ain't enough for the two of us?"

So then, if you're brave enough, if you have the opportunity and the fortune probably that comes from being a decent person, you meet with the teachings somehow. You meet with something that

brings you here. And now you can see the thoughts. “Stop that. Not going out tonight.” Right?

And the horrible part, really, is when at first you’re here and you see the thoughts and they still grab you. And now you see that they’re grabbing you. That’s in the beginning, and that’s torturous—it can be torturous. Or maybe if you’re a long-time meditator, you’re out here and it’s still, *shoom!* (*Dawai holds his arms outstretched*). It still grabs you somehow, right? Remember, all thoughts trigger emotional upheaval. That’s very subtle to notice, but whatever emotions we’re in, whatever states of consciousness we’re in, is triggered, upheld, maintained, and ended by thought or lack thereof. Okay?

So this is real. When these patterns—when they don’t have the strength anymore, even after a long, long time—they don’t have the strength to captivate the witness. Perhaps you’re in Dzogchen and the witness is now fading into infinite space and the thoughts are just here within infinite space like, trying, trying to grab... where are you? No witness to grab. That’s where the inquiry schools, they utilize that technique. If they’re doing it right, then that witness will be gone and these cycles will no longer have a basis. They won’t have anyone to grab.

And Dzogchen kind of does that too. It kind of pulls the rug out from the cycles of thoughts and emotions by pulling that conditioned self out and leaving spacious ineffable mind there, no-mind. Now there’s nothing for the thoughts to grab. So it’s like a thief entering an empty house, like we’ve heard in the three modes of liberation.

So in regards to stages, we can really consider where we’re at, okay? And especially if you’re approaching Dzogchen or some other path, you’re talking to a teacher about your meditation, well, you yourself—it’s good for you to have a strong idea of where your mind’s at these days. Because most teachers, they don’t know how to properly evaluate where your practice is standing, or they don’t have the bandwidth. Their minds are also poisoned a lot of times, so they don’t have the peace, the presence to even stop and see.

So we have to take responsibility in that way for our own minds and knowing where our minds are at. Your spiritual friends can do a lot, they can see a lot; but it's always best we know the most. Awareness is our true guru then. Because awareness permeates the witness, permeates the thoughts and emotions, the body, and this whole reality. So as we come closer to awareness, further kinds of unidentifying and detaching, then there's that profound freedom beyond this small little world, you know—beyond the eight worldly concerns, which even though they're introduced in Mahāyāna are very radical.

What does your mind look like when it's free from hoping for gain and loss? Or when it's free of hoping for happiness and fear of unhappiness, or fear of a bad reputation and hope for a good reputation, right? All these things, gain and loss, especially for meditators, spiritual practitioners... we really always want that gain, we always want that enlightened feeling like this idealized Buddha that we have in our mind that we should be like. If you have a bar set for yourself, break that thing. Break it, shatter it. It's a hindrance.

You are Buddha now. Buddha doesn't look like this statue, this perfect person who says and does the perfectest things. There's a long list—even Buddha Śākyamuni made sorts of mistakes, you know. And I was even shocked when the first time I saw one of my teachers profess that they're human, and I remember very vividly because I was very idealistic too. We were eating at Tulku Dawa's house in Canada and he was eating meat. And one of the students says, "Tulku Dawa, you're a Tulku and you're a realized master, why are you eating meat?" You know. And he said, "Well, this is my fault. This is a weakness of mine." And everybody was kind of like, "Huh? He's not infallible?"

So really, that humanity though gave everybody access to him. He was able to teach us the Dharma, human to human. You know? So I really think we can be overly idealistic when it comes to ourselves and what that Buddhahood truly looks like. So here, looks like Yeshé shared the eight worldly concerns. They're known by many different

names, apparently, like the “Eight Winds,” and taught for a very long time. Kind of one of these timeless teachings: hope for pleasure, fear of pain; hope for gain, fear of loss; hope for praise, fear of criticism; hope for good reputation and fear of bad reputation. And they added one recently: this hope for upvotes and fear of downvotes.

Okay well, I think I was able to really vocalize these somewhat abstract stages of meditation. I wanted to break them down into those main three: being stuck in thoughts, being the witness of thoughts, and then the dissipation of all of those—or at least the softening of the witness, that conditioned ego. Now remember I said within the witness, thoughts and emotions start to soften, your patterning, your conditioning starts to soften; but within awareness, your witness starts to soften. Okay? All right.

Well, thank you so much for listening and I hope it benefits.

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Dzogchen Tonglen

And so for you all in the dear sangha here today, this will be a repeat of what I just said. So this is a different type of Tonglen. The typical Tonglen involves this kyerim visualization, and it's also very powerful, the Tantric Tonglen. And so if I'm not mistaken, this is derived from Atisha's Mind Slogans. I haven't looked into that in a while, so please correct me if I'm wrong, but I believe it's 59 mind slogans compiled by Chekawa Yeshé Dorje and Tonglen is deriving from that, and that is also derivative of the Sūtras, Mahāyāna Sūtras. The exact name of the primary sources escapes me right now, but Lojong slogans are generally attributed to Atisha (10th-11th CE), although they developed over hundreds of years. So we have Tonglen, it's a very popular practice that's taught by many, many Tibetan masters and various Dharma teachers.

And for example, I did a graphic of this using 3D Studio Max and Photoshop for Lama Tsultrim Allione. I don't know, maybe some of you know her? She's the author of a book called *Feeding Your Demons*, and she has her own little sangha. The sangha is called Tara Mandala or something like that. And so anyway, me and her teamed up for one Tonglen practice, and basically, this is the same one I'll share with you. This is the Tantric Tonglen practice, it's different from the Dzogchen Tonglen that I'm going to share with you.

So in this context, Tonglen is a visualization practice. In my opinion, it is still very powerful, because we don't really visualize good things. We get caught up in the negative, and so it could be beneficial for you, but I'm not gonna elaborate very much on it.

Essentially, you imagine somebody—and you can all do this now—like somebody you have a problem with or something like that. There are many types of people you can imagine, like groups of people, animals, friends, family. So we'll start with somebody that maybe you have a little bit of a beef with. And maybe you guys are gonna meet

later for a fight, you know, just kidding, I know it's not that serious. So anyway, this person, whatever, even if you just have sort of a weird vibe with somebody, I think it's okay.

So bring this person to mind. And so the visualization will occur sort of directly in front of you. You can close your eyes and it will still be projected in front of you in a sense, unless you're anomalous and it's happening in another location, go ahead and tell us about that. So anyway, typically it's in front of you.

And now you have this person in front of you, and you can imagine their suffering and stress in the form of some kind of visualization that, in my opinion, can come naturally to you. It's a grime or a dirt or typically soot—you know, some kind of something covering them to represent their stress. And then you breathe that in. You breathe all that cloudy soot, or whatever you imagined, in through your nose. And you allow it to change at the throat into pure luminous compassionate liberating light—however you again interpret that naturally, with not much overthinking. And then at your heart, you exhale and you leave over that person in your visualization completely luminous. Even washed out, they could be completely just white light on your exhalation.

Now, I know some people have challenged this. They say, “Oh, you're taking in other people's energy,” and da-da-da-da-da. In that case, please don't do the practice. If this is what you believe—if this is what you practice—if this is how you think, then don't do this. But if you have a little bit more of an open attitude towards this, then perhaps you could entertain the fact that all you're doing is relieving yourself of the perceived suffering and the various blockages. Of course, you could be benefiting them too if their beacon of receptivity is shining. But you know—it's really about your presence right here, and you're clearing that. So you know, you take it how you want to and don't do anything that makes you uncomfortable.

So in Anuyoga—so that's the kind of Mahāyāna, Tantra, Vajrayāna, Tonglen—but you can incorporate Anuyoga, like Pranayama, phys-

ical channel stuff, with this too. So you breathe in, you say, OM. And then you let it change, AH. And then on your exhalation, HUNG. Right, the famous OM AH HUNG. And this is more non-conceptual. So you visualize the person—OM AH HUNG. And how you do that when you're breathing, I'm not sure. I think it's because you're pronouncing it mentally—you're not saying it out loud. So as you're breathing in, OM. Changing, AH. Exhalation, HUNG.

And the idea of this as it transitions into Dzogchen—now this is my own invention, okay, the Dzogchen Tonglen. As far as I know, I haven't heard anything about Dzogchen Tonglen just yet, but it would be interesting. And the only reason I'm sharing this is because I do this practice so often. I find myself just breathing naturally and just wanting to take people's suffering as I'm breathing naturally.

And so you might just be resting here in effortless abiding. All sentient beings are within your mind, or on your mind—and you're breathing in all their troubles, all the wars, all the confusions. You're just breathing it in, changing it, and leaving over liberation and luminosity.

You're picturing even Vladimir Putin, Benjamin Netanyahu, Donald Trump, you know, people that to me seem confused and seem a little lost. These are the type of people that you take all that trouble away from them and you leave over nothing but compassionate, open-heartedness. And if you're a Republican, then please choose some Democrats. It's up to you, you know, who you're choosing here. I don't want to get political or one-sided, I want to be radically inclusive with this whole thing. Hey, choose some independents even, some people from the Green Party.

But primarily it's about what's on your mind and the congestion and the smog—the smog of conceptual samsaric conditioning is lingering in your mind—and so you're clearing that on the exhalations, leaving a very luminous openness. All right?

So in a pure Dzogchen sense, there are no thoughts involved with that, and maybe you have some thoughts—it's okay, those are

involuntary, just popping up. But ideally, you would rest here, zero thoughts about that, because you're tapping into your lucidity and your lucid connection with all beings. Such as breathing in, changing that—and it becomes not even changing—it's one instance. All three phases of the breath become one instance.

And so Dzogchen Tonglen just looks like this. I'm keeping my eyes open, whatever is here for me in this presence. Maybe I'll deliberately invoke all sentient beings a little bit—but not really necessary. And just breathing in, taking all that bullshit, letting it change, and then exhaling the freedom, you know—because it's a lot. I know it's a lot, everybody. There's a lot going on out there. So please don't overwhelm yourself and don't feel uncomfortable.

But those are the three phases, in my opinion, in my experience, of Tonglen practice. So you have the visualization where you visualize the soot, the suffering, the stress, whatever—and you're taking that, changing it, and leaving pure luminosity. And then you have the OM AH HUNG practice—it's a little bit more stripped down. And then you have the bare-naked Dzogchen—simply pure presence type of breathing.

Any questions on those three inquiries?

SANGHA: I have one. You said earlier that when we do this practice, it's healing ourselves. When I visualize the person that I have a trouble with or a problem with, I find myself no longer having a problem with them while I do this practice, or after a bit of doing this practice. Is that what you meant?

DAWAI: Yeah, that's precisely what I'm talking about. And then you'll be surprised how that has a non-dual effect. The very next day, this person could come up to you and say something very nice or something like that. It has a profound effect on your environment as well.

So we're healing the root, which is our mind. We're healing that root. And so typically, we don't see it this way. We see the environment

as the root. We see the environment first. But this is very nice to sort of engage in this approach, because it's sort of sourced in your subjective experience, which makes it radically different than a standard materialistic view or even a theistic view, where we externalize our divinity. So we reclaim a little bit of that healing power and that freedom, and we come into our own resolution that way.

And you take your power back. Nobody has power over you. Because even if your parents did very, very unkind things to you, it's how you're holding on to that in your mind and interpreting that, and your congestion and contraction within your nervous system is happening because of that. So that person is not coming over and tightening your nervous system. You're doing that. And so if you truly want to win, you know, in a conflict, then let it out of your mind.

And by the way, I want to mention something very, very important. When you do these Tonglen-type practices and you embrace compassion alongside awareness practice, then your natural compassion starts to shine. This is something I'm very thankful for, because when I was a kid, man, I just loved all the animals, all the people. I would just run up to people and hug them, no matter what color, what size they were, you know, what kind of class they were. I just loved everybody so much. And then I got bullied to shit, so they took it away from me for a while. You know, they really did. They took it away from me. And then I almost became a bully. You know, I almost became the jerk. And so I'm so happy this awareness practice allowed me to be kind again, allowed me to love again, you know, and just be my natural self, because that's what I was. I was just, I had that kindness in me already.

(Yote the dog barks). So that's right, Yote. Yote is testifying over here. So um, this really, this release of the coldness, letting the ice melt from my own holding on, like, "Screw this world, this world is so mean," you know, "People are so cold," and da-da-da-da you get very grand and very existential. And I think to release that hardened mind can be such a blessing.

And then what's left over here, you're abiding it. And you see Ramana Maharshi, you see Anandamayi, you see Longchenpa, and you see your own teachers, how they abided in this pure presence with an open heart, just almost naturally touching all sentient beings, and every sentient being, telling them all, "I love you," individually, one at a time, somehow, you know, in a real way. Not just this kind of, "Oh, I love you." It's a real, like, family, like something somebody who really cares about you would say, "I love you," like that, you know.

And so it's not about good and bad and feeling good and bad. It's about, "I love you," through good and bad. And this is a very powerful thing that we can discover through this practice and rest in our natural warmth. I'm not even saying right now that I have all the ice melted, okay? But I'm saying that it's possible, in our 10-minute bursts and longer meditations, to allow that ice to melt and to come back to our naturalness.

Making sense, right? It's coming back. Come back home. And that's why I say enlightenment, freedom, is familiar to you. It should be familiar to us. You know your natural compassion, and you know your natural knowingness. Your natural spacious mind, you know it very well before you got kidnapped by Saṃsāra. Mm-hmm.

Yeah, I'm very happy. Many of you are accessing that freedom. I couldn't imagine this many people having true access to that freedom. I know it may not seem a lot, but typically, traditionally, Dzogchen groups were very small. Three people, five people would be a big Dzogchen group in a small village, or a group of nomads, or even in the back of a monastic university, practicing the ultimate truth. So this is on, or in the charnel grounds, where they're hiding. They would typically hide in the charnel grounds in Bharat, in the kingdoms of what they now call India, Jambudvīpa, and other names there.

So anyway, I hope that helps you rekindle some of your naturalness.

On the Topic of Sensitivity

I feel like sensitivity is an interesting topic, something that goes a little bit mysterious in our world. People often ask themselves and each other, *Am I too sensitive? Are you too sensitive?* Right? I think we've all heard that. Everybody agreeing, or no? We've kind of heard that narrative, right?

And so here's an interesting notion that I invite you to entertain: that we're all the same amount of sensitive, just like all the fishies in the sea. All the animals are the same sensitivity to the environment, right? Everything, the flowers are all, even though they grow different and look different, they are all the same sensitivity to the environment.

So my little amateur speculation, but I feel like it has some basis and pretty solid ground, is that we're all the same sensitivity, but we have a natural mechanism that filters stuff out. And this is proven by modern science: that our consciousness, our brain, and the rest of our mind filters things out that could be overwhelming or scary, or anything like that. I've heard Buddhist teachings that say many of your past-life memories, you don't remember them because if you did, that'd be horrific, right? So we have some reasoning here. We have some logic that says, well, yes, there's a lot of filtering going on.

And when you're in the movement of your mind, it's very difficult to handle all that stimulation. So we've become very tough. Maybe we can think of it like a soldier's training. It's not that things aren't getting to you, because they clearly are. Soldiers often have recollections after they do their bit, they remember and feel everything; it catches up to them, right? So they have very high suicide rates and things like that. And with this awareness practice, we can avoid things like that by handling our sensitivity. I myself am considered a sensitive person. I feel the animals, I feel their disposition. I feel the disposition of the world pretty easily. If I see somebody suffering or something like that, I can empathize pretty quickly.

And I used to think that was a problem, especially when you start shedding tears at movies, and shedding tears when you see some squirrel on the road or something, you know. And people had also expressed that to me: that I'm too sensitive. But thankfully, it was a superpower that I didn't know was a superpower. I was just too much involved in my sensitivity.

I was contracted into the stories and not providing space for my sensitivity. But the sensitivity itself was just fine. Like I said, it was a superpower. It gave you the ability to be non-dual, to feel things, to see things, to see many layers into things, which to me is magical. To me, that's power.

Because empathy, we may think, *Oh, empathy makes you weak*. And anything can make you weak. But when you have awareness practice, when you have spaciousness, you can be that sensitive and still maintain your power. You see, and you can be a sort of warrior, a true warrior like that, you know where you can feel things and still survive and do what you've got to do, I suppose, through compassion.

And either way, I want to let you all know that if you feel like you're sensitive, just start to bring that into awareness and allow it. And it ends up becoming a kind of superpower. Because how else do you think things like, well, we're naturally telepathic. I don't want to claim that as something we try to do. We're just naturally non-dual, telepathic, and clairvoyant, and things like that. So how do you think that happens? It happens through empathy, through compassion, because in fact, that's why the whole Mahāyāna tradition was created, is to engage non-duality and emptiness through compassion. That's the whole bodhisattva ideal, bodhicitta.

Okay? Am I saying bodhicitta allows you to read minds? You know, we don't need to be reductive about that, but let's be logical. Wouldn't it be logical that if you have extreme empathy, you're reading everything about that experience?

(The audio cuts out for a moment) ...Yes. Well I said you're not looking through anybody's phone... So you're not violating because

of compassion, because of honesty and innocence of just being in the presence. And not having a contrived plot on people and things like that, and you don't have all these negative beliefs about people so there's an innocence to it, and you can read their thoughts and emotions. Yes. And compassion is what allows you to do that. And so you will never be able to read any thoughts or emotions if you don't have the compassion. And it's safeguarded like that. Understand?

So sensitivity, to me, and all the six sense spectrums, spheres, open, wide senses, wherever you're at with those, they are naturally sensitive and open, including the thought and emotional mind. That's why it's better we relocate ourselves into awareness. Because you could be feeling stuff and adopting thoughts and not even knowing it. And you could be carrying trauma inadvertently, you see, by thinking you're not sensitive. But even the most, the toughest of us, the sensitivity is still there. Yes. Is that making sense? Any questions, comments on that, challenges? Pretty logical, I think. And there's a depth to that, of course. And I feel like for everybody, as long as we can be safe in our sensitivity, then we'll be okay. Why is that? Well, I'll elaborate a little bit.

For example, with my Luna girl, she's got this sort of persistent thing going on with her right now. And that probably hits me as close as it could get. You know, she's my first doggy friend. And to me, she's so sacred and precious, and still, you know, could have a lot of life in her. And I hate the mystery of not knowing what's going on with her. You know, I'll admit it, I'm not infallible. I'm not some kind of majestic Buddha. Well, I guess we all are. But on the other side of that, you know, I'm trying to speak to you as a human here. Of course, something like that would naturally have you concerned, right? Your family, your friend getting sick or something like that. Mm-hmm. And we don't know what's going on, of course.

So empathy and compassion, free of contrivance, allows us to actually see deeper into that situation. So now I may see that even if she's sick, and even if it was incurable, there are more layers past that,

aren't there? Yes, she may be sick, but she still has her pure mind, still pure energy. And what's going to happen to her mind? What is her mind going to make next after this body?

Oh, I wouldn't even be saying this if it wasn't visible in the face of empathy, non-duality, and compassion. You can see past that. And that's the vital layer that's very great for a yogi to see past. Because first of all, you're seeing very deep. If you can even see your friend's pain, like, *Oh, this person is sick*. That's already layers of empathy and compassion. So multilayered cognizance, you're seeing your mind reading, okay? Just to make this accessible, your mind reading. You are. Because everything's mind. And in the face of non-duality, that's what we do. We read each other's minds, even speech. So don't get silly about this, please, my friends. We just keep it mature.

So you saw that layer of, yes, this being is sick, they are suffering. And then maybe even see another dimension into this: how they feel about it, are they handling it good, are they handling it bad? And then even further past that: what is their karmic energy, their momentum? Are they headed into more sickness? Are they headed into more trauma and confusion? Or are they headed into a kind of awakening or freedom from that body, from that sickness, from that confusion? You see, you can see all these things making sense, right? We're getting a little into woo-woo territory because it's unknown, it's mysterious, I know. But I want to put it out there only because I wouldn't even say it to you unless it was validated in my own experience. And seeing that extra layer helps out a lot to be able to see your family, your friends, your animal friends, to see where they might be after their sickness or something like that. And then seeing in your own mind, too, all this karma. That's why the past, the future is all here with us, right, in the presence.

And so as we continue to exit out of our 50,000 words-a-day narrative that has... And by the way, 90% of those, according to Fred Luskin at Stanford, are repetitive. So the average person has about 50,000 thoughts per day, and 90% are repetitive. Can you believe

that? Most of them are negative too, unless you have something exceptional about you or your culture. So in my opinion, that's significant to understand, we get limited into that dimension, that very small framework of mind. When we bail out of that, we hit the eject button, then we start to parachute in the clear sky of our own mind with no ground. So now we have full access to our mind, full access to cognizance far beyond even under the most genius person, under 100,000 words in their vocabulary, you see. That's why the yogis, they use their intuition and that cognizance and that empathy and compassion to read fully 100% into reality, without trying. It gets revealed to you. And then we use the concepts, the nomenclature, the classifications that we have to express it.

Okay, everybody, that's my little sharing today on sensitivity and how it relates to pure cognizance and omniscience. I hope that makes sense, and you can look into the six super cognitions and enlightened omniscience and things like that for more on this, okay? Are there any comments, questions?

SANGHA I: Okay. This morning, I noticed in the session this morning, I noticed a response that you had to a question that one of us posed. And it reminded me of my response to the same question. Okay, someone was asking, *What is the view?* And he asked that a couple mornings ago when you were there. And as soon as he asked that, it helped me to access my experience of what the view is for me, which is something that I can't, you know, I can't put into words something...

DAWAI: Ineffable?

SANGHA I: Right, yeah, yeah, okay. And then people started to respond, and all the responses were very beautiful and very heartfelt from each person. And they were sharing what, to them, is the view. But in my mind, somehow, I got into my mind thinking, no, those are not the view. I was thinking the view is, like I said, something

inexpressible. And what we're talking about mostly is the liberation that comes when we are in the view.

We're talking about, *Oh, the view is if I don't have to react the way I used to react*, or something like that. So in my mind, I was not perceiving something that you perceived this morning in the session when he asked the same question, and he said, *Am I getting it?* And you said, *Yes, I can tell from the way you're speaking that you are getting it.* And I was not sensitive enough. I was not connected enough to what he was saying to perceive that, what you perceived.

So anyway, I was so glad that I hadn't said anything, because I wouldn't have left room for him to have confidence in what he was experiencing right then. And you gave him kind of room to understand something different as time goes on. So yeah. So thank you.

DAWAI: Yeah that's a nice point, yeah. It took more than one sentence to prove, to verify that he was dealing with the view. It is really in the way that people describe self-liberation. And if you skip from recognition to full enlightenment, then you're just sitting here saying, *It's all pure consciousness, I'm good, I'm enlightened.* But there's an in-between phase there that, at least for me, if you're traveling along the path with me, then we need to verify that you've been through that, that you know what self-liberation is.

Self-liberation is probably one of the key ways that we can verify the view. Because self-liberation could not happen without open awareness.

So typically, lately, I mean, it's been so impressive, the sharing that's been going on in these groups. I've never heard anything like it, and I've been part of therapy groups to try to incorporate dharma. Like as a monk, I sat with therapists, mental health experts. The depth that we go in here is quite impressive, the amount of insight, introspection that's happening. And it's thanks to accessing the omnipresent cognitive dimension.

Yep, that's right. I'm going to fancy up the terms now. We're going to switch it from tathāgatagarbha to purely present or omnipresent cognizance. Yes. There are many ways to speak about these things, but it's really about that this cognition is like space. It's conventionally speaking unchanging, as the basis of our mind and all experiences.

So it's very simple. We're either located in the movement, the experience of the mind, or we're located in the basis of the mind. The basis of the mind is free of any harm, right? Free of any birth or death. And in that regard, it's also free of confusion.

And so it starts off with the Eightfold Path. Right View is the first in the Eightfold Path. And from a Dzogchen point of view, you can follow the Eightfold Path perfectly, actually. Because once you have adopted or recognized the nature of mind, that becomes Right View. And Right Intention is coming from that, all your thoughts, your body, speech, and mind.

And so there's Right Intention next, and then Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Concentration, and Right Wisdom, or sometimes Right Mindfulness. All that is coming from recognizing and stabilizing in awareness. So you have accomplished the Four Noble Truths, the Eightfold Path, Six Perfections, the Bhūmis, the Jhānas, all of that, just by stabilizing into the nature of your mind, you see?

Without spaciousness, the mind tends to be reactive, operating involuntarily. It loves to jump on things right away, like the doggie. You throw the toy, and it's jumping right away. It's rare, but you will find sometimes a dog that throws a toy and looks at you, and then also looks at the toy, examines what's going on in that situation. You see?

And so this is the same. We have space in our mind, and so we can see more dimensions. If we don't have space and security, our mind will not allow more than one or two dimensions into a situation.

If we were to see all the sentient beings around us, for example, and I know, again, I'm getting off the spectrum a little bit here of our material world, but there are many beings, and for our safety, we

cannot see them. And we ignore the fact that we can feel them, and hear them, and things like that. It's safe to do.

Okay, very good. So that's my little, just sharing. And thank you so much for some discussion. Is there any more discussion on this topic, sensitivity?

SANGHA 2: Yes. You talk about the other sentient beings, so my question is actually regarding dharma protectors. Do you think, is there any need that we need to practice the dharma protectors, *sādhana*s? Because there's a certain saying that *atiyoga*, even though it's an advanced teaching, it could be risky too. And so dharma protector may help us to release sort of the karmic maturity eruption and accelerate it because of this practice.

DAWAI: Yeah. Yeah, that's a good question. And *atiyoga* proper, you find out there in the world right now, two different versions of Dzogchen. So that's why I have to use the word *atiyoga proper* or *Dzogchen proper*. Dzogchen proper for me is when you recognize the nature of mind. You're sure that you've seen awareness as the nature of your mind. Then that is your dharma protector, in Dzogchen proper. That is Ekajaṭī, that is Mahakala, that is Vajrakīlāya.

But in leading up to that, then, yeah, if you're dealing with deity practices, you're dealing with this crazy world, it may be useful, and everybody can follow their teacher's advice on this one, okay? It may be useful to do dharma protector practices. In here, I rely on a few key elements of the view as protection, because Vajrakīlāya, the wrathful personification of Vajrasattva.

What does Vajrasattva mean? Vajrasattva means pure being, essentially. So that's why it's purification. So Vajrakīlāya is a Dzogchen protector, and that's a wrathful form of purity and purification. So what is the highest form of purification? It's your awareness practice. So there you have the protection, but you have to be sincere about that, very humble about that view.

And then anybody want to guess what becomes your highest protection? I've said it before.

SANGHA 2: Your awareness.

DAWAI: Awareness, yes. But as long as you keep it innocent, transparent, compassionate, these will be your protections. Honesty, compassion. Because within awareness, it's very difficult to be like corrupt-minded. To hurt other people is difficult, because it starts to burn on you when you lie, when you steal from people and things like that. It starts to burn on you, which is what the protector does.

It starts to burn on you, you feel it, it hurts you, and so that's why compassion is protecting you. It's really compassion and transparency which can be powerful protectors. And honesty, right? And we see that on the conventional level how beings, they are not protected when they do... That's right Dorje, crimes and lies, they require a lot of effort, but also internal effort, internal disguises and things that can hurt your mind and your own liberation. So that's what you see out there, beings that live pretty criminal lives, living desirous, getting into strange things that your mind doesn't agree with. This is also sort of torturing yourself, and OM MANI PADME HUNG, right?

We don't want to chastise anyone for any of this, but that's the fact of the matter: when you live a wholesome life you have it a lot easier. And it may seem a little bit more boring, but it's a lot easier. And sometimes you take that easiness, that freedom for granted. You know, it seems like boredom but it's really, you are free you know, if you get past that little feeling of boredom that comes and goes. Boredom's a big one that haunts people, believe it or not, it gets a lot of people. So sitting through your boredom, like sitting through an itch on your face, just letting it come and go, is very powerful.

But in that same regard, okay, you know activity, getting into things and producing karma and things like that, especially in these ways, in the non-virtuous ways, this can create hell in our minds. Alright?

So it's important to understand how that becomes the ultimate protection.

SANGHA 2: Very good, thank you.

DAWAI: Yeah, very good inquiry. Thank you for that one. Any other discussions stuff?

Alright very good. So I think we can end it here, roll the credits. I'd like to thank my producer, my mind. My director, my mind. All the actors, my mind.

Recorded May 15, 2025.

The Great Canvas of All Minds

They say, oh you can't assume the position of God as the creator or as the all-existing thing. All right? But it's not like that. You drew your mind on the great canvas.

So you have always been a part of this whole thing. If there is a God or an infinite consciousness or a oneness, then you drew your mind on that canvas. So just like a blank canvas, we drew a circle. Yeshé drew a circle, that's his mind. I drew a circle, that's my mind, and we're both part of the same canvas, just like that. Both of our minds are part of the same pure cognizance, that pure cognizant field, and the basis of our mind is pure cognizance—that's why it's beyond singularity or multiplicity, as well.

So let's say these little circles were ego, Yeshé's constructed self and my constructed self, and we really think we're separate from the canvas. So you see? We initiated dependent origination; we initiated duality and stress, because we think we're separate from this canvas.

And so now we're moving around, we're even talking to each other and Yeshé tells me, hey, we're all part of this canvas, this canvas is all we are, it's the whole thing.

And I say, oh!! And the circle breaks open, Yeshé's circle breaks open. You see? And then now there's holistic, just abiding in a great evenness that way.

But our minds are never separate, so we're not really two little circles like that. Our minds are concentric, like Indra's net but on the same canvas. So there is a divinity, there is something that's... You know, you have your own mind paradoxically, and I know this is sounding like theory, but we need some of this theory in order to complement our realization sometimes. So you have your own mind, even if it's non-dual and even if it's on the part of the great canvas, right, part of this great cognizance.

So if a fish was made out of pure water, it would still have its own mind, but it wouldn't be inseparable from the ocean. Wow, so many different, different ways to sort of um..

(*Dawai reads a chat message*). Oh good, I'm glad that's happening for you. Because you know, it's the first time I use some of these metaphors and things like that to describe what I believe is correlating with the Dzogchen teachings and some of the other teachings out there. And what I see and what I believe from the other yogis are seeing, okay? In the best way to explain that.

And how you can end up melting into this grand divinity, and that's what they call unionizing, right? Unionizing the Higher Self or unionizing with God, unionizing with the infinite consciousness. Now your body, speech, and mind is in a great flow.

So it's almost like you immersed yourself into a stream of water and you had mud all over you and the stream is taking it away, taking it away, taking it away—that's self-liberation, but eventually you start flowing, you get taken away to your whole body, it's you [sound of chuumm]. And now you're in the flow, right, now you're in the stream. Easy.

In our creativity, when we're taking walks, when we're studying, painting, you know, it's wonderful to study subjects that we're actually into because that's what complements the flow.

Making sense, right? Want to jump in there?

SANGHA 1: Wonderful teaching. Thank you. I heard it, you know, when the gods in Hindu religion, Brahma, and he was also explaining the same thing and a lot of the gods freaked out. Anyway, that's not what I want to ask you.

Can you do a sādhanā or puja on Guru Padmasambhava sometimes? And we could record it and put it on YouTube because I listen to you in the the Chenrezig Pūjā. It's very strong and powerful.

DAWAI: Yeah, we can. Do you want to do it today?

SANGHA 1: Yes, please.

DAWAI: We can do it towards the end after this section of the session, okay? And those of you who want to stay for the *sāadhanā*, you're welcome to. And those of you who aren't really into mantras and things like that, you can check out. But we'll do the Guru Rinpoche *sāadhanā*. Yeshé, you can find it in a Namchö text, by the way.

SANGHA 2 (CHAT): How would a fish made of water proclaim ownership of some part of the water as mine, without it not being sensible?

DAWAI: Well that's what we do, we take... If this is all cognizance, a pure base of infinite cognition, and let's say you're just resting in that, purely happy. Then somebody offers you an apple. I'm just kidding. That's a reference to Adam and Eve, you have to be super corny to get that one, but um, so really...

So you're here resting in this pure cognition. Inseparable. Perfect. I imagine there's still play, there's still compassion; but it's something beyond imagination. Let's say this is if you're a total pure consciousness merged with pure consciousness, okay?

But because it's cognizance, just like the mind can dream and layer itself and isolate itself, all of a sudden you create a world. Ehh I don't like this pure cognizance, I want to eat some broccoli, and I want to actually take somebody else's broccoli, right?

So now you create a separation within that. Before, you were completely submerged in the bathwater. Now, you're sort of sticking your head out of the bath and it's creating a separability. So self and other is how dependent origination started, that's how the whole issue gets started: is you divide cognizance within cognizance. I don't know if any of this is making sense, but I'm trying to just explain it—how that initiates that self and another.

Maybe look at a single-cell organism, to me, that was a great example of how consciousness can separate itself out, right? Making

sense, or no? How consciousness can separate itself out and isolate like a cloud within the sky? A cloud can separate itself from the sky, yet it's inseparable from the sky, isn't it?

Okay, now I should have started with the cloud.

SANGHA 3 (CHAT): Someone was talking about how yogis can go without food, this practice called *chölen*?

DAWAI: Yeah, they can. I think that's possible, but maybe unnecessary.

SANGHA 3: In that video, yeah, they told you that some yogis are lying down for a month after month so, and that the call is the *samādhi* state, they are all in a *samādhi* state. They are in, it's like, I can't explain. We have to rewatch that video again if we need to. Yeshé has posted the link.

And I have a follow-up question. The follow-up question is, the *samādhi* state is way deeper than deep sleep, right? Deep sleep.

DAWAI: Maybe we can think of it like clouds. Like we have very very dense clouds, and we have very very light clouds. And so when you're in a deep, deep sleep, you're in a state. It's possible to be in a kind of thick cloud in deep state, or a deep *samādhi*. But in deep *samādhi*, there's no karma being made, so you're staying there in an almost deliberate way, this is *sūtrayāna samatha*. You're staying there in an almost deliberate way, so there's no karma.

But with Dzogchen, you don't have to stay in a deep meditative state to avoid karma. You just recognize the nature of the whole thing and abide in the nature of mind, and then karma will not be a problem for you. So that's the difference, you see?

SANGHA 3: Another follow-up question would be: Yeshé once told me when I was having difficulty, he was telling me how to have a good sleep without sleeping. So he taught me yoga nidra and I came to know that yoga nidra is nothing but resting in awareness. You are

just opening, you can close your eyes, you can keep your eyes open, doesn't matter. You are just staying in awareness and you are not in thinking mind. You are not losing your glucose, sucrose, you are in a rest state...

DAWAI: Your energy.

SANGHA 3: You are getting rest, even more rest than you get when you are sleeping, and today named it deep sleep. So what I understood is, anybody who knows this practice, who knows how to stay in awareness, can be a master of yoga nidra from what I understood that day. Now the follow-up question is: Can we say that samādhi state is just a higher level of yoga nidra, more or less?

DAWAI: Probably. Maybe somebody else wants to jump in; I don't know too much about yoga nidra.

SANGHA 4: Yeah, yoga nidra is a preliminary. In hatha yoga practices, and the ones I've been involved in, we do yoga nidra at different sections and there's times where you do it multiple times. And it takes you deeper and deeper in each sit. What's happening is it's allowing the body to go in deeper, deeper states of relaxation to where you no longer feel your body. You get very expansive from that, then your mind can then relax.

When the mind relaxes, there's less need for all this calorie intake. We can look at the studies that they've done in people who play chess, and they burn a lot of calories, and they don't do anything, they barely move. So when the mind and the body become extremely still—stillness, all the other functions can go into like a hibernation type state. This is just my limited understanding, what I've been taught.

But that yoga nidra allows deep, deep amount of relaxation while at the same time you're not going to sleep, but there is a limited quality to yoga nidra. Since you're laying down, you still have that falling into sleep or the hypnagogic state. And we're going beyond that by being absorbed back into what we've always been. But the yoga nidra

allows that deeper, deeper amount of relaxation, but the same with just sitting. When we sit and allow everything to be, include our environment and everything, we're getting absorbed slowly back into all of that.

DAWAI: And you have energy even if you're thinking—you're thinking from awareness now, so it's not going to consume all that energy. Thoughts are able to flow, big difference. You can tell when you're crunching on thoughts, when you're holding thoughts, and this can, especially if you have brain sensitivity, can be really obvious. So that's what's taking energy, is when you're holding thoughts and being in that cycle of thoughts. Yeah, very good, thank you.

SANGHA 3: Thank you all for answering my questions. Thank you.

DAWAI: Thank you. Yeah someone else want to jump in there?

SANGHA 5: Sure. Good morning. The concentric clear films metaphor was great. It reminded me of there's a book, Holographic Mind, Holographic Universe, and I don't remember much of it, but I remember the description of holographic film, which is this:

You pass light through the film at a certain angle and it creates an interference pattern, and if you look at the film, you can't see—like if you just hold it up to the light, you can't see what the picture was, but if you pass light through it at the same angle, there's the picture. And then the really interesting piece of it, to me, was if you cut a small corner off of the film, not from the center but from the corner or from anywhere, it contains the whole picture in that little piece of the film. Yeah, and that is the part that reminded me of your concentric clear films, which is—

And you also used that, you said today that omnipresence is the same as non-referential—that kind of blew my mind.

Same kind of thing with the holographic film, you know? If you take a picture on holographic film of an apple, right, the apple only experiences its apple-ness, but maybe there's also a banana and other

things in the picture, and the apple might argue like, no, I have this very separate space on the film, here I am, see, I'm so well-defined.

But if you know the nature of the film, which is that the banana is completely overlaid over the apple and the whole picture is everywhere in the film, you know, non-referential, like, maybe it would blow the apple's mind, you know?

DAWAI: Yes, and omnipresence is also synonymous, correlates with empathy and compassion. Omniscience correlates with compassion. The deeper empathy and compassion you have, the more apparent our natural telepathy and clairvoyance will be.

Obviously, even as we're speaking right now, you're decoding the words that I'm saying, which are just sounds, just vibrations, but your mind is making something out of them. And the same is for any feelings you're getting right now or any thoughts you're having. We are in an interchange right now and reflecting each other in that way, it's a nexus.

And truly, if you want to embrace omniscience outside of our limited framework of the words we know and the thoughts that we know, then you can just embrace your natural empathy and compassion.

You'll see it there trying to rear its head all the time. You'll have compassion knocking at your door, chances to help people, chances to not think about ourselves, and at the same time paradoxically benefiting ourselves through service to others in a non-dual, kind of uncontrived way.

This is very easy too—just one little bug, or just saying some kind things and listening to a friend, anything like that to get out of the selfing, self self self self self. That's why this group is so great too, we get a chance to do that.

But it's very important to understand that this cognizance, it permeates everything. So that's how the six super cognitions and this Buddha omniscience is even possible. And it's safeguarded

because if you're not compassionate, if your ego is getting involved in omniscience, then you're going to get cut off from your omniscience because ego is dividing. But if you keep it compassionate, then you'll have a very easy time. And that's why kind people are considered very intelligent in many cases because of the pliancy of their mind, like that.

So I encourage you all to allow empathy and compassion, which is—that's the essence of the Mahāyāna path, okay? Because they emphasize bodhicitta and the bodhisattva yāna as it's called. And so that's an introduction to non-duality, emptiness, and this omniscience and omnipresent clear cognizance.

Okay, very nice, very good.

So these are exciting topics that don't get explored very often, at least not out there in the known Dharma world, at least that I know of anyway—how to correlate things like super-cognitions with sensitivity. Today has been this, one of many wonderful themes happening today, actually. So part of that theme, part of our discussion has been wholeness, the fourth samaya of oneness, that I imagine we're getting to in the Longchenpa text. It's oneness without melting into oneness, right? So it's not a complete loss of agency in the conventional sense of the word.

Okay, very nice. Any other comments going on?

SANGHA 6 (CHAT): Interesting. Yoga nidra actually sort of got me into Dharma.

DAWAI: Okay, very good.

Recorded May 15, 2025.

The Four Cyclical Isolations

When you first go into a short session, you're leaving your eyes open, and what is here for you? Well, typically we're conditioned to be in thoughts.

So if I was to give an example I would say: "What is happening with this meditation? What am I even doing with these people?" But really, you're just having thoughts, right? "I wonder what I'm gonna do today? Probably go meet up with my mom. I wonder if I'm nervous about that. I don't know, maybe." So I'm in these thoughts, right? And that's kind of where I'm psychically located.

But you can have awareness of thoughts.

So if I'm resting here and I'm just noticing any thoughts, I'm having thoughts about what I'm going to do today. You saw that, yes or no? Anybody not able to see their thoughts?

Then notice what kind of thoughts: narrations, images, song in your head, the movement. That's the internal movement, right? So-called. If you're able to just do that, just have awareness of thoughts, you're already in a different phase of the mind.

So, look at the ants. You know, no offense to the ants, I love the ants so much, actually, but they're really on a mission. If I was to say, "Hey ant, can you stop serving the Queen for a second or whatever you're doing, and pay attention to me so I could teach you a breath meditation?" The ant would not stop. "I am on a mission. I don't want to hear all this woo-woo stuff right now."

So this is like that. We are on missions in this collective, conditioned environment. Politicians are on missions. Leaders are on missions. People driving like crazy to get to work are on a mission. And if you get in the way, guess what you're gonna get? *The cuckoo of awareness* (middle finger).

Everybody understanding that, right? How we can psychically isolate ourselves into mentalities, and that becomes emotive, including all these intense feelings.

“Get out of my way, I’m on a mission!” And the ant is like, “Get out of my way, I’m gonna crawl over you, I don’t care.” Steps on the other ant with like ten legs, ten feet, in their face. How many legs do ants have? I think, yeah, six, right? Six feet. You know, so when an ant steps on you, it’s six times over.

But anyway, this is what’s happening, right? And we get very clunky because we get trapped in these psychic isolations, and we essentially steamroll. We stiff-arm our way through anything at that point. And even people are trying to tell us some positive news or give us a gift or something. “No, no, I can’t right now. I’m too busy.” That’s all making sense. Psychic isolation, right? It’s not discussed so much, but it’s part of our science.

When you engage with introspection, it’s kind of like you’re using a microscope or a telescope, except you’re using awareness, which is just a scope. This scope, your lens, lets you see your thoughts now. Because you’re allowing them, just like when you look in a microscope, you’re just allowing the specimen to do what it’s doing while you observe.

Well, just like that, let your thoughts do what they do. If they’re evil thoughts, destructive thoughts, let them come and go. It’s when we give them extra momentum, extra energy, that’s when those thoughts can be a problem. And you may even follow through on what these thoughts are saying instead of just letting them come and go. See why psychic unbinding, why that cognitive diffusion is so beneficial for us?

And people say, you know, all the time, “why introduce Dzogchen like this without any ngöndro preliminaries and without strong Dharma backgrounds sometimes and things like that?” Well, they introduce cognitive therapy to you, which is the same thing. Increased visibility will never be a risk, okay?

Don't take this for anything more than it is. You're just increasing the visibility of your mind, and breaking out of isolations. There's nothing harmful about that.

Maybe in other practices, tantric practices, there could be harm, and the way people present Dzogchen sometimes with a really strong emphasis on Guru Yoga could be harmful, but the way it's presented in this group, there's no harm in increased visibility.

So that's one phase when we come here for the 10-minute sessions, all right? You can be in your thoughts, or you can notice what thoughts are here in the 10 minutes.

I see a question here...

SANGHA 1: Do you feel that the fact that nothing specific observes that which is also not something is the essence of emptiness?

DAWAI: All right, we're gonna slowly build up here, okay? We're just trying to make this accessible for the people who are just getting into the meditations and things like that. So we want all this to be accessible. If there's any point in which I'm speaking, something becomes inaccessible to you, for example, if I say, "Hey, just rest in Dharmakāya emptiness," you're gonna be like, "What?"

A lot of you, and now some of you know exactly that that's synonymous with awareness, that's synonymous with pure presence. No problem. But the mind tends to overcomplicate things.

So remember why it's so crucial: The thoughts and the thought isolation are very, very troublesome for you. It causes a lot of disharmonies, it causes anger, it causes really crazy cycles of desire and things like that, pride and jealousy.

We have about thirty to fifty thousand thoughts per day. I always cite that statistic from Fred Luskin, and others have those stats, so it's not just single. Ninety percent of those are repetitive, and then probably eighty percent are negative. See why it's very, very useful to break out of our thought patterns? It's just cycling thoughts.

And if you yourself don't want to believe me, then you can verify, you can test, you can observe your own mind. Is this the same thought that I had six hours ago, or yesterday, or an hour ago? Yes. And in many cases, when practitioners have observed their own mind, they have found that this is repetitive. And the worst is your moods, your depression, your sadness is repetitive. So, in that regard, it can be tormenting. Here I am again in this cycle, and *da da da da da*. All right?

So that brings us to the second thing. That when you're in the short session, where you could be, maybe I'm in a mood. Maybe I feel sick, or maybe I feel nervous, or something like that. So I'm in a kind of mood now, and somebody says: "Hey Dawai, why don't you pay attention to your breath? Take a deep breath." "I can't right now, I'm nervous." Short breaths, stressful breaths, right?

So okay, Dawai, "just be here with it for ten minutes." Okay, so I'm here, I'm crunched up, my shoulders are crunched, my neck is crunched, I have tension throughout my body, and I'm not doing anything about that.

But I'm again isolated, right? Now instead of vivid thoughts, I'm isolated in a mood. It's a little bit more vague, it's a little bit more subtle where my isolation is, but it's still cognizance. It's still cognition, just like the thoughts. I'm stuck in cognition, I'm stuck in cognition either way. So I'm stuck in this nervousness, this anxiety—and then I just let it be. It has to go away, it cannot last forever.

So in cognitive science, for example, Dr. Harry Berry has these statistics: 90% success rate with allowing things to be. Your panic, your anxiety will alleviate within 10 minutes or so, whereas if you perpetuate it, if you didn't let it be, if you kept on thinking about it, it would last over an hour, and sometimes days, these things could last years.

So think of when you lose somebody or something like that, that's just holding a thought unnaturally. It's nothing to blame anybody

about, of course not, but that's what's happening as a matter of scientific observation, almost introspection, contemplative science.

We see that you must hold something, some ideas, some belief, and then you must renew it in order to have your troubles, right? So these are the isolations.

We can be in moods. I'm in a bad mood today. Well, what's wrong? All this stuff is wrong. I'm in a bad mood today, and you'll have to keep on reminding yourself of that, or else your bad mood might leave you. You don't want that. You don't want your bad mood to go away, do you? No, so keep kicking yourself in the butt, make sure it's still there. That's what we do anyway. So this is also what happens.

So there are two kind of isolations that I've described so far, the thought and the emotion, right, essentially the emotion. The third one is the body.

(Sangha 2 raises their hand). Is this a real question?

SANGHA 2: Why don't we want bad moods to leave?

DAWAI: There could be many answers for that, actually, that are probably better than what I could give because there are lots of studies on negative bias, why we lean into negativity. It's a very curious thing. I think it has to do with survival and the four F's of psychology of the reptilian mind and of our karmic conditioning.

From a dharmic point of view, it would be the very basis of dependent origination there. It has to do with our ignorance and our self-grasping. Bad moods typically are perpetuated because of self-grasping, because we're not getting something the way we wanted, things like that, okay?

But yeah, maybe you'll get some better answers. Why we perpetuate, why we have a negative bias? It's just saṃsāra, I guess. You know. And we really get hooked on those. We justify lots of things. We justify being sick.

Look at a lot of people that fake sickness. Why would you ever do that? We don't know. It just happens. People want it for different

reasons. You know, they do that kind of thing. I think it's normal. You know, children do that when they want attention and things like that.

So, this must be perpetuated with thoughts. This is what we know about this particular psychic isolation, cognizant, isolated cognizance, we can say. It's a pretty good term. Like a whirlpool in the ocean, it's an isolated cognizance. Being in your thoughts, being in the mood, and also holding a perspective.

I'm incorporating the five aggregates a little bit here. So let's say you've been practicing meditation for a long time. You feel enlightened. You feel, man, I'm pretty somatically cleared. I'm pretty mentally cleared. So you're sort of holding this perspective, like, yeah, I'm that enlightened dude. You know, me the enlightened one. And then when you talk to people, you're assuming that, yeah, here I am, the enlightened one, talking to somebody.

So it's a kind of, not many thoughts there, not much mood there, but it's a perspective. You understand? You could go to the complete opposite of that and say, I don't believe in enlightenment. That is a bunch of crap. And you kind of, you're not very having any thoughts, but you're kind of having the skeptical disposition, this perspective. And then maybe someone says to you, hey, you can really enlighten the mind, you know. And you're holding this perspective like, yeah, okay, I believe you. Sure.

You know, it's just a perspective. It's not really deeper than that, a lot of times. And we can hold these perspectives for long, long times.

Nationalism is a great example. You can be very proud of your country. That's a kind of perspective that you're holding. You can see people marching at restaurants together, all holding the same perspectives. Religious hierarchy, racial hierarchy is a perspective. You know, it's very subtle.

And it sucks because all beings are each other's teachers and are each other's relatives and friends and family. Yet all these things divide us. It could even be a football team or a basketball team, you know.

I know that's a sensitive topic, but these are perspectives that we take up. And I just want you to know them, to see them, because visibility is enough.

You don't have to do anything about it. If there's oppression in this world and you can't do anything about it, visibility is enough, okay? Just knowing, and just us speaking about it like this openly is enough.

If these kinds of discussions give you stress, that's probably your empathy, your compassion, which is great, better than apathy and destruction. But at the same time, we should be able to discuss these things without our emotions conquering us, and just put a flag in the ground: This is wrong, right? And you don't even have to hold a perspective that I'm against extreme nationalism or extreme religious fanaticism. You just can objectively state, like a scientist, religious fanaticism is probably destructive for the mind. Very easy like that. Extreme nationalism, those kinds of perspectives are very destructive for the mind, just knowing that.

(Dawai reads a chat message). Oh that's an interesting comparing, comparing nationalism to a collective ego. Very interesting, yeah. And I want to say there's some kind of healthy nationalism, to be, you know, happy about your country, your culture, and things like that. Yeah, so I don't want to completely say that. Yeah, maybe that's more patriotism, isn't it?

So interesting topic to get into, but it has a lot to do with the mind. Those are cultural zeitgeists that kidnap the mind very easily, because that's another deep psychological thing that we do. When we see groups doing the same things, we all start dressing the same, we all start adopting the same language, and whatnot, and less free thinkers are popping out of that kind of structure.

All right, so I've gone into perspective, how we can isolate ourselves into perspectives, cultural perspectives. Those are a little bit less localized than emotions and thoughts, but still psychic isolations, cognitive, isolated cognizance, I'm going to use that new term, okay?

And so obviously, for some of you it may be obvious, I'm going through the four foundations of mindfulness. So the third is the body. We can actually have this cognitive isolation into the body, because the body is also alive, living, doing stuff, and if you stub your toe, for example, and you say, 'Doh!' [sound], and then you start isolating yourself into the vibrations of that toe. You've seen that, right? You've seen yourself do that? Very good.

So now you know what it's like to isolate yourself into thoughts, to isolate yourself into emotional energy, and bodily energy. Internal stuff is very difficult. If you have some kind of internal pain, you don't know what it is, it's very difficult not to isolate yourself into that—but that isolation is not going to help your blood flow. It's not going to help your oxygen delivery and your T helper cells create white blood cells for the healing. It's not going to help any of that. That isolation is going to create a tension.

So if you can allow that, the vibrations of that injury or that sickness, best you can, without contracting into it, then, in my opinion, this will be better, okay? And again, you don't have to do anything for any of these. I'm just describing to you all the different ways that we can isolate ourselves.

And so I believe [name] is still here, or no? Yes. So, he kind of inspired this because everybody... a lot of people deal with the neck and the head pain going up, up the back of the head, right? And the shoulders. This is a very sensitive area where your head is connected to your torso. And the nervous system, the pineal gland—a central hub of the nervous system—that is connecting to the rest of your body there.

So that's why I say, when we do our short sessions, these are all the things that you're bringing into presence. You don't have to deliberately bring them in. They're already here within pure presence.

So for some of you, it may be like taking a bath—your whole body, including that neck and that head tension, is within awareness right now. And you're allowing it some time to relieve, for that contraction

to alleviate. Just like a fist. How you would allow it to just, by not doing anything, and in fact, you're stopping the doing because it takes doing to clench a fist. Power to the people! But anyway, so when you are clenching that fist, it's a doing, and then you stop doing, and there's a release.

That's exactly what's happening in our necks right now, or most of the time. And so, there's absolutely nothing to do about it. No moving around, all this stuff. You could actually hurt yourself if you do that rolling the neck thing too fast. Rolling the neck is very, very good in its proper context, okay?

But when we're doing the short sessions, that's why they say Anuyoga, the 8th yāna, where you do tons of yoga—neck rolling, you name it, shoulder rolling, and a much more intense yoga is the 8th yāna. Dzogchen is the 9th yāna. They say in Anuyoga, it takes many lifetimes to achieve liberation using energy practices in yoga.

But in Dzogchen, one lifetime—you can have liberation. Why? Because it's easier to release that tension in your neck by allowing it to just be here than it is by doing 10 cycles of extreme yoga while you're holding your breath and whatever else, breaking your kneecaps.

So big difference here between Anuyoga and Atiyoga, the 8th and the 9th yāna. In 1 through 8, you're doing stuff. In the 9th yāna, you're not doing anything anymore. Doing is antithetical to liberation, to self-liberation.

You cannot have cessation or cognitive diffusion if you're doing something, alright? And that means I can go grab a cup of water right now and still not be doing anything; there's a slight paradox in that.

SANGHA 3: A couple questions just came up when you mentioned that. I wonder if that's why Dzogchen is better for our times right now, is because maybe back a long time ago, they weren't doing as much as we're doing now. We're already doing so much with daily lives and jobs and stuff. I wonder if that's just a thought that I'm having.

DAWAI: Yes, certainly. There's a lot more preoccupation. The minds are way speedier. We can pretty much say that for sure that it's a little bit more materialistic now, and the minds are much speedier.

So what we have is, to me, degenerate times—this Kali Yuga that we're in, it's ending. It's a long run that's ending now and going into the Golden Age, at least according to Dharmic cosmology. But as it ends, it's like water going down the toilet; it's getting denser. So, you have all the information that used to be everywhere, now it's just on the internet servers, like condensed. You have all the forests turning into cities. Everything's getting denser, you see, including the minds. And that's why we don't see the true power of the mind, because we're contracted into these dense isolations.

That's why I want you all to break out of the isolations, you understand? There's another world when you start to break out of that density.

So you're absolutely right, and I hope many more Dzogchen guides pop up, and we all, the yogis here end up continuing to benefit. I think each of you is at that level of being, if not now, then, as you mature, whatever. You know, you've met with Dzogchen. Traditionally, that's considered of epic karmic proportions. Like, you've done something extremely good to meet with these teachings. And that means you are a sovereign monarch. You are beyond the gods. The gods venerate you according to the dharma, right?

So you know, you can inject that into your ego if you want to, but it's more to just let you know how special it is when we connect with Dzogchen, at least according to the dharma texts. Yes, and then Yeshé has here the Kali Yuga cycle. And by the way, what does 4,320,000 equal? 9. Okay, very good.

All right, and so the last psychic isolation that we can experience is the environment. Just like a cat gets very enticed by the mouse, we can isolate into focus itself. Like, if I'm focusing on a cup, and I really want that cup, and I have some dreams about it and things, well I'm

isolating into the three spheres of conception, that subject-action-object trichotomy.

So those are the four foundations of mindfulness, and the five aggregates—condition, consciousness, form, mental formations, everything is in there. And how, in these ten-minute sits, where are you? Where are you isolated into? Or are you isolated?

See, the one thing that does not ever isolate is awareness. That's what holds all the isolations. It's the very basis for any experiential movement, any consciousness, okay?

So I think you got it. That's why we get pointed to the nature of mind. It's not just awareness. Awareness is like a placeholder. When you and I have a one-on-one, or you and any authentic awareness holder, and you have an aha moment, and you see something there—cognizance recognizing cognizance—then that should become your new best friend. Because that's the one place that's never going to be trapped, ensnared, damaged, hurt, sick, anything.

All right, everybody? Making sense, yeah?

And it's gonna come off a little bit different if you've never recognized awareness, the nature of mind, the nature of reality and all experience. If you're not familiar with that *rang bzhin*, that nature of mind—the cognizance that permeates all other cognizance, if you're unsure about it or you haven't been introduced, then this whole explanation may logically add up, but you're not going to be able to access it. Because you'll say, oh yeah, I know I can get isolated in my thoughts. And then, as you're saying that, you're isolated in your thoughts. You'll get isolated into your thoughts about isolation of thoughts. The mind is a very tricky place.

All right, so now that I've gone over those, I just want to also include the eight consciousnesses, because we got all this stuff.

We got our mental mind, getting stuck on thoughts, getting stuck on emotions—that's the sixth consciousness. But there's also, you can be isolated into a feeling of a watcher, a thinker. And that's kind of

where [Sangha member], I believe, in the beginning was going into. What about emptiness? Well, it's great.

If you're stuck in your thoughts, now you're observing your thoughts: "Wow, I'm having a lot of anxiety about what I'm going to do today." But now, who is the one having that observation of the thoughts? You see, so there's a third layer there. That's the conditioned self—that's the watcher, the thinker, the stinker, whatever you want to call it, the feeler, the one who's offended, the one who's offending, the one who's mad, the one who's sad. This feeling of 'me' sitting right now, listening, hearing words—a reference point, yeah.

And so that's another psychic isolation. That's another cognitive isolation, okay? We can be in that with very little thoughts, very little emotions, but still have a feeling of anchoring into separability.

And as you trust awareness, that also begins to alleviate and soften. So that isolation—the very root of all suffering is starting to alleviate as well, starting to come apart. So, it's contracted and then it's starting to soften apart, okay? Back into spaciousness. Yes, and with that, all your karmic seeds are being softened too. All that karmic momentum has no basis anymore. It needs a reference point in order for karmic cycles to occur, just like a whirlpool needs that momentum, that center point.

Okay, everybody, well, thank you for letting me present that. I feel like we don't get into the mechanics of mind much, and the Thrangu Rinpoche text that we're reading is all about that, and I wanted to correlate it to our short sessions so that when you come here for these short sessions, you know what's going on. You know where you're located, which "country" are you located in? The country of your thoughts, the country of your emotions, the country of your body, of the environment. Just knowing is enough.

So this can all be truly fascinating stuff. It's like being a scientist and you're having a microscope, a telescope-type device where you could see everything about the mind and your reality. It's fascinating.

SANGHA 4: I want to ask, since this was a very broad and beneficial overview in my opinion, but I want to say, where do the mental factors get into, like, fit into this? Because it said that they kind of observe what the minds observe, the aspects of the minds observe, but other than that, I don't really know how they correlate to these, so I want to ask.

DAWAI: Listen, go ahead and copy and paste the 52, I think it is, mental factors. So, you see how that was a very generalized question, right?

SANGHA 4: Yeah, since we kind of did a broad overview as well, I wanted to ask a broad question to that, if that's okay.

DAWAI: Okay, but the question you just asked me was essentially an invalid question. You said, how did the mental formations fit in? I just explained a whole bunch of mental formations. I'm not trying to offend you, it's just an invalid question, because I already went through contact, feeling, perception—we went on a whole thing of perception. So, you're basically saying, how does perception fit into this talk that you just had?

SANGHA 4: No yeah, okay, that makes sense. I must [audio cutting] the concept of mental formations, I think, because are they separate from the minds, or are they kind of in the concept?

DAWAI: My friend, you're just asking questions just to ask questions now. Yeah, really, what does your heart desire, right now?

SANGHA 4: What does my heart desire? I think I was just confused about that, but that's okay.

DAWAI: But when we sit here in the short sessions, there are all these things here for us—all these various isolations, emotional. We can get stuck in thoughts, we can get stuck in our own greed, in our own

pride, in our own jealousy. So, do you have a question about that? How we can get stuck in thoughts?

SANGHA 4: No, I think that makes sense. Okay, yeah, I can kind of see it now when it's described like that. I think I was kind of not understanding the meaning of the formations, but yeah, that fits in the way you talked of it. That's okay.

DAWAI: Mm-hmm, yeah, if it's helpful to define mental formations, as you see there with the list, those are constructs, okay? They come about through conditioning. So, I have to program together a construct. For example, greed is a construct. It's made from self-grasping, from sensory constructs. I have to create, like, maybe I really like apple juice—I have to create the apple, I have to create the juice, I have to create the idea, the taste sensations, I have to associate. So, it becomes a construct. Greed is a construct, you see?

And so, mental formations can be constructs, but they can also be just little fly thoughts, too. But every thought is going to be, essentially, a construct until you start to abide in pure presence, and until you allow pure presence—then the thoughts have less weight. They have less—every word that you're speaking, every word that I'm speaking. For example word and speaking, those are constructs. Word has more to it. It has a whole file tree to it. Just the word "word" we have to assign, we have to grasp. And how are those built up? You know, these are all things that will be revealed with awareness, you start to see all the file trees.

SANGHA 4: Thank you, yes, that makes sense.

DAWAI: And I'd say at the base. Look at Kristoff Koch and maybe others, like a lot of physicists that deal with consciousness, I suppose Donald Hoffman and some of the ones I would name are a little bit kind of popular. There are many scientists out there that are interesting, so don't let me sway you into any direction. But when you start the... I think Kristoff Koch was one of the ones talking about

how single-cell organisms are living intelligence. That's consciousness there. So, how does a mental formation initiate? And it's a very first stage I would say it's very much like a single-cell organism.

SANGHA 4: Yeah, that makes sense. But do you think the consciousness are like prior to those, or are they also constructs just like the mental factors?

DAWAI: Yeah, there's always the pure basis of consciousness, and as soon as we take that and twist it into something, there's conditioning. So then you have, first you have ignorance of the pure basis, which is a necessity for dependent origination, and karma, and conditioning. So you need to ignore the fact that it's already perfect and one. And so you start off the whole thing by creating a me and you, like a single-cell organism does. And then fabrications and conditioned consciousness arise from that, according to the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination, and I would agree.

SANGHA 4: Oh, that makes sense. Okay, okay, thank you, thank you.

DAWAI: Mm-hmm. Thank you. And way to accept that challenge, you know. I know I challenge you a little bit, and you're one of the best I've ever seen at accepting those challenges. Seeing how you yourself, I just got to put that out there—they can react any way. You get upset, even, we all. I'm not saying that they got upset, but if they were to get upset, they would be able to see it first. It's pretty amazing when you're working with people like that. Like, oh, I saw how I got upset by what you said, or, and then also trusting me, like maybe I could be more delicate with my speech. So awareness is teaching me, it's teaching them. You see, that's how to build a healthy relationship right there—and you have your insight, and you trust each other, you know. You're gonna see your bullshit, I'm gonna see my bullshit. But I'm just very proud of you, because the way you can reflect and correct, the way you can stay in the presence is amazing. It's very good.

SANGHA 4: Well, thank you, yes. I think that's a very good benefit of this group, and for, like, socially too since we don't need to be lecturing each other constantly if we want to fix anything, and there is a trust that it will kind of be fixed by itself, I suppose. And I think that's very socially awesome, I guess, socially awesome.

DAWAI: I imagine they would be a great teacher too, huh? Maybe. Further down the line.

SANGHA 4: Thank you, thank you.

DAWAI: Yeshé also posted: "A definition of mental formations are defined as the aspects of the mind that apprehend particular qualities of an object."

Yeah there's probably never going to be a thought that you have that isn't associated with an object. If you could come up with a thought, or even a word that's not associated with an object, I've done this. I've found very few like, love is probably a close one. Love can be non-dual without an object, but Sanskrit words—you can find Sanskrit words like OM, right? Very non-dual, not based on a sense object, but most thoughts that you ever have will always be about some object.

Very good, wow, we really went in on this session. I can appreciate that. You know me, I'm a little insistent when we do our short sessions that everybody is, pretty much everybody. There may be a few people to get a pass, but everybody should be waking up together. We're all gonna wake up together, okay? We're not leaving anybody behind. As long as they're here in this group, they're here for some reason, and that means that we're gonna try to pull everybody out of the water, all right? And I know it's not always happy-happy and fluffy-fluffy—that's not Dzogchen. Dzogchen isn't always fluffy, although it can be quite fluffy.

So, all right, very good. I'll end the session here then. These gatherings are considered very powerful, very meritorious, and my

aspiration is that we become so strong that people with addictions can come here and start to get the support that they need through this awareness practice and the friendships here, where they can overcome these, even the strongest psychological entrapments and isolations. This is what it takes to come out of addiction, come out of trauma, come out of hate and things. You need to be around people. It's really I mean, I guess you could do it on your own, but it'd be very, very difficult. So the safer we can make this, the more inclusive, the more you all show each other love and respect, we can be that place, all right everybody?

Imagine if this is a place where somebody can come and be free of their addiction or their trauma or their abuse, really. And if we stick together and don't compartmentalize ourselves, we can help each other like that. But if we get compartmentalized, it's gonna be very difficult to overcome our stuff. We need that sangha aspect, the friendship aspect, okay? So we all trust each other, trust our awareness practice to teach us, and we'll continue to have a really powerful support for people like that, okay? And not hurt each other anymore, right?

All right, so from this gathering, any merit, any good that has come about, there are beings in this very presence that are suffering, and we dedicate it all to them.

Deep bow to you, everybody, and I hope you have a beautiful day.

Recorded May 23, 2025.

The Many Layers of Psychic Contraction

Okay, Little Bear is going to give the teaching... so pay close attention. He's showing you how to be a loving dog, if you ever get curious. Love you too, buddy. Go sit, go sit. Your harassment is on camera.

All right, well, I wanted to talk about these psychic nuances a bit more, all right, and sort of put it out there for your reference and sourcing.

Before we talked about the layers of the mind or dimensions of the mind, so I used a little bit of a funny analogy with the whispering. So if I started whispering to you right now about anything, maybe I could whisper about Little Bear. Now he's harassing Nitty. For some reason he's harassing the cat, but that's okay.

Now there's a part of my mind that's talking about Little Bear and the cat, but there's another cognitive holding that says you need to whisper for some random reason. Usually, we have a reason to whisper, right? So, there's some thought that's holding a batch of thoughts.

So in this way, there's an echo of cognition. That's why we hinge on awareness practice—because the awareness practice embraces all that cognition. It's the base cognition, *gzhi* or *kun gzhi* in the Bön tradition, and sometimes also in the Nyingma tradition. So layers of thoughts holding each other, creating subjectivity.

I'm whispering because I need to be quiet, and now you start talking about the cat. You see these different layers?

So most likely we have one of those right now—some predisposition, some little veil, like a sheet that's over us that creates our perspective, our mood. It's like the seasoning that you add when you're cooking. You're seasoning everything you say, think, and do with this backdrop cognitive contraction.

Remember, I'm not suggesting it's a bad thing, everybody. Whatever you're going through right now, however you perceive the world, this is just like eggshells. But the elements—the elements will never be separated from mind, you see. So as an awareness holder, you can incorporate the mind completely in the effortless abiding that we *don't do*.

So if I'm relaxing here, I have this whole echo of cognition relaxing, and now I'm doing nothing so that echo has a chance to sound out, right? If I was to use these little meditation cymbals here, it's the same thing. (*Dawai rings the cymbal*). You're letting it have a chance to go away, to go back to the basis.

So thoughts are just coming from your mind, and when you abide in the whole mind, a thought is just... (*A bell sound rings*). But if you're drinking stimulants like coffee, this is what you have: (*Dawai hits the cymbals repeatedly, producing lots of frequent, tiny clangs, ring ring ring ring ring*). It's never stopping.

We can allow the echoes of our experience to settle. Then what is left over? That is your Buddha.

(*Dawai addresses Little Bear*). Okay, maybe he really needs to go. He's not just harassing me. OM BENZA SATO HUNG. Purification practice for interrupting the Dharma.

So this is the case though, when we do effortlessness, okay, in *The Way of Abiding*, Longchenpa is suggesting exactly this—not suggesting, hey, your awareness, everything's perfect, everything's enlightened. That's why when people express prohibition towards Dzogchen, one needs to understand there's still a 15-year timeline for self-liberation, sort of the maximum time it takes for conditioning to unravel, but I think we're moving a lot faster, honestly.

But really, you need to give time for self-liberation in Dzogchen. If you're waiting all your life just to be introduced to Dzogchen, well, by the time you're introduced to it, you're not even going to have time to practice it. And all these books that are published about it, how will you have time to read them?

So I'm not really for the prohibition in its current context, the way it is in the Dharma communities out there. That's maybe an old-school thing that had value, and maybe still some value, of course, but obviously it's time to break that egg open and really get Dzogchen out there so people can free their minds.

So yeah, this corresponds with the five aggregates, because of course you have form in there. I'm talking about the elements. I'm talking about conditioned consciousness, which is essentially contracted consciousness—like if you could take empty space and tighten it, right? That's what we're doing with the pure consciousness—just kind of a perception of tightness anyway. So a psychic contraction, similar to the subjectivity created in a dream.

So you have perception in there, mental formations in there. You have also the eight consciousnesses when we're just effortless abiding. This is all the stuff that's happening, all your doings.

The sixth mental consciousness is active with thinking about the future or the past or analyzing the present. The seventh egoic consciousness is involved in that—I'm sitting here, I'm here, am I accomplished, am I not accomplished, what do I need to do later, right? So all this is a big old highway, super highway of preoccupation, and that's all eight consciousnesses.

So you have the five senses—the eyes, we leave them open; ears, our awareness holds all the ears. If you have more than two ears, they're holding all the ears. I meant to say all the sounds, not all the ears. So anyway, but it holds your ears. It holds all the sounds. It holds whatever we're perceiving as the thing making the sound.

In this way, we're resting in the inclusivity of cognition, rather than subdividing our experience into, "Oh, what was that sound, I liked that sound, that sound needs to happen again," or "No, I don't like that sound, please make it stop." This is all some kind of getting involved in subdividing our experience into a psychic contraction.

And then the eighth consciousness is also included in this. I like to look at it using this dark energy example that the scientists speculate,

theorize, that there's about 95% dark energy right now. We cannot see it, that our 100% reality is 95% something we cannot see.

So to me, for meditators, that should give you a clue that you can go ahead and let go of the contraction into what you're seeing and hearing and feeling and thinking—and there is a much broader scope, much broader scope.

So your memories, your karmic seeds, your past lives—think of the immortal jellyfish. I'm telling you, go look that up if you haven't. It's such an interesting little character. It never dies. It just goes into a kind of cyclic existence where it contracts and then expands back out and has another birth. It contracts into its embryo or something like that. I'm not wholly educated on it, but it never dies, and it looks pretty cool, too.

So this is exactly what's happening to us, except the appearance of death is so overwhelming when you're conditioned towards it.

(Dawai reads a chat message). Oh yes, the Turritopsis.

Yeshé has the information, be happy to share that with you: “The Turritopsis dohrnii, also known as the immortal jellyfish, is a species of small, biologically immortal jellyfish found worldwide in temperate to tropic waters and is one of the few known cases of animals capable of completely reverting to a sexually immature colonial stage after having reached sexual maturity as a solitary individual.”

So it goes back to childhood like Benjamin Button style.

So to me, that's very interesting, because if you look at the pictures, they got it mapped out, the stages. It looks exactly like cyclic existence, what you would think that our mind is doing, except we're a little bit like the snakes, we shed a skin.

But when you think atemporally, when you take time out of the equation, you start to see that we're still actually with our bodies, even when our bodies are gone, or when the bodies seem like they die.

But this is all for the yogis to see for themselves with their own eyes. I'm just saying that using deductive reasoning, we can assume that, well, if there's deductive reasoning, you can assume that there's a lot

out there, like in the 90th percentile that we don't perceive in our proprietary reality.

So just by letting be all the elements—the four foundations of mindfulness: your thoughts, feelings, body, and elements or environment. But if you take the elements mixed with mind, then it's all four. And you just really let that be like that, including the subjectivity of sitting here. That's the sensation of the witness, the reference point.

Then you don't have to worry about all these programs that are written into your mind and all these things, because the very circuit board that's holding everything is getting pulled out.

So if you can allow that subjectivity to rest in your awareness—that feeling of a me sitting here, a witness, a watcher, a thinker, whatever the witness is doing, whatever the individual, the agency is doing, relaxing as presence, you can uproot the basis for all affliction. And then it's not a complete loss of agency either. That would be like the sun losing its rays: it's not like that. We can abide, releasing into nonreferentiality without losing stability.

Now if you've been introduced to the nature of mind, then you can do this. You can allow that feeling of an observer, a thinker, a me, that very feeling—you can bathe that naturally in effortless abiding.

But if you have not been introduced to the nature of mind, I don't know how it's possible, because you will still be in a reference point, a preoccupation of your experience, because you have not seen just outside the preoccupation, this cognizance that's holding everything. So you have not seen it, even though it's been holding you—like the fish hasn't seen the water that's holding it. It hasn't acknowledged the water even though the water is there. It has seen it, right? It is the sea. So I think it's just like that.

So remember, the mind is like an echo. It has a spectrum—from dense to subtle, from very obvious like the internal narrator, we're talking about that with our vow of silence coming up—that even the internal narrator is a kind of speaking, right?

And I shared with [Sangha member], actually, this idea of speed reading. They talk about sub-vocalization. Speed reading is done when you don't narrate out loud to yourself. And the degree of how much you're willing to give that a try is very similar to how much you're willing to let go of this: I must pilot this thing. I must think my way through this thing. No, you really must not. You don't have to, actually. Try it out.

Just read a paragraph. Start with a paragraph without reading it out loud in your head, without narrating. See what happens. It's quite powerful.

And I found out later that it's actually a thing out there, speed reading, because I was already using it for my reading. So very cool stuff. It's not like I found out, it's somehow connected in the collective with me.

So anyway, that narration that goes on all day, pretty much for a lot of people, especially if you're on some caffeine or some stimulant, it's going all day. And it sends you into various moods. It gives you worldviews. It makes you hate teachers. It makes you love teachers, all kinds of stuff.

So taking a vow of silence to begin knowing or seeing that internal voice, seeing echoing. You'll see a subtle voice or coarse linguistic narrative. And you'll continue to allow those to just liberate out, just let the air out of those.

All right, so any comments, questions so far on any of this stuff?

SANGHA I (CHAT): Dawai teaches Dzogchen speed reading.

DAWAI: I'm talking about speed reading life here. Without that narrator, you know, they call it sub-vocalization in the science of literature. But I'm talking about this having multiple applications when this narrator starts to quiet down, because it's creating a literal electrical boundary.

When you're in thought, you can see it, you can imagine this, that you're creating a psychic isolation. And as long as you're there,

well, you can't be everywhere else. Now you can have thoughts, but you don't need to be stuck. (*Dawai reads the chat:*) "Okay, in the spheres of conception." That's why they call it, the ancient yogis knew this, isn't it amazing, spheres of conception. To me, that's high-tech terminology that we don't even have in modern psychology, that I know of, anyway.

SANGHA 2: What's the upcoming vow of silence this weekend?

DAWAI: I'm inviting everyone for this weekend to take a vow of silence for two days and do some fasting, a few hundred thousand prostrations, I'm just kidding.

SANGHA 2: You mean this weekend or next weekend?

DAWAI: The one coming up, because tomorrow is Father's Day. So there are people that are gonna, unless they really want to hurt their children and confuse their children. "I know it's Father's Day, but I'm not talking to you today." All right. So everybody's invited for that. Yeah, jump on in there.

SANGHA 3: Okay, yeah, talking about the layers of the mind. So I mentioned the other day that I had reasons that I was listening to the Medicine Buddha *sādhana*, and I don't usually do mantra or anything like that. And one of the things that I had noticed before about mantra for me was people talk about, oh, this is non-conceptual and this is helping you to improve your ability to rest and to be concentrated.

And I always thought, well, okay, how come they're saying that, surely, because they experience it that way, but I never did experience it that way, because there were always at least two layers of things going on in my mind at the same time as I was listening. There was the thing going on that says, I'm listening to this because I want to listen to this, I want to hear it, but I'm not really hearing it.

And then a couple days ago, for about the length of one sādhanā, it actually did happen to me that I heard, that I didn't hear or pay attention anyway to that layer, to that voice, I just heard the sounds. And to me, that was very nice, because at least I could experience what I thought I was supposed to be experiencing, what I thought probably everybody else experienced except me.

Of course, for me anyway, it didn't last. But to me, that's okay that it doesn't last, because I do know that all of that, all the thinking about it and all the noticing the experience after it happens, all of that belongs to the whole thing. So, yeah, okay, thank you.

DAWAI: Very nice, thank you. Yeah, that's a big thing, I think, for practitioners. We tend to get hooked on the good stuff. But maybe we can be a little radical and say, bring it on, I want my habits to resurface, I want my challenges to a safe degree.

When awareness starts to really dawn on your life night and day, then it's totally appropriate, and you'll start to see that.

We've got a little *turritopsis* jellyfish in us, because when we go to sleep, and when we go in and out of moods, this is all cyclic existence. We go to sleep and wake up, this is all retracting and contracting of the mind.

So just that being within awareness eases up our subscription to the movement of our mind. We unstick from the movement of the mind. And you all are great, really great practitioners, great masters, actually. And more and more, you're coming into the enlightened mind, just really ready for that.

Recorded June 14, 2025.

Letting Be Whatever Is, a Dzogchen Talk on Self-Liberation

I feel if we have a lot of talk about Dzogchen and texts and biographies and things like that, but no talk about the actual practice or the approach—well, we’re not wholly complete. So anyway, just a few words to help you maybe understand this profound approach that happens to have a lot of common ground with cognitive science and cognitive therapy.

In this approach we’re just letting be with our eyes open, senses all open, without rejecting anything or going inwards or focusing on anything externally. So if I’m sitting here speaking right now, my eyes are open, yet they’re not focusing on anything. And I don’t need to be in a continuous thought proliferation to be speaking to you right now. See, I don’t need to be aboard a train. I can let thoughts come and go.

So the reason why I value Yogācāra and various mechanics of the mind, even the modern mechanics that we see, is because while we’re resting here with our eyes open in a comfortable posture—like you would sit at a park or at the beach or something—just relaxed without focusing on anything, then all your doings, all your preoccupations are being aired out. They’re getting a chance to breathe. So we’re not adding another doing on top of a bunch of doings that we’ve accumulated throughout the day and throughout our lives.

So the idea is that there already are doings. There’s already effort in this presence, and we allow for that effort to untie, to breathe out. So it’s a lot like water can be frozen; mind can be frozen, it can be crystallized. But these elements, this life, our crystallized cartoon reality, well—it doesn’t have to be limited to that.

We can apply the four foundations of mindfulness—so our body, our emotional feelings, our thoughts, and the entire environment. So the three spheres of conception as in concepts: subject, action, object,

the *ayatanas* as they're known in the Dharma, we're letting them be open. Everything's okay. Because if there's a sound, that sound is happening within mind. If there's something being seen, if I look over at Scrappy Tank over there, that's all within the same mind—even me focusing on him.

Then, if I have a thought, “Oh, I wonder if it's gonna rain some more?” that thought was held within the same mind as hearing the sound—as hearing, as the sound, and as the source of the sound. All three spheres of conception are within awareness like that.

And to expand that, it's not just awareness. This is your main cognizance; this is the unconditioned pristine mind. And so even if we're reifying and crystallizing, that starts to soften in a safe space, within that stability, that *Samatha*, and then, yes—even our world actually starts to break apart. The rigidity, our subscriptions, our hooks, our triggers, things that grab us and entice us and entrap us—these are all now within this pristine cognizance. Your ego grasping, your overthinking, your under-thinking, your empathy and apathy, your proliferation and desires and ignorances and aversions—they're all within awareness.

There's nothing that has never, ever—or never will be—consumed and fully embraced by the mind. This cognizance has always been holding, and so we're just essentially twisting around, freezing cognizance. But that doesn't make it any less pure. Just like ice doesn't make it any less water, even though it's very convincing.

And that's why we start to do Dream Yoga and various practices to access the lucidity, the full cognizance of the mind. Because you have a basis, but you also have a very profound lucid part of the mind that we're letting be. Deep parts of your mind, deep dimension, but now you're starting to see everything with awareness. You're coming home to the cockpit, okay? To the main control room instead of just the thoughts, which is just an aspect of the mind.

But in a sort of immaturity, we tend to isolate ourselves in the thoughts and tell elaborate stories and have very good reasons for

keeping those stories. Yet those are isolating us and preventing us from spaciousness and purely present perfection. It's here, even for the worst of us. Without our constructing and proliferating and worrying and fearing and hoping, it's here now. Nothing to achieve, because that would assume that you're imperfect. Nowhere to get to, because then you'd be leaving pure presence.

So with this practice here in the group and maybe others—I know it's recommended in many texts, like the Aro Yeshé Jungne texts and various Longchenpa texts—to use short sessions, inquiries, and various pointing out methods to familiarize with the immediacy, the purity of enlightenment. And many of you here have been flickering in and out, perhaps not even knowing that you're flickering in and out of total perfection—which is probably a good thing, because when you know it, you start to try to get involved, trying to retrieve the unconditioned.

And that's all part of it, too; there are no faults. In this whole life, there are no faults. We're all perfectly where we are, being held intimately by a grand cognizance that's very loving. It's all energy infused with mind, purely compassionate.

So what's underneath the cloud of our preoccupations, right? If we just let it be for ten minutes with our senses open like this, including the egoic feeling of a “me” sitting here, feeling of a “me” thinking or hearing somebody speaking, a feeling of a “me” sitting here meditating—that's not just your body, that's an actual cloud of consciousness, an aggregate.

And you may be holding a perspective like, “I am so enlightened,” or maybe even just, “I am totally free and open right now, no thoughts whatsoever,” and you're kind of holding this perspective—that's also within awareness. If you're in a mood, holding views, if you're contracted, expanded, or neutral.

So as we just let all this be, these various preoccupations, these clouds get a chance to dissolve, right? Dissipate. But if we're literally

electrically holding clouds of isolation, psychic isolation, then how can they dissipate?

And in many meditation methods, they'll have you hold another cloud, or do more stuff. "Do these mantras to purify your mind." I'm not hating on mantras, okay—many of them are genuinely powerful.

So just by letting be, I think that makes sense logically, right? Rationally. There's an untying, there's self-liberation, there's self-harmonization. The degree of that self-resolve depends on how much we trust—really, that's it. It's not even a matter of practice experience, resume, credentials, nothing. How much do you trust?

I've seen people brand new, fresh to the path, with a good heart—just open heart. All our hearts are good; open heart, "give it to me, what do you want me to do? What do I not do?" You know. And having a great liberation, having great freedom because of that trust.

Now that's difficult, so if you don't trust, it's okay. I get that. It's hard to trust people, it's hard to trust spirituality, science, meditation, the world. I get it. So that's why it seems incremental—it seems like there's gradation.

Just like if I have tension in my hand and my hand hurts because I'm squeezing my fist, the more I trust that if I let go, I'll be relieved. Okay, I got some relief. I don't really trust. Ah man, this hurts. Last time I was letting go, I felt better. Okay, it feels pretty good, feels pretty good. And then you have a habit. Oh, there it goes again. All right, now just let it be, let it be, it's gonna open up again. Eventually, you're free of these various boundary constraints, right?

So letting be is the remedy. Again, I'll cite Dr. Harry Barry, who has incredibly high statistics—90 or 95% success rate with curing panic attacks. Just by letting be, they can last 10 minutes. Otherwise, they would last an hour or longer. And that's an incredible success rate.

And he's not the only one; Jon Kabat-Zinn has been pioneering that for a while now, with the quitting-smoking programs and things like that. We don't quit smoking, just keep on smoking, but now you bring awareness into it. Now, that's not an endorsement, for those

of you who go into that thinking—it's not an endorsement to, "Hey, go, everybody go smoke, go do whatever." No, we're dealing with what's already here, not trying to create new stuff. Big difference, in Dzogchen we're dealing with what's already here and not creating anything new. So I hope that makes sense.

Short sessions are used in all these cases. If you have stability—even just from reading books or knitting, or anything—can stabilize the mind. Or maybe you have a very busy mind, and you want to really practice Dzogchen—then grab a mala or some kind of counter. Count your breath, stabilize your mind—it doesn't take too long. And then, abide in pure presence, the view. And the thing is, you can abide in a part of your mind that includes everything. I just talked about that. Or you could be in the movement, the display, the energy, right?

So the reorientation is a bit vague, it's a bit hazy, when the pure cognizance is nascent, right, in the background. But as you come to sanghas, and read texts, and do all these things that you may lean into, then that awareness is dawning and becoming more evident. Many practitioners here, I think, are seeing that. Your experience more and more is starting to thaw out within the clear light mind. It's becoming more evident, just like a sun coming up, over the day. And we start to see things that we never saw before, all kinds of stuff.

And then, if you can manage to let be, everything, whatever it is: "Oh, I like to eat a lot." "I like to walk a lot." "I like to talk a lot." "I like to be quiet a lot." Whatever it is, let it be! "Oh, I had some evil thoughts." Let 'em be! They came and went, like a bird through the sky—unless you said, "Oh, I had some evil thoughts, I'm an evil person, why do I have these evil thoughts, it's probably 'cause of my parents, that's why I have those evil thoughts." Now you have a story. You bank that story in your mind, and now officially you're an evil person - it's part of your egoic narrative, your construct. We have many of these egoic cycles, or constructs that complement our egoic cycle.

So letting it be has to be radical, and we never assume “Oh I’m fully enlightened,” or “I’ve fully got it.” That would be another karmic sort of pattern, narrative. Mmhmm. So I think I said it all, you know, once, we don’t need to even speculate or go into full enlightenment too much, because once all your karma exhausts, you’re there, but you know, what’s the point—you’re not really gonna proclaim that, or need to proclaim that or anything, or speculate if you’re there or not, ‘cause you’re always here. So that’s why letting be is so profound—you’re covering all your bases, even the ones you don’t know about.

All right, so that’s it. If you can learn even when you get upset, when you have an encounter with somebody, maybe use the breath technique too, where you breathe in all the hard energy, the vibes that you’re getting, breathe it in; on the exhale just leave that peace there. Somebody could be coming up to you very excited, and you just breathe in, take that in and heal it in your own mind; on the exhale, leave them enlightened, right? And that way you don’t make up a narrative, you don’t crunch into what they’re saying.

Even as I’m speaking right now, don’t crunch into what I’m saying, or analyze what I’m saying, it’s just all here in the presence, flowing, talking about something you already know. Like we’re both sitting in front of a mountain. “Yeah, that mountain has a great shadow to it, it looks so amazingly blue, and I could see some grays and purples in there, and how the clouds come up...” We just be sitting here together, talking about the mountain.

So, any questions about that, leaving it be, and self-liberation? (*Dawai pauses*). Everybody OK on that. I know most of you probably understand, very good. All right, may it benefit everybody.

Recorded July 2, 2025.

Wake Up, You're Having a Rough Dream!

Yes, so this is a talk on meditation and just another summary and a reminder of the praxis involved with Dzogchen, Mahāmudrā, and what I would say many authentic high-level approaches. They all end up with, they should anyway, end up with empty cognizance.

And so empty cognizance means that there's a field of cognizance that's been holding your experience and permeating your experience. And that field has to be empty of any kind of substantiality. If it existed in any reference point, then of course it would not be able to hold your experiences in their entirety.

So I think it's safe to say that's the Dharmadhatu. What do you think, Dorje Lekpa—you agree? (*Dorje nods*). The space that's holding everything and inseparable from everything. Dorje Lekpa's giving the exploration on *The Basic Space of Phenomena* right now.

There's chönyi in Tibetan, or dharmata (Sanskrit) is also used. I like the womb analogy, because the baby in the womb cannot be separate from the mom, and is dependent on the mother if it wants to grow and exist, and cease to exist; it all happens within the womb. Although in this case, this would be, a lot of times they call suchness or emptiness. They associate with a sphere; sometimes some of you yogis can tune into the atmosphere itself, you can be aware of it; it feels like a sphere. Next time you're outside, you can try that maybe, and just rest without any focus, noticing that sphere-like encompassing presence, just there naturally.

Then once awareness goes outside of that sphere, then you're really reaching boundless space. So then it becomes almost like you know marbles, right? The little marbles that you play with, little glass that you roll around, well it's like you're looking at it, and this is earth, this is you on earth now, the marble. Your mind becomes one with entirety, right? They're not joking about that oneness.

And so we call it ineffability, I think that's the safest word. You start to release beyond your intellect, beyond your reckoning, beyond any kind of concept we could ever imagine.

And so I think it's safe to say that walls, cars, atmosphere, cities, even tight forests can serve as psychic borders, because the mind is constructing something there and limiting itself to those parameters, but in reality your mind is like a star—an infinite star.

We begin to impregnate the infinite with boundary constraints and build great walls, right? Great divides everywhere. So those start to soften up when we recognize the nature of mind, because no matter what, mind has to be there inside or outside the atmosphere, inside or outside the house, the car, the office.

But isn't it true, on a psychosomatic level, that we sort of feel boxed in, don't we? When we're in a car, we feel like we're in a car, we don't feel like space, wide open space, just because we're not used to it. So you see, this is truly like an eggshell, isn't it? An eggshell of constructs, patterned, moving mind that creates walls. Electromagnetically, this is not anti-scientific.

So by recognizing the nature of mind, we say, oh, we start where we're in our turtle shell: thoughts. The thoughts, they're like a turtle shell, OM MANI PADME HUNG, I absolutely love turtles. I'm not dissing on turtles, but let's just take it as an example, okay? When we're in our thoughts, we just cannot see the shell; the shell is invisible.

So isn't it preoccupying your mind? This is how we get fanaticism, like people ending their lives, people killing others, and doing all types of extreme things. Because we're believing the thoughts, we're believing in them, and we're saying, "Yes, I've elected you to be my president, I've elected you to be my dictator," actually, not a president, maybe you didn't even elect that guy.

So now these thoughts—they're dictating; we're following them around. We believe in them, we subscribe to them. And instead of letting someone be revealed to us, we go to our associate, the thoughts,

to tell us who this person is—our presuppositions, our predispositions, all of that.

So you see, when we're not partnered up with this consultant, then wisdom can be there. And we know, we start in our little turtle shell, we know awareness is there when I'm thinking. When I'm thinking about, "Oh, what is going to happen with this life?" and "Oh, I'm so worried about it," and all these things—awareness is there, unchanging.

So awareness is there, if you're feeling, "Oh, I'm so depressed, I feel so sad, how will I ever get out of this?" Again, awareness is there, just holding it. You could be in that emotion or in the awareness. And at first, when we're hooking into awareness, we don't really see its entirety. That's why you cannot really have authentic emptiness, in my opinion, you cannot be as sure as you could be with awareness practice. With awareness practice, you're sure you're thawing out the conditioned self; you're sure that's starting to dissolve.

So we start in the turtle shell: emotions, thoughts. We verify, yes, they're permeated by awareness. The body, oh, yeah, that too. When I have a pain in my toe or something like that, yeah, hey, "Tank, Tank, wake up, you're having a rough dream, wake up!" (*Dawai speaks to his dog Tank*).

Okay, so then, typically, we get isolated into that subjectivity; that starts to soften out, especially through the Mahāyāna-type approaches that focus on compassion to access true emptiness. They get you out of self-absorption and into compassion, to where all day it's no problem; you think of people so much, you think of animals, the environment so much, and it's easy, it's light, it's not work. You don't mind serving the animals, you don't mind serving the people. And then you get served in return immensely from that.

You start to sail the subtle seas of karma because you are playing it right. You're being kind, you're being open and empathetic and wise; so you're sailing underneath everything.

So on the surface, it may seem, oh my God, five dogs, what the heck are you doing? In the under seas, it's, wow, you're helping these beings out, they're helping you out; there's so much beauty in this. And then people are also helping me because I'm helping the dogs. They see pictures of the dogs and they say, "Oh, I want you all to be okay." You see? So it's not an immediate reward system, it doesn't work good with our alchemy where you do something and you get this high, right? When you navigate these subtle seas naturally, effortlessly, with ease—then all good.

You're doing what's in your heart; it's always been there. You know exactly how to follow your intuition, how to follow your compassion, and when you're going against it, whether it's on a career level, relationship level, treating yourself level, treating animals. So many people here, they just, they get a dog and then they have to move, so they leave the dog and typically they'll leave it with Emmy or Rebecca or one of like three people who have 20 dogs already. You know, that's the kind of thing, how could you do that? But the karma there that you're getting into, you don't even see it. It's so subtle, it's in the subtle seas. That's why you've got to play it right. You've got to play it according to heart, even if it's a sacrifice.

And so just to continue on from that premise, when you start to soften the shell of subjectivity—your main shell, which is enhancing duality—then what follows are the other boundaries we've set in, our environment.

So it's just like a dream. If I was dreaming that I'm working a nine to five, I'm in my cubicle, okay, in an office building, and then I start to see, wow, my mind is permeating my whole body and this cubicle. Then all of a sudden, body is softening up, cubicle is softening up; maybe still appearing, but mind is starting to not be constrained there. And then whole dream is mind, right? So your mind wasn't just you in the cubicle, it was you and the cubicle and the building and everything else. It always was. But we go into subdivision; we divide ourselves into psychic chambers.

So in this way, by letting be, we access lucidity. Really am rhyming a lot. So we're talking about the elements here—your mind is in the elements, it's everywhere, but it really doesn't seem that way, because we're so used to, we're patterned, we're electrically magnetized into subjectivity, into a great divide. You see, so letting be, you're letting all that mind start to soften, and then whole world becoming part of your mind; and that's the magic show.

Then we repossess our freedom, we reclaim our mind. And then something else entirely begins to take place, just like any rebirth, any child coming out of the mom, any bird breaking out of the eggshells. Something entirely different starts to reveal itself when we're ready for it, right? When we're not taking refuge in the sense world anymore, and we truly want freedom, then we're ready.

It's just like with the fist, if I'm not releasing, if I don't want to release this, I'm not going to have relaxation. I promise you this, and I wouldn't have said this a year ago, I've discovered this, the realization that you all have your own Buddhahood, your own entire universe to play in, just waiting for you outside of these small chambers.

You are the sovereign monarch, as *The Kunjed Gyalpo* says. It's true. The stars are yours, the sun, the moon is yours. But we cannot be a monarch, a true monarch anyway, we have many monarchs—but we're talking about a sovereign monarch. If we want to be free and really play and really enjoy and liberate then we have to be sovereign. So mind has to be free of entrapments, otherwise you don't have any sovereignty.

And that's the path, that's spirituality, that's religion, it's freeing us into the ineffable sovereignty. We hinge on awareness, really, because it takes you outside of the atmosphere, okay? NASA has nothing on the awareness practice. You want to go out to space, use the awareness practice.

They actually say in the scriptures also that a yogi can hear the planets rotating. Oh and this has been discovered out here on this mesa, in the mountains, surrounded by mountains, that you can feel

the sun and moon, you don't need time, time is here. That's why clock changes man, they really screw with yogis I think, because there's just such a great natural cycle to it all, natural timing, seasons of our mind, the blinking of our mind with night and day and so much beauty to behold, right? And that's our access point, that's our bridge.

You know, it amazes me that in the dharma it explicitly says that the path starts with "the path of seeing," that one needs to see mindfulness or awareness as the nature of mind, rather than something to create. This is explicit, even in the provisional vehicles of the dharma. But people, I'd say like 80-90% of dharma practitioners do not even deal with awareness. That's a travesty in my opinion, that's people just stuck in a pileup, you know?

So thankfully these gatherings are so wonderful, each one of you activating and coming into the sovereign monarchy of your own mind. You are having such a profound effect, even according to modern science, they have this butterfly effect, and then definitely according to the dharma it has endless benefit that just ripples out. These are the lights that need to be there in dark times, and we're holding the balance together too like that, okay?

So I think that's about it. I don't know what I just said, yeah I think I was just talking about awareness as pretty much permeating the four foundations of mindfulness, right? And really hinging on that to reach the spaciousness of your own mind, and the flow and the harmony of your own mind. And rediscover your own kindness. It'll be familiar to you, I said that a long time ago, right Yeshé? Enlightenment is familiar to us. It's like these qualities from childhood start to come back, and wisdom from childhood, and innocence, and lots of cool stuff returns that was always there as you. This is your mind, it's revealing itself to you.

So I think it's really beautiful, and I totally venerate those of you who are on this path in an authentic way—embracing the awareness practice. To me that's pioneering, we have a very thorough understanding of this awareness practice, Dzogchen, and you're utilizing

that. I couldn't have imagined the depth of it, you know, there are many people that just practice mindfulness or dharma, and they don't go as deep as you're going, so I really do venerate that.

When I saw Rolpa's video, oh my god, I was so proud and happy, like, he's just so on point, you know, and thank you Yeshé and everybody in the gatherings for making that happen too, I was just so rejoicing for all of you. And when I see Dorje Lekpa's videos too, right, I'm like, wow, we're doing this, we're really, really doing it. And this is what I knew all my life that we're going to do, and that's why I feel so good to see you all being empowered, because this is real, you know, and it truly, you know, I was just outside, just so elated because of you all, and it's still here, really it is.

So that was longer than a 10 minute talk, I'm pretty sure, but I suppose it was important.

Recorded July 18, 2025.

Turning Awareness on Itself

Let's get into the awareness practice if you're not already in phase three, essentially just nice and firm in awareness—as awareness. So that's what happens: the very thing searching for awareness, or searching for enlightenment, is awareness. Okay? That is the cognition. That's just a more coarse, active part of consciousness within consciousness.

So the invitation here is to relax, letting all four foundations of mindfulness settle in their own place. So any emotional energy, we don't need to modify or analyze or apply some kind of antidote. And remember, this is Madhyamaka, the middle way, so if you need to put a band-aid on your cut, that's okay. Oftentimes antidotes can lead to internal grasping and congesting our situations rather than just letting them settle out naturally. We've been calling it “echoing out.” Somehow [sangha member's name] got us to start saying “evaporating.” Whatever you want to call that, it's fine.

But it's settling in its own place. It's self-liberation, right? It's *rangzhin* in Tibetan, and we're starting to get used to letting be. No matter if we're in a dramatic situation, a restful situation, etc.—to let our feelings, our thoughts, our body, and the environment just be—and let it come undone by itself. And so I want to get into this for you more advanced yogis. And if you're not feeling me, if you're not hearing me, it's totally fine. Okay? You don't need to try to remember any of this. Don't, you know... you don't need to get agitated, if you're not understanding it, you don't need to look for it even. But no matter what I'm saying here, you'll be able to access to some degree.

But basically, when you turn off the headlights, “consciousness with surface” where we're hooking into stuff, we have thoughts on our mind and so we are captivated. So eventually... “slightly up-aligning here,” eventually you get to the point where you're not on a

train of thought, you're not stuck in an emotion, and you're able to turn off your headlights of focusing into stuff. And now you're just in a kind of passivity, like taking a bath. (*Dawai breathes out, relaxing*). You're just resting in awareness, which is like space—encompassing the body, the emotions, the thoughts, and the environment. Like you're in a snow globe. You know, your mind is sort of everywhere now and so you can successfully let our interaction with the environment be as well. So if some sound is happening or some sights are appearing, we just let that settle in its own place as well.

But here's the part that may be a little bit advanced: so if I'm turning off my headlights, I'm not even looking at you all right now. Awareness is surrounding my body, so to speak. It is my body, including the eyes, the eyeballs, right? And seeing itself, and all the appearances, is now just here. And now I still have a subtle feeling, maybe, of... me sitting here. What's left over when there are no more thoughts, no strong emotional energy, nothing in the body is distracting us? What's left over? There's a subtle—you know, you may even see it somatically in the neck and the shoulders—there's still subtle feelings here. And that's what they used to, I suppose they still call it, "turning awareness in on itself."

Every little detail, every little sensation that you have in your body right now is resting in awareness; it's there. So if I have a thought right now about the moon being bright, that's obviously in my awareness naturally. And I never need to program awareness to say, "Okay, I'm going to think the moon is bright and you be aware while I'm thinking that." We don't have to do that. And so if I have some kind of emotional upheaval right now, or just normal excitement, then I'm allowing that also to oscillate through like a wind through the sky.

And that's what they're using in cognitive science with this high success rate. So that's why it's benefiting so many people in our groups, because it actually works. It's bona fide. Verified. And so we're taking it a little further because we're explicitly recognizing that which holds the panic attack. So in cognitive therapy right now, in

the past five years or so they would just say, “Be there with the panic attack.” And you would say, “Okay.” And you’d be in it. And they even say, “Strap yourself to a chair.” It’s a feeling like that because you feel like you’re rumbling, you’re in it. But as awareness practitioners, you won’t really feel that. You’re not isolated into the panic anymore.

Even if you’re a beginner, you’re starting to access your mind outside of the body, outside of the elements, outside of the earth and the atmosphere. The great mind that holds you while you’re sleeping and waking. The very basis, right? And this is something we need to verify. It’s like we’re stuck in a dream and somebody’s saying, “Hey, this whole thing is mind.” And you’re just too distracted. You’re just too caught up. You don’t even listen to the person. Like me, always looking for my dogs in my dreams. Somebody could say, “Hey, it’s just a dream. Your dogs are actually, this time they’re actually still in the house.” And I would just continue looking frantically, wouldn’t I? Because I’m so convinced of it.

But let’s say somebody really shakes me up and says, “No, this is all mind. This is all your mind, even me.” And then you start to see, even though you’re in a dream, “Wow, my mind is actually everywhere. It encompasses, right? It’s vast and encompassing my experience.” This is something you need to verify, you need to test. It’s not a belief system. And we hook onto the very nature, which is awareness. So even if it is a dream, there’s still this nature of the dream which is cognizance.

So it’s like the dreamer who’s sitting there chasing his dogs all of a sudden saw, “Wow, me running right now, me chasing, this is all cognition.” But you have to start with awareness. You see, you can’t really see that it’s all consciousness at first. And you can use your logic, your rationale to get there. Space is alive, atoms are alive, particles are alive—whole thing’s living. So then all of a sudden you use awareness, you see this awareness that’s in even my dogs. Let’s say in my dream I catch a dog and I put him on a leash or tell him, “Come on, come.” All that is living intelligence—that’s cognition. The only difference,

I would say, typically with the waking state is that you have other minds that can tap into the dream. Usually, when you go to sleep, are other minds there? But you're pretty compartmentalized, you're psychically isolated.

Unless you're special, you talk to people in your dreams; that's totally awesome. And I believe you. I'm done not believing people, everybody. Whatever you say now, I will believe it from now on. If you tell me you're astral projecting to Pluto and speaking to the archangel Michael with St. Germain, I believe you 100%. I'm done, I'm done challenging people. It's too much work. It's easier to just go along with the delusion. "Oh, St. Germain, really? Oh my God, me too. I was raising my vibration with St. Germain in the sixth dimension in one of my dreams earlier, yeah." Oh god.

So as mind scientists, you know, as equals here, everybody's truth has so much validity yet has none whatsoever, right? So as mind scientists, we can start to at least pull out of our involvement a little bit into this dream and test: what if I pull my hooks out? Let it be—let it settle in its own place. Is my mind really everywhere like that? Ooh, and then the whole thing shifts on you. It's not what you thought it was. And it gets bigger and bigger and more ineffable, right? Everything that's happening is a co-emergence of your mind.

Think about, once you pull out of your distraction and your subscriptions into reification and crystallization of the five wisdoms, the five lights into the elements—once you start to pull out of that, let them settle in their own place and let them de-crystallize. Wow. (*Dawai pauses*). So mind is vast, I think that's how we can benefit beings far away or seemingly far away, and continue to be persistent with compassion when beings in our sphere of influence, so to speak, want to engage in non-virtue and destructive behavior.

You know, there's advanced people right now. And there are many compassionate advanced people. But there's advanced people that are just misdirected, misguided, and so we can begin revolutionizing the collective. I think that's what we're doing and why we have so much

support as a gathering. When you free your mind, it's so powerful. And we're going together, okay?

We're gonna get straight to the point and that way you don't have to waste any more time and energy. Those who are sincere about the view, about liberating your mind—that's the truest thing we can do right now. If there are terrible things happening in the world, free your mind. If you're suffering, free your mind. If other people are suffering, hen-lightenment is the answer.

Okay last time, just very proud of myself for that one. For those who don't know, Yeshé said, "Why did the chicken cross the road?" and I said, "He wanted to reach Hen-lightenment." Now, I had to bring it up three more times, okay, just to get the smile. We're just smiling, taking it easy, nice and light.

And you know there's many people, the sangha is huge, who are witnessing this liberation, this freedom, this spaciousness. And yeah, you're still kind of going through your stuff here and there and getting caught up in your contemplations and having your desires cycle through. Yes, but you're free; the chains are broken. Many teachers talk about that. Once you have the realization of awareness as the nature of mind, there's really no turning back. Particularly if you're around people who are insistent, that make sure that you have it, then yeah, there is no turning back from that, because you've tasted sugar and it's like, "Wow, you've had this taste." And going back into contraction, going back into what they would call samsāra and into conditioned existence, it just feels wrong, right? It feels icky.

So that's all I had to say. The main point there was allowing every last sensation that you have here to liberate out. They're really like contractions. And we can allow them to liberate out, so that would include the conditioned self. That's what I'm sort of pointing to, okay? The conditioned self liberating out. The main contraction, that initial factor in all stress and suffering—it's the very start of everything is that little divide that we create. We have our whole mind here and then we created a divide in there. So now there's one part of our mind

navigating around in another part of our mind. I wish I had some action figures to show what I'm talking about.

So letting things... you know, this is all eight aspects of consciousness, including the karmic momentum that we have stored up. This is a liberating out, particularly in the sleep state. And when we have drama in our life, like when we have a fight or something, there's strong liberating out in those situations. And you'll find that every time, if you have a habit of something—a desire, jealousy, pride, whatever—every time that same habit, your old friend, cycles through, it will become less and less impactful, right? Less and less binding there. As long as things are in the flow of self-liberation, that is.

So any comments or questions about that? Got it, right? Effortless abiding. Let it all continue—our perspectives, our moods—all just release, release, release, and try that flavor out. And that's what I was trying to express to our friend in the last session was that: try it out. Try it. Cause we feel obligated to think about stuff, don't we?

And not everybody has the choice to see, "I am strongly thinking about something. My frontal lobe is weighing down. I'm elaborating. I'm creating scenarios." Not everybody sees the opportunity that "I can actually let this go right now."

"No, but I got... I got to." Sorry. No, that's how we do. And then it grabs our body. It grabs our mood. It affects everybody around us. "I got to think about this!" Wake up! No, no you don't. You don't have to!

"Yes I do! Leave me alone! I'll give you 10 reasons why I'm an MF-er, why I need to be thinking about this right now."

We should all do that just for the heck of it. Pick some topic that we're always thinking about and just create 10 reasons why we need to be persistently occupied by this topic, you know, persistently thinking about it. These are cultural spells getting in our head. People's pain getting in our head, right? Stories constructed from the library of the delusional. Every word, with all due respect, is an empty appearance.

Recorded October 10, 2025.

The Bravery of Integrating Experience into the View

The topic is what he was, from a conventional standpoint, calling patience, but from a Dzogchen point of view I wouldn't say this is patience—it's more bravery than anything. It's brave when we begin to allow karmic habituations.

Maybe an example can be if you go to the store and back and you get stressed out during that. And you're usually caught up in it and it drives you crazy—some kind of traffic or something like that. Or, you would almost invite it now, with an awareness... say, "Okay, I'm gonna take this trip. And as soon as I start to feel agitated and things like that, I'm going to be in the witnessing of that."

So it's a whole different perspective, right? From being in the agitation to having this kind of opening to it. And that's what I'm talking about when I say we do that with baby steps.

You could cold turkey that—I don't know, it depends on the person. But for example, nicotine: you could just invite yourself to feel that urge, that wanting it, that going without it; maybe stop smoking inside or inside the car, or both. Little things like that, and you'll catch yourself wanting it—and that wanting it, within awareness, is very good.

Now typically we'd be adverse to that wanting. Like, "Oh... there's this wanting, I gotta satisfy it, right?" But here, in baby steps, with awareness, we can begin to say, "All right, wanting, let's have a look at you. Let's see how long I can last."

And this can go for so many things. You may have old friends, deep feelings that pass over you from time to time, or even an angst of something's wrong but you can't find anything that's wrong, or something has triggered you or stirred you up. Now you have awareness to discern: "Well, I know this is going to pass and I'm going to come back to my naturalness."

When you're only caught up in the experiential waves, and it's very difficult to see: well, this is gonna pass—even though it's quite overwhelming and vivid and heavy. It's going to pass and I'm going to go back to normal, somatically even. Throughout the nervous system, you know that it's gonna go back and the body will settle.

And since our mind is actually broad and open and spacious, we can be like the moon held by space. Except in this case, the space is a knowingness and a compassion—an undeniable, indisputable, irrefutable compassion. So we let ourselves be held like that when we go into these 10 minute effortless abiding or you do your thing, you—you sit out in a forest maybe and just abide.

We're not chasing good feelings, everybody. In fact, you may be a perpetual asshole. That may be the skin you were born with, but that does not mean you cannot be free—in your assholeness.

Samsāra will never make sense—we're not trying to look good in samsāra, that's not our indicator here in Dzogchen. There are angels, the sweetest people you ever meet that died before they even reached their teenage years. And there are killers and—you know, you name it—that live to be well into old age. It doesn't make sense. You don't need to look good in samsāra, that's not an indicator. You don't need to look enlightened. You don't need to speak calmly and constantly be in a state of peace—like a Greek Buddha statue.

It's all everything, all the energy, all the time. Whether it appears as sadness or happiness, virtue or non-virtue, it's instantaneous perfection at all times—just this. And we will soon start to conceptualize our way out of pure peace. There will be a thought or a wave of emotion or something that says, "But... but it's not perfect because of this." Crazy mind, right? Crazy.

So in 10 minutes even, you may have many urges to do this or that. That's why the 10 minutes so powerful, because it's the same exact thing—you're taking baby steps with being with your own energy. And believe it or not, if you can sit through just wanting to itch your face, you can sit through wanting a cigarette.

One's just a little heavier than the other. One has more stories than the other. More concepts, more karma, but it's all just a banana. Oh man, I didn't tell you all, but we're gonna rename the website from meditationonline.org to thebananas.org, so we have a constant reminder.

So any questions, comments so far? Is this making sense—how slowly, throughout the day and night, we're incorporating all experiences? Sometimes they term it integration—integrating experience into the view. It's skipped over a lot of times because, particularly in non-dual approaches—and I mean this with kindness and no disrespect, but—they just tell you everything's perfect right now, and that's it. And then the karmic cycles return, and you're like, “Oh, doesn't feel like this non-dual perfection anymore.”

And so this path actually deals with those cycles, you see, by integration. Integration, self-liberation—things freeing in their own place. It's not really out there. But that is the remedy, paradoxically speaking.

Any questions, comments? You got it? Pretty straightforward, right? Especially if you've seen awareness, you've seen this space-like, very subtle aspect of your mind that can hold every aspect of experience. You need that, otherwise everything I just said, out of context.

In order to do nothing—in order to take a bath—you need bath water. You cannot just sit in the tub and say, “I'm taking a bath.” You can proclaim that, I suppose, but...

So it's true, we're kind of always in this bathwater, but the recognition frees a sentient being. And it could seem like forever before a being recognizes their own freedom. Could seem like a long time. And we see that even here, year after year, decade after decade: people lost in some belief. Now you have beliefs weaponizing people.

People all gather around a belief. For example, right now in America, that's right, I'm getting political a little bit, just as a metaphor. We have a relatively tiny group of Christian nationalists, white nation-

alists, they're just sticking together on that one thing, Christianity, well, their interpretation of it, and white supremacy. That's their unifying belief. And look how much they've accomplished.

But why can't we stick together? Because we're fighting about beliefs. All the normal people that aren't white supremacists—we can't get along. We just need to unify just like they did, you know? Under the umbrella of compassion, just—

SANGHA I (CHAT): A banana supremacist.

DAWAI: But you know, under compassion, under relentless insistence on peace. And if all the people united under that, they'd be safer, they'd be better off, the world would be better off. Instead we play all these games with all these countries and force all these laws onto people, and all these things. And all the propaganda getting shoved into people's minds is the basis. This is psychological warfare.

Well, in my little fantasy, there has been and will be a time again where beings are just beings without the labels, you know? There's no reason to fight each other at all. There's no reason to hurt animals at all. And that's radical, isn't it? Just like we gotta let ourselves be loved, we gotta let ourselves be enlightened, we gotta allow ourselves to be enlightened, we gotta allow world peace. We gotta allow that great peace. Never know what could happen.

So beginning to see the entire reality just like you see your inside—allowing it to self-liberate, be freed in its own place. When beings, even in small groups like this, wake up, it's so powerful, then what's uniting us? Awareness, naked awareness, you can't mess with that. There's no belief that could fight that or turn against, get people to turn against awareness.

Well anyway, maybe I've gone a little idealistic here, or at least it sounds that way. The main point is to allow oneself to have that freedom throughout the day. And maybe, you know, you need to take it slow, slowly integrate experiences and reality into the view. Okay?

So I think that's all I have to say on that topic. Are there any questions, comments? Think we can all relate to that, how beliefs can possess us, ideas can possess us, and get us doing the cruddiest things. Justifying abuse, only to feel terrible about it.

Okay, and this way, you know which beliefs are in line and which aren't. You have your whole mind here. They call them metacognition, have all these countless names throughout history for this beautiful awakened mind of yours. And yes, I'll say it, mind of yours, because we don't mind speaking in conventions. Once you get it, you get it. You don't need to sit there and play with words to appease people's conceptual ideation. That's a little ridiculous, right? A little petty.

Okay, well thank you so much for allowing me to just share a little bit there about these wonderful topics, and I suppose we'll go into the text if Nitty will let me have my arm. Really? (*Dawai talks to Nitty the cat on his lap*).

Recorded November 06, 2025.

The Four Ponds

I just say again, warm welcome to everyone here in the live session. Your presence is amazing. To be in the view with you is amazing. Thank you for that. Even Nitty cannot resist anymore. So I did want to just briefly talk about this—well, maybe we can call it *the four ponds*. That's right, I'm making stuff up now. So you could be in one of these four ponds; in fact, you are in one of these four ponds.

One has a great whirlpool going, spinning and spinning. And you jump in and you're spinning too. That's the pond of the thoughts. Still, pristine water, but it's a little spun up.

The second pond is a muddy pond. You could be in that muddy pond—very thick mud—and just maybe swaying around, enjoying... This is the pond of emotion because they feel like that sometimes, right? We have a heavy almost stuckness.

The third pond: a little bit less mud, actually very little mud. I forget what they call that, it starts with a 'B' I think—that water that's a little bit gray and foggy. If anybody knows it? Yes, brackish; it's a cool little word. So that's more of the spiritual pond, the pond of the practitioner. Very subtle. "I'm a Dzogchenpa, I've realized non-duality." The great oxymoron.

So, the fourth pond is pristine—pristinely pure.

Just knowing when you're in a pond is good enough. And these ponds correspond with the spectrum of cognition. The coarse linguistic narrator is an electromagnetic, psychic confine.

I'm very sorry to say, but when I hear all these spiritual teachers just giving data dumps, these videos and stuff like that, and these conferences, there's not a single pause: neither dog nor attention. There aren't any dog paws and there aren't any pauses in their electromagnetic data dump.

Please if you catch yourself talking, talking, talking, talking—other person talking, talking, talking—you talking, talking, talking... Or if

you're talking to a group of people talking, talking, talking, talking, and you're not breathing, you're not pausing, then you are in that pond: the whirlpooling. This is the most common place humans meet each other at. You can feel it when two people are conversing—there's an electric connection there, sometimes very difficult to break. Think at a bar; think when you have a meeting with somebody and you're the only two people there, and you're talking, talking, talking, talking. You can tune into that: you can feel it lobe to lobe; it's a kind of lovemaking.

And I'm not trying to diss anybody here; what I'm suggesting is that there are alternatives and perhaps humanity itself is veering into this great alternative, for it seems to be the only option: increased cognition. It's a survivability issue. If we don't become more aware, we will self-destruct, just like you see people doing all the time.

Increased awareness helps us in our life, helps us with our relationships, helps us with the environment. So people becoming less abusive: every one of you to show up to these live gatherings or watching on YouTube—you're becoming less angry, less abusive, more conducive to your reality. That means one less child getting yelled at, one less child experiencing anger and violence in their environment, one less animal getting hurt and scared, one less wounded soldier.

If we stay stuck in our electromagnetic whirlpool, it's only going to cause vexation and devastation, everybody; it's really worth getting used to a broader scope of the mind. So when you're thinking, thinking, thinking about stuff, turn it around—look at yourself. The awareness can embrace what's happening; then the thought is seen as a kind of cloud in the middle of your mind. The train stops. You're no longer bound. In modern cognitive science, they call it cognitive fusion. You're no longer fused to the thoughts. That's all I really want for you. Only reason I'm here—I plead with you—claim your freedom.

So the coarse linguistic narrative train can be stopped, and then we can start to feel and listen and talk to our body. Instead of imposing and trampling upon the subtleties of our network, now the heart can be heard. Now we're speaking heart to heart: "I'm a human, you're a human. Hi, I'm a buddha, you're a buddha, ah... What's up? Hi." You see? (*A sangha member responds*). "Hello."

We're only fighting each other when we have a thought in our mind. When the thoughts aren't there, we don't have a reason to fight each other, be mad at each other, look at each other as if we're aliens or something. So I could meet you at that electromagnetic level, and we could party it up. I could do a data dump and give you lots of conceptual proliferation that would make you feel a little high too—"Ooh, never thought of it like that before"—but that's not my style. I want to meet you at the heart first, meet you in the view, and let's talk from there. Let's talk from the top of the mountain.

(*Dawai does not speak for a while*).

That's right, we're practicing lots of awkward silence today. It's no longer becoming awkward, is it? Kind of cool. Getting used to pure presence.

So when the coarse linguistic narrative releases that constant perpetuation, and the heart is able to breathe a little bit. Now any sense of substantiality, any sense of division—a reference point—is able to breathe; it's no longer contracted either. There are levels to this thing, okay? Get out of the thinking mind, get out of the emotions, get out of the apprehension—the reference point.

And these words will always come up a little short, right? But basically what's happening here is a fist that's been contracted is finally allowed to release. And you have the fists everywhere, (*Dawai gestures towards various points on the body*), and the head just releasing. We have lots of room here. It's like if you had a hundred acres of forest, and you built a little bitty box under a tree, and you crawled inside this box, and you tried to live there, and you're kind of looking around: "This is my home, I can't really have guests, it's too small." And then

some fly gets in your box—“Oh my god, this is crazy, get this thing out of here!”

Your mind is vast, spacious—more spacious than space. You’re aware of space, space is in your awareness, the whole planet is, the sun and the moon. More spacious than space... You don’t need to live in a box.

So that’s all I wanted to share today. What do you think? Any comments, questions going on? It makes sense; it’s very straightforward. Good. And as long as you see the nature of mind, spaciousness is yours—be good to go. It starts with recognizing—we just say awareness for the sake of accessibility—and then there’s the appearance of the phase of familiarization. As if the person in the dream is now warming up, getting used to being the whole mind that’s having the dream—this multi-dimensional, multi-faceted mind that can create entire environments, that can create the feeling of rigidity and solidity.

When you go to sleep and you have a dream, you feel solids, you can smell stuff. How the heck is your mind doing that—creating the feeling of solidity? I went in my dream and I got smacked upside the head, even shook your body when it happened. How did your mind create that? There was no smack. You never got hit.

Just like that everybody, there’s no smack now. You can see yourself like when a dog looks at you. When a dog looks at you it’s just—it doesn’t know you have a PhD. It doesn’t know that you really messed up last year with your partner. It doesn’t know that you drive a car; nothing. The dog just looks at you: (*Dawai makes panting noises*). Can you look at each other like that? Minus the tongue—you don’t need to have the tongue, the tongue is optional.

But look at the innocence there, because a dog isn’t over-conceptualizing, isn’t writing a story about each individual person. A dog is a dog. Maybe little stories. Little Bear does seem to treat me a little different than other people that come visit. But still, there’s this blank slate when they look at you. Maybe you could look at yourself like that too.

And believe me, you can still have all your accomplishments, all your plaques on the wall, your entire biography can still be there, now with a lightness. PhD, no PhD, all good. Same thing as the banana, when you just imagine yourself as the banana. All of a sudden all the stories are clear, the identity constructs—all of it.

Recorded November 28, 2025.

Subjectivity: the Habit of Apprehending

I wanted to come back around to subjectivity. We all finished a ten-minute effortless abiding session just now, and it doesn't really end, does it? But what happens is after the bell rings, even though we don't have a bell, after the session ends, we start "doing" again. We start piling on the doings.

And so that's why it's great to discern this contrast after ten minutes of doing nothing. Letting the doings come off of us and seeing what it's like when this topic of narration, this coarse linguistic narrative, what happens when it ceases?

It's electromagnetic. You can literally imagine that contrast when we're thinking a lot and when we're not. And the irony is, you can have all those thoughts at your disposal from spaciousness, without the electromagnetism.

By the way, I just posted on Discord. Discord is fine—it's Dharma-filled, it's beautiful, so I don't mind mentioning it. I just posted this study, relatively recent, where they're talking about how light can affect matter.

For us, this is great because we basically posit, or the yogis are saying this is what they're seeing, and you can see it every time you go to sleep, that your mind can create physicality. It can reify. It can smell things, see things, hear things, and feel things in a dream. That means those properties have to be parallel to the waking state. There's no way those would be isolated, light mingling with light, right? And the reification of that magnetism can start to ease up.

I know I'm getting a little bit brain-bending here with you, but it's still fascinating stuff anyway. My point is that we don't even need to have a conceptual idea of what's happening here. Viscerally, somatically, we can tune in when we're stuck on something. That's a smaller dimension of consciousness.

We may be stuck in a habit—people get stuck with a point of view for years. Look at politics, how those thoughts and beliefs and ideas can just captivate people for years. Believe it or not, you can still join a political party without sacrificing your entire freedom and spaciousness. It's wonderful, actually, you can be a participant rather than a servant of this energy in the world.

So this is a little bit more advanced: the reference point, the subjectivity. The *manas-vijñāna*, as they call it in the Eight Aspects of Consciousness model. Because typically we're thinking a lot, we're feeling something, and we're really comfortable in that, so you don't even see the reference point.

Who is thinking? And some kind of irresponsible teachers will tell you, "There's no one thinking, nothing there." And then they'll leave it at that. Then the person thinking comes back, the teacher is gone, and you're left wondering, "Oh, what do I do?" You try again to tell yourself that you don't exist, but it doesn't work this time as well as it did the first time. So like I said before, Dzogchen is a little bit more responsible. That reference point keeps re-emerging. It's habituated, it's programmed, it's plasticity.

So when the reference point, the habit of apprehending, re-emerges, we're into kind of melting it like ice, or if you want to say, as [sangha member] says, evaporating it. Releasing, surrendering—so many things you could term this. I say the more words the better so we can diversify. But when this contraction releases, because it *is* a contraction of consciousness, that reference point can be on a spectrum.

Sometimes it's very heavy. When you get insulted, when somebody targets your beliefs or your identity in regards to culture and family, then you'll have a heavy weight there of subjectivity. Who's the one that's hurting right now? Who's the one who got called a "poopy head" and feels very, very offended by that? Who's the one who's in love? Who's the one meditating? Who's the one who's neutral? Ah, these are all so many ways we can just witness subjectivity.

Any questions about that so far? Because again, it's just like when you're looking down at your iPhone and you're driving through a rainforest, you're missing all the monkeys and the plants and all the crazy stuff that you could be seeing because you're on this phone. Well, that's subjectivity. That's exactly how subjectivity works. You're *in* subjectivity, so you're missing the whole thing.

And subjectivity can be pleasant. The subject can have a mansion and all the food in the world and the illusion of this entire setup. So in that way, the Buddhist scriptures say that gods, and demigods, get captivated for a long time by sense comforts without any desire to leave them. They become very comfortable with subjectivity. We're lucky we get to taste the dirt a little bit as humans.

That's really it everybody, the fact that we can somatically, viscerally tune into the conditioned self, the small self, the small mind. We can see that plain as day. That's the Eight Consciousness model. That's karma, you know, we can feel karma, we can see karma, the weights of it within awareness, because awareness is so subtle and omnipresent and permeating.

That's a lot different than a lot of schools that I'm seeing, at least on YouTube, and hearing at some of the temples where they just talk about the "conditioned self" a lot. And they're actually reconditioning the conditioned self by all the data dumping and talking about it. But here we're talking about something we can *see*. Big difference. We're more interested in scraping off the conditions, getting them out of the way, freeing them up, rather than inflating them with usually "high vibe," good stuff, right? Then you just have a façade, a persona.

Believe it or not, we can just be our naturalness, be ourselves, so to speak. We can be ourselves when the self is gone, when the conditioned self is gone. Isn't it amazing? These healthy paradoxes.

I don't know what to say because I feel like I'm almost luring you out of a golden room here that's very, very comfortable. You've got bathwater, you've got food, you've got all this stuff, and I'm luring you

out into the great unknown, off a cliff. You don't have a parachute; there's no ground.

Good thing I've already jumped. It's okay out here, everybody, come on. It is okay to release when you're ready. It will release: the stories, the identities, the habits, the home you've built in illusion.

So we've been touching on these wonderful topics, how Dzogchen is very radical (shout out to Keith Dowman). Because Dzogchen embraces all people, all things as teachers, as the co-emergence of mind. We're ending all the little battles, all the little strife, addictions, impulses, clinging and grasping to the sense world. The subject-action-object trichotomy, that triad, is softening its electromagnetic contraction.

The *Āyatanas*: The ears, the hearing, and what's heard. The eyes, the seeing, and what's seen. The thinking mind, what's thought, and the topic of the thought. The emotional mind, the emotion, and what's being felt. You'll always find these three spheres of contraction—until you don't.

And so you may see somebody, you may go to the grocery store, and many “doings” start to enter into your presence. “Oh, look at that, I should get some of that kind of bread. Oh, maybe I need to go down this aisle, I've never been down there. I wonder if they have any bananas? Who is that person following me? Why is this cart so squeaky? I don't understand why they even put these ones out there with the messed-up wheels.” You see? All this stuff can happen just from walking into the grocery store.

But for awareness practitioners, that's great. Because that's a whole bunch of weight. You can walk in there like the sky, like space. Say, “Come on, what's it gonna be?” I do this on my walks. Just ensure clarity. Is my mind and space the same? Right? Am I clear? Or has something entered my presence that needs that *shenpa*, that needs that hook to enter, to stay in presence, that needs us to grasp? Some worries, some fears, some enemy, some friend—all of this stuff. Making sense, right? Pretty straightforward.

So next time you go to the grocery store—clear your mind, and then start to see all the thoughts that come in: the preoccupations, worries, emotional energies, all that stuff. Grocery store, work, wherever. You can see this. Any questions so far? If you get this, freedom is at hand.

SANGHA I (CHAT): Self-liberating awareness equals truly knowing oneself.

DAWAI: Yeah. And in Dzogchen, we don't mind saying "oneself." That whole thing is beyond singularity and multiplicity. We can leave it alone. I know this mind isn't your mind, right? It's more of a *reductio ad absurdum*. It's a reduction. It's not my mind, but it's not your mind.

Okay, so subjectivity is the seventh aspect of consciousness: *manas*. And it has to, almost like when you're swimming and you're trying to stay afloat and you grab these bags with you, and all this stuff is with you while you're treading water, this is the eighth aspect. This is all your karmic seeds and everything: your memories, your stories. You have to *hold* those, everybody. There's a subtle weight there, even in the eighth *Ālayavijñāna*, the storehouse consciousness, they call it. Even there, there's karmic seeding, karmic weight.

In this presence, everybody, that's what's so special about effortless abiding. And not trying to figure out what exactly is liberating, or what exactly is here right now. Yes, you can know coarse thoughts (the sixth aspect of consciousness). You can know emotions—they're visible to you. You can know subjectivity, "I'm feeling sad today," you can know that feeling of *me*. It's visible.

But your karmic seeds, your sense weights, those are going to be a little bit more subtle. You've got to keep leaving them alone, keep leaving them alone. So you see the entirety of your mind movement, your mind contractions and expansions. And that's good enough, just seeing when our mind weighs into something, subscribes to something.

And you don't even know right now the stuff that you're subscribed to if you're residing in a more coarse mind. You don't see all the subtle things: "I'm holding a story about missing my dad and wishing that I could talk to my dad," or something like that. Or a story about how I got abused as a child, or something like that. That story has to be held here, like those waiters with all the plates. We're holding stuff, believe it or not.

So when subjectivity, the sense of interaction, and all that stuff starts to free up, ah, now even karmic seeds are freeing up. Particularly if subjectivity is freeing up, because who's going to hold the plates? See, subjectivity holds stuff in the visible (the phenomena) and, shout out to Kant, the *noumena*. It holds karmic seeds, the invisible world, and the visible world. It's holding stuff.

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Thought Isolation Practice

First of all, I'm very, very grateful again to be in the presence of so many people that are authentically allowing their freedom to unfold in their mind, in their life, and also just confronting their own mind. This is exceptional, in my opinion, and I'm always very humbled to be here with you all.

We have these Dharma talks, they're very powerful, and we have these practices, and it takes checking out of your comfort zone to embrace these practices and what's being introduced here, so just very good on you. And thank you for joining those of us who prioritize freedom.

It's so easy to say, well, I have my food, I have my sex, you know, I have my money, my comforts, I'm done. I don't need anything else in life. And the doggies do that too. They say I have my food, I have my comforts, that's all I need, right? And they don't even really care about introspection, for example. But do you want to live like a dog? Like, I love the dogs so much, right? They're my best friends, but, like, the scope of awareness, there's a lot going on that a dog isn't seeing. And the dog is confined into its own desires, usually—a lot of dogs, I don't want to generalize, but typically the dog is confined into those desires and humans get like that too.

We can just be like a dog, got my food, I'm good. Right? And never entertain the possibility that you're just in a comfort zone of unhappiness, essentially you're trapped. You're thinking that because you have this food and these few superficial needs are met, that somehow that's it. And in a way, simplicity, it's true, you can find completion in simplicity. But if you're just programmed to suppress everything, and be comfortable with your food and your house and your air conditioning and everything, this is a kind of slumber. Right?

So, yeah, I guess I don't need to go into that too much and it's just my opinion, right? But a lot of people have something nagging

at them and saying, well, instead of suppressing this and pretending like my discomfort, my unhappiness, my dissatisfaction, instead of pretending that's not here, I'm going to actually look into my mind, and that's what many of you are doing and what's so commendable.

But let's talk about it then. You know, I guess I just set the stage a little bit there. As far as the audience goes, I don't need to remind people that mass hypnosis and social engineering is being endorsed, but also we have many unhealthy family dynamics nowadays taking place and lots of stuff there to mess with your mind and entrap you into materialism and materialist ideas. It's essentially somebody else's hypnosis. That's why I cite the Donald Hoffman quote where he says, "after much experimentation and testing, we've come to the conclusion that natural selection reflecting the true nature of reality is virtually zero."

I'm saying the same thing. You know, we're following a dream here, a dream world that's based on physicality, it's based on desire, food, and sex, and a lot of beings are dissatisfied with that. And so we go from this barbaric mentality of (*grunting*): "Get food, have sex." We go from that to turning the light inwards and discovering something way beyond that scope. And so I wanted to talk a little bit about: what is it like when you look at your own mind? This can be like a train that's been going and going for many years, it hasn't stopped and the wheels are falling off and the inside stinks and, you know, pieces are falling off of it. This train has been going and finally you stop it to look at it, to examine it. Well, if you don't get out of this constant thought proliferation, you are on a broken train. Dukkha!

I'm preaching to the choir a little bit here in this group. Now many of you notice, and many of you have heard me repeat these things in our live gathering here, but this is worth trying, everybody. To be stuck in these stories and these thoughts and these old habits—just to look at them. Just to turn awareness in on itself or cognition in on itself, use awareness and see your own mind. What kind of thoughts

are you having? Are they one thought after another? Are you able to stop the thoughts?

(Dawai pauses for a few moments). Huh?

Why are you still thinking?

PHAT!

Give it a try! And we're not going anti-thought, of course not. We're going anti being-programmed. Anti being stuck in the thought, if anything, not really anti-anything. But try it everybody, try to just stay here with not a single thought in your mind. Let that feeling in your head soften up. Become like the sky.

(The sangha tries the practice for some moments).

Now you can isolate a thought. We have one thought, "The weather is cold." Let that be our only thought. "The weather is cold." Noticing its texture, its length, its coming, its abiding, and its going. "The weather is cold."

Where is that thought happening? Don't think about it. Just notice the space where that thought is happening, that's why we isolate the thought. We want to start to connect with the basis for that thought, the base cognition.

And no matter what thought you're having, you're free. Anyone not able to isolate a thought? Or become mono-minded? I know there are more thoughts happening for most of you than just "the weather is cold." If you're taking my invitation to become mono-minded, then thank you, I know that's kind of tricky. So everybody here is pretty much accessing this, right?

Yes, please.

SANGHA I: Hello? Okay audible. When I do that exercise and there is one major thought...

DAWAI: We're still in the exercise right now.

SANGHA I: Yes. Oh, I mean, I'm speaking now so there's more thoughts.

DAWAI: No, doesn't have to be any thoughts as we're speaking. You can still have "the weather is cold" here as your only thought. So let's keep "the weather is cold" as our thought. Now what are you saying about that thought?

(A moment passes).

So you're thinking way too much right now. You have one single thought, just trust me a little bit. Trust me, instead of proliferating on everything and challenging everything always, just see, what's it like if I have "the weather is cold" and hold that thought? Can you do that or no? And let that be your only thought?

Words aren't thoughts, I know you're examining that now. I'm sitting here speaking to you without a single thought. These words are just coming out. No plan, no fabrication, no nothing. "The weather is cold." Where is that thought located?

SANGHA I: It does seem I can feel that.

DAWAI: Where it is intuitively. Okay? Don't use that powerful mind of yours, but intuitively check in when you have a mono thought, just one thought: "The weather is cold." Where is that thought happening? Intuitively.

SANGHA I: The environment.

DAWAI: Hum. Sure. Is there a knowingness there?

SANGHA I: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

DAWAI: As we say, as we say, "the weather is cold." There's a knowingness there too, isn't there?

SANGHA I: Mm-hmm.

DAWAI: So it's happening in an environment which is basically space. And there's also a knowingness infused with that. So we have Dharmakāya and Sambhogakāya there, right? Empty cognition.

SANGHA 1: Okay, yeah.

DAWAI: So can you isolate a thought now?

SANGHA 1: Yes, it feels so. There's this feelings still that are otherwise. Is that meaningful?

DAWAI: Yeah, just keep trying this. Don't worry about if you're thinking more than just one thought, then that's okay, that's in your experience, right? Then you're able to measure yourself. Well, I can't really have just one thought because my mind is very busy, and that's okay. I'm about you know, 50% there. And then next time you try it, you isolate the thought again, and you'll be, you know, 80% there.

SANGHA 1: By thought does it encompass feelings and vibes and so forth?

DAWAI: No, no, we just want to isolate a coarse linguistic thought.

SANGHA 1: Okay, coarse linguistic, okay, okay.

DAWAI: "The weather is cold," that's it. We're dealing with the sixth aspect of consciousness, the cognitive aspect—the mental formations.

SANGHA 1: Okay, okay. I feel it now. Okay. Since I felt some sensations and like feelings and kind of mood, I thought that was not facilitating that.

DAWAI: Yeah, that's just more add-ons, right? That's adding... like I said, become mono-minded, but there may be more stuff going on as you're doing this little experiment.

SANGHA 1: Awesome, okay.

DAWAI: Anybody else not able to isolate a thought?

SANGHA 2 (CHAT): This seems somewhat similar to focusing on a mantra or recitation.

DAWAI: Somewhat similar, I would say, but this is more scientific. This is actual introspection because with a mantra you're just chanting, chanting, chanting. But here you're actually turning awareness into a kind of scope, a microscope, telescope, whatever, mental scope. And you're using that scope, that ability for visibility to look into your own mind and just witness what's going on there. And then lucky for us, the witnessing itself is good enough, a remedy. So just being able to see your thought from start to finish particularly is very powerful.

Remember, it's the thoughts that drive us off a cliff that we hurt ourselves, we hurt others. It's thoughts that cause us to take a puff, right, or take a drink. It's thoughts that cause us insanity, paranoia, jealousy, you name it. Hate, division, racism, all of that starts with a thought, it's facilitated by thought. And then we invest our emotions into it, and then our identity gets essentially embedded into the thought constructs that are ceaseless. They just keep on going.

People would drink coffee even in the mainstream world and then keep those thoughts going day and night and have insomnia and things like that. And then they're fighting and agitated and aroused all at the same time. And it's crowding out the mind and there's no space for things to echo out, for things to breathe. And that's how karma is compounded into karma, into conditioning. That's how conditioning is created, by compounding, by never letting your stuff echo out.

It's just like plasticity, except it's on an invisible plane. Just like this modern plasticity that they've discovered, cognitive neuroplasticity and emotional plasticity. So that's why I'm really inviting you, almost begging you to try this, give it a shot. And I know many here in the live gathering you are, and I appreciate you so much for that because this will make it to where you never get bound again. Nothing can ever hurt you again.

It may seem like on the surface, you're caught up in your moods, and you're caught up in your day and something agitates you. But

there will always, always be this recognition of a higher cognition, a higher consciousness, this very basis that holds the thought. You have seen it. You can no longer be captivated. You can no longer be hurt. You understand? That's why it means so much to me to go into this together.

And I have no presentation skill, I have no manners. You know, I grew up with no parents teaching me anything and no schooling, and so I'm sorry if it comes across rough or weird or anything like that. I don't know what normal is, and I don't know how to act sometimes; I just go by what I got. But this is it everybody, if you can just, (well, thank you but) if you could just find this everybody, you will be okay, you know? Alright, I think Sangha 3 was next, there.

SANGHA 3: Hi Dawai, hi sangha, let me go on camera, I feel rude being off. So the whole time you were just talking with [Sangha 1] and to the Sangha, I was experimenting and trying to still hold that thought, "The weather is cold" and just isolate it. And I feel like I did, I had it in this little bubble and everything was still flowing through me and I could understand the words that were coming out, and somehow they were still being processed but I was still holding that thought in that bubble.

And then as soon as you said my name, it felt like it kind of like went away, and then I had to focus again. And so I had a feeling that that was going to happen, and so my question is, is that part of the process or can I still... I know I should still be able to contain that, right? And then interact, but still have that thought isolated. That's what I'm struggling with.

DAWAI: Yeah, very good. You know, this is wonderful. It shows the power of your emanating mind and multifaceted mind. They had this trope going around that people can only think one thought at a time, which is ridiculous, right. Compared to what you're doing here, you're showing that obviously your mind is multifaceted. So yes, you

can actually somehow speak from some place in consciousness and still hold that thought at the same time.

You know maybe we could say it's like the... the rubbing the belly and patting the head thing. Except you have this great Avalokiteshvara mental ability to emanate across dimensions and realities and things. That's what originally in the ancient Vedas, Ishvara meant that, you know, the very fabric of this and the creator all in one. So you have this ancient trichotomy there with Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva. Which happens with every one of these thoughts.

The thought comes, Brahma, it abides, Vishnu, and then it destroys, Shiva. So you have the Ishvara here, connected to Avalokiteshvara, by the way, for those Dharma nerds out there. It's the very... we're just playing with mind, we're just playing with consciousness. Just... you are the spider, you know, weaving the web.

But yes, it was a great share, just showing how much you're seeing is always impressive to me. Thank you.

SANGHA 3 (CHAT): How does Avalokiteshvara do the belly and hand with a thousand arms?

DAWAI: Well, using two of their arms. Yeah, Indra's web is what gets... where we're in Indra's web in this gathering right now.

So now we can isolate a thought and... go ahead.

SANGHA 4: Just wanted to do a quick share of something wondrous, something surprising which happened when we did this yesterday. Because actually over the weekend, okay now it's Monday for everyone I guess, but over my weekend I was totally not in you know this mono-mindedness. I was like in proliferation throughout, you know, getting in a mood and all that. And I went to that session and then you started the meditation with like, oh ah mono-mindedness, let's just have one thought. And something unexpected happened for me. Because when I don't even remember what's the thought, but when you say, now let's have this one thought, and then you say

the thought. And I was like going to be like, all right, let's repeat the words, you know, which Dawai said, and then we had that one thought, right. But I stopped because I realized the moment you said it, there was no thoughts. There was like no nothing.

That was like... then I realized, yeah, maybe I don't disrupt the quietness by like adding, contriving a single line.. So I was just like, ahh... And it's like really you know, the sūtras... but I always thought it's a high, very high level when you say, in the seeing just the seeing, in the hearing just the heard. And I dare not say that, wow, I achieved that level. In fact, I was like, okay, maybe wait a while to see if I should share this or what. But it's like I felt that there was a glimpse. And of course, it didn't last or anything, my mind very quickly goes into proliferation and stuff like that. But yeah, I think that was a magical moment to me, yeah.

DAWAI: Yeah, this is exceptional to even be able to see the activity of your own thoughts. So there are different minds. We could almost make a graphic out of this. You know we have 36 people here, 37 including me, and we could all make a graphic of our mind, what it does when we say "isolate a thought."

Let's say "The weather's getting cold," right? That one thought, "The weather's getting cold." Well, what is Sangha 1's mind doing with that? You know, maybe painting a pretty picture of snow and mountains. What is Sangha 4's mind doing with that? "I don't know if I want to think about this," you know, or, "Do I want to isolate this thought?" You know, maybe having some doubts about the thought. Maybe Sangha 4 is adding on to the thought, even though you just shared the opposite. I'm just giving examples, okay? Don't take any of this personal.

Maybe when I say, "The weather's getting cold," Sangha 4 says, "Oh, I need to get a jacket," you know, "I wonder what kind of jacket I'm going to get." You know, so everybody's mind is going to do something unique with this. And just observing what your

mind does with thoughts is good enough. That's the magic right there. You get to see, you know, you get to zoom in a little bit while zooming out, and see how your mind interacts with thoughts, what it does with thoughts. How proliferation starts, how visualizations and nostalgia can take place from a thought. All kinds of stuff. How anxious feelings can arise from a thought. There's an entire spectrum, it's worth writing a book about it or making a graphic, because there's an entire spectrum of things that the mind does when asked to isolate a single thought. Very interesting.

And by the way, is it okay if these sharings are on the YouTube channel? They're very powerful. You all do so well in these sharings that I really wish more visibility on them as long as people are comfortable.

SANGHA 5: Something clicked when you told Sangha 1 that it was about isolating mental formations. So I had just ordinary perception, and in that was repeating "The weather is cold." And I finally understand what a thought is. And through that I know what all the other thoughts are, they're all mental formations. And my head is full of mental formations all the time so this is an interesting, interesting exercise. Thank you.

DAWAI: You had a realization. I'm chipping away at you guys. Very good. Yeah, Sangha 1, ask a few more questions and they will become Buddhas.

This is so powerful everybody and we've spent nearly the entire session on this topic, which isn't very long comparatively speaking, this Dharma train moves fast here. So what you're seeing, you know most people wouldn't be introduced to this kind of thing after years and years of meditation and mindfulness practice and things like that. So please don't be going hard on yourself, let yourself naturally get good at this. It's possible and it's extremely liberating.

So anybody know what comes after isolating a thought? What technique I'm gonna talk about after that? Well, let's read the comments here.

SANGHA 5 (CHAT): Isolating the conditioned self.

DAWAI: Yeah, Sangha 5 got it, because that's another kind of thought, but it's a little bit more vague and in the body.

SANGHA 6 (CHAT): In my experience of the exercise, keeping the thought in my mind meant continually causing it to rise, or it would otherwise dissolve.

DAWAI: Yeah, we had that last session and I maybe should have specified that reinvoking the thought is fine. That's what I mean by mono-minded. You're just having one thought. You're letting it, ideally you would notice the echoing out of that thought. That's the dissolution. We want those three phases of the thought to be seen: its creation, its abiding and its dissolution. Those are three very important stages to simply witness, because then you can notice panic, heavy feelings, and traumas within the same space. You can notice their arising, their abiding, and their cessation. That is the superpower.

So if I have a thought, let's say... I want to pick something that's as less complicated as possible. "The hand has five fingers." Is that good? Is that debatable? (*Dawai reads the chat*). Well, yeah, I guess it is, uh, false; Sangha 1 said "false."

"Birds fly." There we go. Two words. "Birds fly." Very easy. I know some birds don't fly, but we're gonna just stop. Not talk about penguins. Don't do it... I can read your mind. So, "Birds fly." Obviously just that, those two words are already invoking us to get silly, you see? I mean, that's the power of thought, just noticing that, just how did those two words cause us to act that silly? Just little sounds, basically, little vibrations. So as long as we begin to notice the effect that thoughts have and how they abide, what they look like,

their texture, their tone, their frequency, their vibrations, this is all that's needed.

So if we have “birds fly,” let's just become clear canvas, that's our thought, and it leaves a little bit of a trace before it vanishes completely. “Birds fly.”

Now the space is going to increase between your invocations. You can still see it flying around your mind, so be careful not to reinvoke it prematurely. There may still be a trace of that thought there. For me, I can still right now see a trace of that thought, without deliberately invoking it.

What was it? “Birds poop?” Oh, “Birds fly.” I got you guys. Okay, so very good.

Go ahead...

SANGHA 1: Hello. I want to ask, is there anything to how long it stays or more abstractly, why does it stay for a particular amount of time? Like in your experience, if it's more weightful, does it rest longer or is it just because you're constantly ringing that bell again and again? But it's actually really ringing for the same amount of time, just you're kind of putting so much effort that it's going, bam, bam, bam, boom, boom, boom.

DAWAI: Yeah. That's a great inquiry. You see these are things, it means nothing. What are the implications? There are no implications. Seeing is enough. Right? And it may look different for everybody. There's nothing to figure out here. You're just watching birds pass by. Oh, that one was flying slower than the other one. Or that one had a poor little mouse in its mouth, or whatever. You know, that one had huge wings, look at that, wow. Same with your thoughts, wow, look at this one, this one's big. This one's really taking some time to go through. And I think there is a standard perhaps that we can say, I'm here in awareness, just like a pristine lake, and you throw a pebble into the lake and it ripples. Well, this is what you're doing. You're vibrating the great mind and you're saying, “Birds fly.” It's a vibration, a ripple.

And then I think for everybody that ripple would be the same, if we had a pristinely pure clear mind, all of us. The reason why it doesn't appear the same is because every one of us is doing something with that thought: "Birds fly." Now there are a lot of yogis here, maybe you're not. I believe that some of you are probably able to throw a pebble in the lake and that's the only pebble. You just watch it ripple out. "Birds fly." You can literally tune into the rippling, to it echoing out.

The issue is when we're compounding, we say: "Birds fly. I wonder why they fly? I wonder how many birds are gonna fly? I wonder if they're gonna poop on my car, and then I'm gonna have to clean it? I don't have enough paper towels to clean it. Oh, I wonder what I'm gonna do with the birds later when they come back? Are the birds gonna be in a flock later?"

And this is the kind of perpetuated thought cycle that gets us trapped. And then we're blind, we don't have visibility. But instead of about the birds, it's about your fears, it's about your parents, it's about your job, about your school. And you sit there thinking about birds. So this gets you out of that electromagnetic confine, as I would call it. And then you can still think about birds from there. You know, we can still have all the thoughts about birds we want, no problem, from here.

So give it a try, everybody. What's it like to watch birds fly by? Whether it's your emotions, whether it's thoughts, what's it like if I just let this bird fly by rather than analyzing it and being stuck on it? This happens when somebody insults you or somebody does you wrong or something like that, or breaks your heart. You'll be thinking about birds for days.

SANGHA 6: I want to say couple of things. Thank you so much for this teaching. And for me it was so revolutionary to be between two thoughts and just be there. And I also noticed that all conditionings are coming up, you know. It's not true anymore how I am, how I'm

supposed to be, of other people's projection in my childhood. And... I thank them for the gift, but I also have the right to let go of the gift. This is not my reality anymore. This is what I look like. I get goosebumps when I talk like this. But thank you so much.

DAWAI: Well, thank you too, my friend. Thank you so much for being here and spending time with us, it's always a privilege. Yes, the space between thoughts, exactly. So wonderful that you noticed that and you're getting lots of love there in the comments. And yeah, to release the stories, right?

I mean, imagine if we branded ourselves with these things and we do, but as practitioners, I mean, it would be ridiculous for me. I was in and out of jail so much as a teenager and I was raging out and I did so much crazy stuff and got in fights and gunfights and stuff. You know, if I let that define me, if I let that continuously repeat in my mind, you know, how I needed to have a better childhood and all these things, it just keeps you in a slumber of unhappiness, right? And then you feel trapped by these stories and identity constructs. Yeah, I feel like I'm in that boat right now, actually. I'm letting myself become myself rather than the stories, rather than the past. And that looks different. You know, and we don't know what it really looks like at first, but to choose peace, to choose compassion and wisdom constantly, and allow yourself to be revealed in that. And not being scared to be brand new.

In this gathering, you all are exceptional, so forgive yourself, forgive others, clear your browser history, and let yourself be brand new, okay? And yeah you may end up cycling back into the old stuff—then do it again. Let yourself be brand new again. Just because you engaged in some sense desire doesn't brand you a certain person. Just because you made a mistake, seemingly a mistake, wrong choices or something like that, that doesn't brand you a particular person, doesn't identify you. So we will get into... yes, I think actually... yes, please.

SANGHA 7: Hello. Firstly, thank you, I mean, what an amazing practice. It's just to isolate the thought and hold it and observe. It's just an incredible practice, it's wonderful. Because I've done a lot of practice in the past, but in a way that was always presented as being like a Samatha or Vipassanā in kind of training in one or the other, or ultimately trying to kind of put them together.

So forgive me if I'm kind of putting this in, and you've just mentioned dropping back into old habits, well, maybe I'm dropping back into old habits, but this feels very... I can apply this in a Samatha sort of a way of holding a thought and then especially that technique of just observing, you know, is it still there? Is it still there? can still feel a little bit of an echo of it. That feels very Samatha. But am I missing... oh, I think I might have just got it, am I missing the Vipassanā aspect, or is the fact that the awareness is Dharmakāya, it is emptiness, is that the Vipassanā aspect—that maybe being aware of being aware?

DAWAI: Yeah you do got it, I like that you do this. You ask... you have an inquiry and then you start to answer it. This is awesome. Awesome to see that in real time. And we're kind of communicating with the group then, you know, and letting it come to us.

But this is a great question. Samatha and Vipassanā are never separated in this Dzogchen approach. So when you stabilize in awareness itself, that allows you to isolate a thought. The more Samatha you have, essentially, the more you can isolate that thought, the better you will be at it. So if the mind is very non-discursive, I'm sitting here space-like and I just invoke a thought, "Birds are flying." Then it's very easy to stay here because of Samatha.

Seeing the duration of that thought, just even one instance of seeing that thought, is Vipassanā. So now you have seen how the thought does these three things. It arises, it abides, and it ceases. That's your Samatha and Vipassanā, united. And compassion is there too because just holding that thought, holding the space for that thought, is the compassion.

SANGHA 6: Don't know if I see that second bit about the holding the thought is the compassion.

DAWAI: Well, when we come into the nurturing of our experience, now we're saying, "Okay, thought, I'm not going to enable you for some kind of destruction. I'm not going to harbor you for some kind of desires. I'm just going to nurture you here in awareness." And that's a kind of...

SANGHA 7 (CHAT): Holding is caring.

DAWAI: Here you go, you made it sound very sweet.

SANGHA 7: Yeah, but I'm being serious.

DAWAI: I know. I know. Yeah, it's very good. It's very sweet. But you know, I think the nuance there that Sangha 6 is providing for us too is that, you know, when you're able to just isolate that thought, you're seeing tons of stuff about the thought. And that's compassion, that's as compassionate as can be. Right? And so I just stuck compassion in there just to finalize the three kāyas because we're essentially dealing with three kāyas here. You have the space, Dharmakāya, you have the cognition, which is your thought and the knowingness of that thought, which is the act of cognition, Sambhogakāya. And then the display of that, the happening of that is the Nirmāṇakāya compassion, that *thugjé*.

But anyway, just being able to see a thought, that little echoing, that's one of the deepest aspects of Vipassanā you guys could see. If you're able to see a thought come and go within your awareness, that is high level Vipassanā. Okay?

SANGHA 6: Yeah. Wow.

DAWAI: There's always more. But important for everybody to know the context, that from this Palyul context that I've adopted from

Karma Chagme in the 1600s, this is not only a union of Mahāmudrā and Dzogchen, but a union of Samatha and Vipassanā, too.

Those people that separate Samatha and Vipassanā, that's a whole different method, that's a whole different technique and style. I would never ever separate them because the second you bring awareness into your body, for example, like everybody can do this, just bring awareness or bring your neck into awareness.

And notice any tension that's within awareness in your neck. Notice how that softens up, doesn't it? That's Vipassanā. You've just seen that by stabilizing and by allowing things to be in awareness, there's liberation, there's insight. Now I can see when that tightens up again, and when it loosens. So it's all about visibility, everybody. Just increased visibility in your life, in your experiences.

And... Yeah, what did you say here?

SANGHA 8 (CHAT): It went separate in Śākyamuni Buddha's introductions.

DAWAI: I think he was keeping them together too. I think it was separate further down the road, but I'm not sure. Yeah, go ahead.

SANGHA 8: Seems like with this practice, there's a core assumption that's different from how I used to think. And that assumption being that the thought or feeling will echo out. That's like the premise that we're working with here. Whereas before, I feel like I was actively trying to stop these things from occurring or popping up, especially sitting down and meditating. Or if I'm at work and I get angry, then I try to do something to stop that. But the shift in premise here to me seems like: it will echo out and just watch it do that. Almost, you know, just sit back and behold it echoing out by itself. That's my take.

DAWAI: Yeah, except it's not axiomatic here. We're not setting that premise, we're just showing you that this is what's happening, right? There's no preset, there's no predisposition required. We can show this to you, all you have to do is be willing.

We're on fire today, everybody. Always.

Is that making sense? But you're right, generally speaking, you're right. There's a whole different kind of vantage point now. Yeah, from remedies to letting be. From inference and imputation to revelation. It's a completely different trajectory here, and that's why I'm happy so many of you are taking part in it. And in such a short time, we've gathered together, too. Just this year has been very powerful for this group. I'm very happy for you all, because you all will continue to bring this approach into the collective, into your worlds, and benefit many beings like that.

This is the only way to be free. You know, we have to reorientate into this kind of approach because the latter has not been working. The former has not been working. My ladder works just fine, dang it! But this is... I got you guys, some of you guys I got on that one pretty good. Don't worry, I got myself too. Whenever I get you, I get myself. Laughter is contagious, isn't it?

Alright. But this is so beautiful to see and always, you know, kind of reminding you of how exceptional it is. Please cherish and continue to be humble about it the way you've been and not water it down with this materialism or, you know, trying to sell it and market it and all these things. It's a sacred, profound truth that's accessed through sincerity and honesty and innocence. Yeah, so high praise to you all for that, and we'll just keep on keeping this medicine alive.

Well thank you so much. I appreciate you all, I really do. And the love that you have given me has probably very literally kept me alive in more ways than one. So, yeah, I'm just as much appreciative of you. Okay, so we'll end here then with a moment of silence for this dedication.

YOTE: (*Yote howls "Woo woo!"*).

DAWAI: Deep bows everyone, Yote said woo woo.

Recorded December 22, 2025.

Time-Displacement Practice

So please relax and we're going to do a short meditation-type practice. Release the mind from any kind of thoughts and things like that, and see if you can just come into pure presence without thoughts, clear like the sky. 'Cause we're going to bring stuff into our canvas, so we need a blank canvas here.

And so now... now I got a blank canvas, I can't remember, what was I gonna use? I had a few options for bringing up the past. We're gonna drag the past into our purely present canvas here. Well, what was it?

I had some dog poop on my boots. That's right, we'll use that one. Okay. So that's mine. You bring something innocent up from last week, last month, yesterday, something a little innocent. Like for me, I had some dog poop on my boot. So I'm thinking about that now.

Everybody understand what we're doing here, right? We're purposefully thinking about something from the past. Anybody not understand? Okay, we're all on the same page. Good.

So I'm thinking about: it was really hard to get this poop off of my boot. And I didn't really *know* that I had poop on my boot and so I kept smelling it in the house and I was like, ah, what is that? And I couldn't find it, you know? Oh, it was a terrible situation. And I just kept searching around. Where's this poop? Who pooped in the house? You see what I'm doing right now, right? I'm proliferating on the past. I'm crowding my mind with the past, aren't I? And nothing else can get in as long as I'm stuck on this "boot with the poop" situation.

Making sense, right? How we can be stuck on the past? Any questions about that? Hopefully you were all able to purposefully stick yourself to the past. Pre-occupy yourself with the past.

So now, let's take the future. I'm going to town today to get water. That's my future thought. Now you pick a future thought.

And now purposefully proliferate on that. I'll do mine out loud first: I have to go to town later. I wonder if I have all the water tanks in the Jeep yet? I wonder if there's gonna be any traffic today? Maybe I'll make some other stops. This water has been tasting funny lately. I wonder if it's really purified or if they're just trying to cheat? Okay, those were mine.

Now you do yours. You don't have to do them out loud, obviously. (*The sangha practices the instruction for a few moments*).

So anybody not know how to bring the future into the presence and crowd your mind with that? You got it, right? It's pretty easy. Okay. I believe you.

Let's clear the mind back to that very clear open state. No past, no future. Just tune into this for a second. We're not thinking about the past, we're not thinking about the future. But now we're going to analyze what's happening *now*. Am I resting in presence? That's going to be my present-moment analysis. Am I resting in presence or am I getting this wrong? I wonder if my mind is fully in presence and I'm going to proliferate on that. I'm going to analyze whether I'm in presence or not. Okay? So you analyze something too. You could say: there's some sounds happening in this presence. What are those sounds? Oh, I have a stomachache right now. I wonder... anything that's happening *now*, in this presence, just start to analyze it. (*The sangha practices the instruction for a few moments*). Ah, very good.

So those are the three times: past, present, and future. And that's how you can actually displace yourself into the past, present, or future.

This happens all the time and it drives us crazy and it stresses us out and it hurts our bodies. We think so much about the future and we're displacing ourselves away from presence. We worry so much about the past and things we've done in the past, etc., etc., and we displace ourselves into the past. It's illusory living because pure presence is all there ever was, all there ever is. And when your mind isn't bogged down by analyzing what's happening right now, when it's not bogged

down by the nostalgia of the past, or the worries, the angst of the future, then all you have is presence, then you have entered the fourth time.

Okay, so any comments or questions about that? I know we're at the end of our live session and you're probably a little wore out, but I appreciate you joining in on that. It's the first time I ever tried anything like this. And I just kind of made it up the other day. It just kind of came to me and I'm sure it'll get more polished and things, but I don't even know how that landed on you, so please feel free to give me feedback.

SANGHA 1: Is there a difference between the present moment and presence?

DAWAI: Yeah, exactly. And you just saw the difference, right? You just saw that. I could sit here and think, "Wow, why is my computer so loud right now? Why is the fan so loud?" And I can think about that, think about that. And that's the present moment. I'm technically in the present moment, right? Thinking about the fan that's happening right now.

But *presence*, my mind isn't being pulled towards anything. It's fully present. And I can still say, "Yup, the fan is loud." But I'm not *in* that, right? So you're not in the three times.

SANGHA 1: So presence is without thinking?

DAWAI: Without the grasping. You can still have the thought. That's why I've said you can still think that, "Yeah, fan's pretty loud right now." But you're not sitting here like distracting away from presence into "Wow, I wonder what's wrong with that fan, starting to piss me off. I'm not sure why. It always has to be like that." So there's a texture change there. Okay?

SANGHA 2: Yeah. Hello everyone, morning everyone. What I was going to say basically was made out in the comment section. That it's

a nice exercise, I've found, because I am now getting used to noticing and stopping proliferation and doing the exercise where you're actually trying to spin it up, I think it's quite interesting to see that, see the kind of mechanism there. And you would just want to do the silly stuff because, as [sangha member] says, actually, you know, for the first four and a half decades of my life—you know, it's automatic and involuntary and you're waking up at three in the morning in a panic about something you said to a girl in primary seven—you know, it's just that you're doing whatever it is about the brain that fires these things up. So yeah, doing it and that kind of nice, lightweight, playful way, kind of shows you, in a way, in a nice way for me, you can assure us how far I've come, you know, but it's good training for noticing the proliferation, you know, bubbling away under the surface when you're going about your day. So yeah, I think it's a thumbs up from me, definitely.

DAWAI: I'm very happy to hear and read these comments too, that people were able to engage with this. That's awesome. Very cool. And yeah, you yogis now, this is true sovereignty.

You can actually pick and choose which thoughts are occupying your mind, and you can contextualize those thoughts and weigh them, so to speak, and see how much you're grasping into them. Very, very powerful.

SANGHA 3: I just wanted to mention, I really appreciate the non-seriousness, because a lot of times when people address these kinds of topics, it's *so* about getting into presence that it actually reifies it, and then while reifying the past, while trying to diminish it, while like, there's just like a lot of clumping where for this, where it's just like: okay, open *that* door and now open *that* door and now open *that* door. Okay, and now presence was there the whole time and is here still. So thank you for the simplicity, is my thought.

DAWAI: Yeah, I hadn't thought about that, that there's a lightness factor. Thanks for bringing that up. That's what seems to be really compatible. What seems to be working for you all is the lightness of it. I hadn't even considered that.

SANGHA 4: I agree with everything everyone said. Just a quick add-on. I found it especially helpful as well to distinguish the present moment from presence, being still in the three times, but in this moment, it's like being here, but analyzing it, telling a story about it, interpreting it. Versus actual presence, actual fourth time is really just even without that, you know. So yeah, I found that really quite helpful as well.

DAWAI: Yay! Yeah, when we're being innovative, we never know, right? So that's great. I think we can polish a little bit and continue to utilize this technique. And thankfully, Yeshé got it out there to share with everybody. So I kind of prioritize some of these other techniques before we do isolation of the conditioned self—and we'll go back to isolating a thought. But here we're doing this cognitive diffusion before we go into isolating the conditioned self. So even though when you isolate thoughts, usually the conditioned self is mixed in there, but maybe not as explicitly.

So anyway, thank you everybody so much for joining and giving these techniques a try. And we just kind of, you know, get more freedom in our mind, in our life, in our world. And get some of the congestion out and use these different mind sciences, right? These are just tools, mind science tools that are very effective apparently, and they're based on our own introspection. So that makes them very powerful.

So yeah, big appreciation and we'll just end here then with this moment of silence for the dedication. And deep bow to you, my friends.

Please take care out there. Thank you.

Recorded December 24, 2025.

Invoking-the-Conditioned-Self Practice

So we'll just go into a little bit of a meditation talk. Dorje Lekpa just pointed out a very important nuance, actually, with this practice.

So a lot of you know how to isolate a thought. This means that you can have one single thought—watch it come, watch it stay, and watch it go. That alone is so empowering; that puts you on a very high level in terms of mental freedom.

So when you have a thought like, “Right now I’m listening to Dawai,” “I’m listening to Dawai”—where is that thought happening? (*Dawai pauses to let the sangha try the practice*). Any emotional energy that you have right now in the body—where’s that happening? The same space?

So if I use myself as a little guinea pig here, and I become completely free of thought, I can then do the practice of invoking the conditioned self a lot easier because I have more of a blank canvas. So now I have complete clarity, and I say, “I’m sitting here.” And then I feel that little bubble-up of a self within awareness, and then it goes away, like Dorje was saying. Very good; that’s all you need to do.

And remember, we want to take focus, attention—this idea of our mind, or this feeling of our mind kind of projecting out—turn it in on itself, okay? So that you’re not caught up in the dream; you’re not caught up in the illusion. When somebody walks by here, the dogs cannot stop watching him. They just watch from beginning to end; they’re stuck. I can’t even grab them, “Come, come on.” (*Dawai mimes pulling someone*). We get like that with the external world, with that subject-object duality. We start to orientate ourselves into a divisive state. So you recognize awareness, which is like space, and you turn it in on itself. And now you’re resting as space-like awareness. You don’t have to operate from division, from subject and object. That’s provisional. That’s preliminary, like a baby being in the eggshells.

It's limited. Thoughts—there are only so many of them. Concepts—there are only so many of them. If we try to box our reality, our freedom, into just words and concepts, logically that's very, very limited.

So this awareness, this purely present cognition, is your whole mind, everybody. Whenever you invoke and you say, 'I'm sitting here'—and I'm trying to be sensitive to everybody, but you know, in Buddhadharma we have death contemplations, and I've brought this up many times, so I don't mean to be insensitive—but we use the dying... what would it be like? A cue or something like that? What is that? What do we call that when we say a little phrase to help us with our practice? Maybe 'cue.' I feel like there's another word for it. (*Dawai looks at some suggestions in the chat*). It's not really an affirmation. Anyway, it's a reminder, yes, but I was looking for another... oh, prompt. It's a little prompt, isn't it?

You could say, "I'm sitting here." That's your prompt, and just leave it there. No more thoughts. Now remember, mind has become clear. My mind is like space right now. So I don't have any weights. That means I'm not looking at my tea saying, "Oh, I want that tea as soon as this session stops," or my mind is not thinking, "Oh, what did I say earlier? I hope I didn't offend anybody." And I'm not in the past; I'm not in the future. I'm right here, nice and clear. I don't have any of those weights right now.

And I say, "I'm going to die." And whatever comes up when I prompt that, I leave that. Yeah. I leave that. And that is the very taproot of division, everybody; so we're not trying to get rid of ourselves. This isn't a kind of nihilism here—even an implicit nihilism—or even kind of like a melting-pot eternalism that seems to go on. Here, we're just releasing the conditioning. Very, very easy. It's a somatic sensation, or we could say a somatic indication, because not everything is going to be obvious to you. So don't worry about seeing things in their entirety. Seeing itself, vipassanā, is very, very profound, because awareness begins to go past that

So you say, “I’m going to die,” and that feeling—awareness says, “Okay, I’m going to nourish that feeling that comes up. I’m going to hold that feeling that comes up when you prompt me.” You do that enough times, and who’s going to die? You do that enough times, and... wow—I’ve been here the whole time, life after life. You do that enough times, then the divine will say, “Okay, you are light enough to come into the spaciousness.”

Almost like a giant version of you has been waiting for you. (*Dawai pauses*). Totally free like a butterfly, going from flower to flower, nothing left to do, nothing to figure out. That’s why they call it the Great Perfection. There’s a completion here, everybody, where you can be retired. You can be on a permanent holiday. You can retire your mind from all its activity. Okay. That is the conditioned self—*mānas-vijñāna* in Sanskrit, seventh aspect of the eight-consciousness model—the famous, the notorious, the illustrious conditioned self.

I know we take a little bit more of a structured approach to this. It’s not all dancing around, and praising God, and things like that, because we want to be sure. We want to verify. We don’t want to be co-opted by delusion.

And so that’s why as awareness practitioners, you have a huge advantage here; it’s like you have a tool in your hands that nobody else has. Well, they all have it, but they have it in their pocket, and they have not realized it’s in their pocket, but you have the ability to see the entirety of your experience. Most of us, until awareness, we have not even looked at our own thoughts; we’re just on autopilot, involuntary.

So this practice is a little bit more structured, and less celebratory, and less sensational in that regard, but once you get in the pocket, you’re good. You can go dance in Hare Krishna, and all this stuff, and whatever you like.

The Phasing of This Practice

When you get pointing out, you have seen the fact that your mind—let’s use a metaphor—is like a window. Okay? For a second there, you’ve seen this clear window, but there’s a lot of stuff on your window, grime covering it. And so the issue is that at first you see your enlightened mind, but because of that grime, which is the momentum of karma, so mental-emotional tendencies grab that right away. “Oh, Dawai just showed me awareness. This is awesome. I need to go party.” Whatever you end up thinking—you’re apprehending that.

Now, somebody with hundreds of thousands of prostrations, maybe even some life changing event or something, now, when they get pointed to it, they may just sit here and really marinate. Ah, and sit in enlightenment. And then it comes back: “What is happening to me?” Or some like apprehension of “me” there. “Am I enlightened?” And so that comes into the presence then, and it sort of distorts the presence of its clear canvas, okay?

So you get pointing out, but then you need to spend—you know, it could be three months, it could be three years, it depends on the individual. But many people here in these live gatherings are quite diligent actually, and quite powerful with your inquiries, and your connections to the scriptures and masters is very, very powerful. And we’re living in a whole different time now, where things are expedited, things are moving a lot faster. So who knows how long it will take, but eventually that window gets clear of all the grime.

And so now you’re sort of like this, relatively somatically free. There’s no tension throughout your body. There aren’t any thoughts that captivate you. And as soon as a piece of grime gets on your window, you know it. That’s the key, all right? We have been introduced to our enlightened mind, but there’s a lot of grime on it. And so we have to keep coming into our enlightened mind to let that grime naturally clean itself.

And then you will have a clean canvas, you will know when you have a clean canvas. You have a wakefulness invigorating every cell. You have a security, a confidence that doesn't go away. There will be no more existential questioning. The "I don't know" mind is the answer, and you're fine with that. There's not a single thing that you worry about. Not a single thing that you need to figure out. None of that.

Yet, at the same time, things are being revealed to you. Profound truths are being revealed to you because your mind's open and spacious. Your heart is capable of immense compassion and empathy.

If you see a being that's stuck in a situation, you can have that strong empathy and compassion but not get knocked down yourself—not get insecure. Like, "What am I going to do? I can't help this person." There's no more of that. There's just... I care about this person.

I may not be able to reach them—maybe a soldier at war or something—but instead of letting that disempower you, everybody, read the news and you find out about a war going on and letting that make you weak, you stay there. You bring that war into your open-hearted presence. And then it's really powerful like that. You still hold your empowerment. You still hold your Buddhahood. And at the same time, you're actually not ignoring the fact that these wars are happening.

So, we come into a very clear, open mind. Clear as the sky, clear as space itself; somatically, viscerally, you will be able to discern that. And then the moment something sneaks back up on you—some kind of despair, some kind of existential dread or worry and angst—you will know it. Your body will contract. You'll see it.

And so what? You're on Twitter again. Yep. Or X, whatever. Yep, you're contracted. Usually, when you're on these social media platforms, you're contracting. You can feel your nervous system contracting. So it's an opportunity for visibility and discernment there, isn't it?

Or maybe when you're talking to somebody, you have to figure out that maybe I shouldn't hang out with this person that much because every time I hang out with him, I get this contracted, uncomfortable, you know, insecurity—whatever's happening. Yeah. So that's where you eventually get to.

And that's what the Three Modes of Liberation compared to a thief entering an empty house. Now things cannot steal you away, not even tragedies. Very good.

When you have an increased visibility, it goes kind of like this. Let's say I'm eating the donut. And the donut is a metaphor for sex, masturbation, anger, rage, overeating, you name it. So here's the donut of desire. It starts off like that. (*Dawai makes eating motions and sounds*). Then somebody says, "Hey, look at awareness." (*Dawai munches*). You know, you're still eating. You may slow down a little bit, but you're kind of like, "Well, my mouth is pretty full right now, I don't know if I need to jam another donut in there. This is a little uncomfortable. I'm getting donuts all over me," right? So you start to see increased visibility.

That's why I always say you just bring awareness into your current situation, your current life. And that visibility will cause a natural harmony, a natural resolution. All of a sudden you're just like, "Man, this is getting redundant. Too many donuts," right? Way too many donuts. And you're getting to see the whole production cycle, everything, full visibility. And then one day you're just like, "Not today." (*Dawai looks at his hand holding an invisible donut, then just puts his hand down*). "Just not gonna eat it today."

And then, next thing you know, now you're clear. "I used to be a donut-aholic." You tell people, you know, "Hey, I used to be really hooked on these donuts, but now I'm free." And then somebody comes to you and they say, "Want a donut?" And maybe everybody's eating donuts. When in Rome, sure, I will eat a donut. (*Dawai goes munch munch munch*). Right? Now you're free. You can eat the donut or not eat the donut. Making sense, right?

This is asymmetrical logic. There are thresholds and paradoxes, so it's a little bit difficult to verbalize. But that's what's so exceptional about our group, which is so awesome, is that we're actually venturing into this previously mysterious territory to many teachers, many paths, many approaches. This is mysterious territory. What happens after recognition? How does self-liberation work? How does actual freedom work? Right? How does conditioning come undone? How does that look? Okay, very good. So any comments or questions about that? This is just kind of phasing through the path.

SANGHA 1: Yeah, I have one question. The process of self-liberation, I've heard the phrase be said that we gain confidence in self-liberation. I'm just wondering what that means and maybe if knowing how the mechanism of self-liberation works, maybe if that helps to gain confidence in it to abide in awareness as things liberate or something like that.

DAWAI: Exactly. I love when you guys answer your own questions with your own wisdom. Exactly. You see self-liberation. "Wow, my headache just went away. That means all this other tension can go away."

"Oh, wow, my habit of desire is lessening," right? Or "I'm able to have more control during my drinking, my smoking, my eating"—things like that. "I'm able to have more visibility or, at least, a slight sense of freedom there." Whereas before, you had no other exit. You had no other vantage point.

So witnessing self-liberation: first, that starts with the body. It's the easiest to notice tension liberating out of your neck or tension out of your jaw or something like that, right?

But it's a little bit harder to see a song liberating out of your head—AKA a habit of desire, AKA a worry, some kind of past story—a narration that's keeping you weak, keeping you disempowered. It's harder to see those liberating. So that's why we start with the coarse

stuff, like the body tension and coarse visible psychic tensions, like somatic weight and all this kind of science. Okay?

And then, once you've got a confidence in self-liberation, you're in phase three. You're basically just... every day you're eating a donut, don't eat the donut; doesn't matter. The conditioned self is softening out with every single interaction, and then it gets quite expedited at that point.

Everything moves a lot faster into your freedom. And you could be sick, you could be injured, you could be dying, you could have a disease—and you will still experience freedom.

Recorded January 14, 2026.

Meditation and Self-Liberation

So in case anybody's interested, I'm just going to go into a little talk about meditation and self-liberation. Since it's all quiet for now, utilize this time. For those of you who are keeping up with this kind of stuff and accessing this kind of stuff. So the big part about this awareness practice is increased visibility. And of course, I've probably said that a lot, but nothing wrong with re-emphasizing that we turn the lights on within our minds, within our lives, and within this reality, however you want to call that.

For many people, enlightenment is like a video game goal or a level or something like that. But there are many of us who came in because we truly wanted to be free from the disturbances of the mind. For example, not only did I really, really want to benefit beings, but I wanted to be free of the traumas and the cycles my mind was putting me through. It was painful. And for that, this awareness practice came through in a big way. And I think being rooted in that kind of sincerity is what prevails here today in our gatherings, that there's no superficiality associated with this methodology—it's all based on, we really want to be free.

And so, increased visibility, you can correlate with the four foundations of mindfulness. So typically we would say mindfulness practices increase the visibility of thoughts and emotions, perhaps bodily occurrences too, physical excitations and somatic oscillations that really vibrate through us. When we do a 10-minute session, there could be a lot echoing out for you. There could be stuff that needs to—it needs space to breathe. And so what needs space to breathe? What are we allowing to self-liberate, to breathe in our 10-minute session? That's the topic of this discussion.

The most important aspect of the Buddhadharma is the liberation of the conditioned self. I was about to call it the "subject." See, my mind doesn't want to divide anymore. The subject-object dichotomy,

the famous one, the famous duality of self and the other, on which everything is sort of predicated. And in this way, there are many vague notions and abstracts about what is conditioned self. Anybody here want to take any guesses on that? If I was sitting here in a 10-minute session, I'm within space-like awareness so I could see everything that's happening. Well, where would the conditioned self be? We know where thoughts would be, right?

SANGHA 1: Attaching to the thoughts.

DAWAI: So an awareness practitioner has the ability to stay here in awareness.

(Dawai reads a chat message from Sangha 2). I would say, [Sangha 2], it's like [Sangha 1] was saying—the thing attaching to the narrator. Almost like you could have narration without that. And Mānas-vijñāna, as it's known in Sanskrit, has this habit of apprehension. So, wonderful, even now that you're able to identify it in one of its aspects. Of course, it has different behaviors and different weights and different tonalities. It's on a spectrum. We can't expect that the habit of conditioned self only behaves one way.

But thanks to the synthesis of the Buddhist teaching with Yogacara, we have the eight aspects of mind. And so the conditioned self is one of the things that's here.

Let's say we're talking about a giant screen right now. What's on the screen? We have conditioned self, we have thoughts—thoughts are visible in awareness. Especially if you're stabilized a little bit in awareness, then you know what kind of thoughts you're having. Whether they're heavy, whether they're light, which topic they're relevant to, all of that is in your visibility. Yes or no?

Are there any thoughts that escape awareness? No. And so this is something that can be verified. Is awareness there through my good thoughts, my bad thoughts? Is it there just the same? Is it there when I'm feeling a little sleepy during the 10 minutes? Is it there when I'm feeling excited and wakeful? Is it there just the same as clear light

awareness? That's for you as a scientist to verify. And I suppose you can use it as a belief system at this point, I'm saying it's better than anything else out there. But ideally, we'd see this.

And so naturally we can conclude, well, awareness has been here all day today. It was there when I was falling asleep just the same. Of course it'll be there during death—of course it will. And awareness practitioners who are beginning to familiarize with the view, you see that it was there when you were born. I'm gonna repeat: you don't need to try to remember your past lives—just become less blind. You don't need to try to recollect, to recall—just release distraction. Everything is accessible.

So we have thoughts, emotions. If I come to the 10-minute session or if I do a 10-minute session on my own, like all these Dzogchen teachers recommend, and how we utilize this practice, then I may also have, kind like in CBT, in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, I may have a panic right now. Many of us get triggered into panic and the body, the nervous system feels tight. Perhaps the breath becomes shorter, we become very volatile, maybe even hostile.

And so I can sit here and let that be, no matter how crunched up it feels, no matter how uncomfortable. And don't do anything about that tension because that's more tension. What your tension needs, what your panic, your worry, your sadness, your anger, your conditioned self—what it needs is space. Allow it to be in space and it will unravel. That's self-liberation, that's cessation, that's nirvāṇa. Why this practice is so powerful, because you can liberate karmic cycles, you can liberate conditioning by doing nothing.

And so we also enter into this, as the conditioned self is liberating, we enter into this—all phenomenon, so all sounds and, you know, all these are vibratory, whether it's sounds, sights, smells, they're all vibratory. So all these vibes, all this energy, we also allow to be within awareness. And so every time subjectivity is softened up within awareness, given space, nourished within awareness, so is objectivity.

Like this perhaps well-known quote by Longchenpa: *Mind resolves itself within phenomena, phenomena resolve themselves within mind.* Because right now if I look in the open room and I'm really attached to something—I happen to have some bananas right there, and I'm really craving these bananas—well, I'm enhancing duality like that. I'm imprinting subject and object. And the action too, by the way, the third sphere of conception.

So, I'm sitting here really into this banana. In order to do that, I need a self to be into the banana. If I wasn't into the banana... So as my alleviation happens—as the hooks come out, my craving for the banana—so does the subjectivity. So they're both resolving like that.

And so those who are further along, we can really abide here with all the elements, including space. And it's not only little tension inside your body, somatic oscillations that are echoing out, but it's also your inter-twinement, your inter-tanglement, entanglement with the environment. Your mind traffic beginning to resolve in very profound ways that you could never contrive, you could never fabricate this kind of resolution. Doesn't it make perfect sense? Isn't that amazing? We don't need to fabricate resolution.

And yeah, sometimes it's like waiting at a bus stop. Not much happening. Just letting be whatever's here. But when that starts to come off of us a little bit... (*Dawai rests in silence for a while*), there's the Great Perfection.

Recorded February 6, 2026.

The Spheres of Conception

I did want to continue on with this fourth foundation of mindfulness and basically how we begin to verify and access. And for context, for people who are interested, this is a Dzogchen context so it's a little bit different than what you might see in mindfulness meditation, placement or object-based meditations, body scanning, Brahma Vihara type stuff, Tonglen even. Here there's nothing to do; there's no effort.

But somehow we want to make sure that we're not being stuck into these fields of consciousness. For example, in a mood. When you're only in the mood and you don't really feel like you have anywhere else to go, or there's some kind of thought proliferation that's taking you over, subjugating your experience. And in that way, we can point each other a little bit outside of that mood and say, "Hey, yes, you are here, but you can reorientate to a little bit of a broader scope."

And so within Dzogchen, ultimately, what we're sharing is the way of abiding. So a little bit outside of Trekchö and Tögal as they're introduced. It's more from once you've been introduced to clear light awareness, and many of you have also been introduced to bindus. Well, now you can practice Dzogchen Samatha-Vipassanā. So stability into awareness is the main practice. And you have constant revelation with that. You'll see, "Oh wow, this mood has been possessing me. I have been really caught up on those thoughts for decades." Lots of revelation; it's quite beautiful.

And just like when we discovered the microscope, I said this last time, we discovered a whole new world that we had never seen before. And we did this with the telescope too. All of a sudden we could see things we could never notice before, although they were there. And so now you have the scope of awareness. This is not like a telescope or a microscope—the lens is like space and it's volumetric and it's very, very thin, and you can see the clear light shimmer in this scope. And

when you access this, it's the new scientific tool to discover the new world; and many of you obviously have already been discovering.

And so thankfully, with the eight aspects of consciousness and many other factors, like the 52 mental formations and the fetters and all this, we have the psychology, the Dharma psychology. But to me it's useful to recognize the spheres of conception. To at least just—oh, yeah, there it is—that's all you have to do. Nothing to modify or analyze beyond recognizing when we're in the spheres of conception. And so of course that's the subject, action, and object, triad—trichotomy.

So many meditators can sit here in the sphere of subjectivity. There's not really much action sphere happening. They've managed to subdue that, pacify that, or whatever, and so we can just sit here in our subjectivity, even though the whole world is around us. And this is a kind of absorption practice, not really Dzogchen. It's helpful, but it's still quite limited. And so I could sit here right now and if I have a thought like “mantras are great.” If I have that one thought and that one thought only, “mantras are great,” well, I can contain it; it's within the aquarium of my awareness.

But am I containing the sounds the same way? The bus, the person walking across the street? Typically not. We look at them and activate the subject, action, object trichotomy. “Oh, look what they're wearing.” You start to—“Who's in that car over there?” And you're really giving this subjectivity life now. And as awareness practitioners, you can see that when you go out and about. And then you can try the other flavor: what's it like when I just leave this in awareness, including the subjectivity? Then there's a softening of division.

Making sense so far? Very good. Any questions, just ding on in there, okay? Because this is a little bit more advanced. If you're only in the thoughts, then you're stuck in a sort of concentric trichotomy: the thinker thinking thoughts about something. It's all located here, the three spheres overlapping. As congested as you could get, like that—as small as we could get.

So when the thought is released, there could be a feeling of me still sitting here—a subjectivity—a sense of a reference point. And in meditation, if we release all focus on objects or thoughts or feelings, then you may come to find that this is just here, this reference point. You cannot really notice this, recognize this, if you're stuck in thoughts, in that constant current of proliferation. So to be fair, you cannot demand freedom then. If you're drinking the caffeine every day and knowing that it's speeding up your mind, knowing that it's pulling on your emotions and knowing that it's messing up your body, you can't demand freedom—you can expect no freedom till you get over it.

I don't know how people do the two, three cups stuff because I notice just slightly the nervous system in my stomach even when I'm not on coffee. I could just get a little nervous or something and boom, it's clenching my organs. You know, I just personally, I can't do it, but either way, I'm not going to go on an anti-caffeine rant here; I think I've done that enough. And by the way, there are no rules. There are only guidelines and advice, but it is a little bit tragic to never get out of that thought current because it just keeps going and going. There's no space in between the thoughts.

Would you feel sad if you saw a little mousey that was doped up on some kind of drug and it just ran in circles and circles and circles? It couldn't stop running into circles? You would feel sad for this mouse. So really coming out of the thought proliferation, ruminations, whatever, is the key to notice the cognition—the cognitive basis. I recently quoted, I think it was David Bohm, quantum physicist, who said that if thought is the foundation of reality, then we ought to start doing something about thought. I was like, "Wow, quantum physicist, he even hasn't seen awareness," which would be the real basis of reality. But he's so much in his thoughts that he thinks thinking, that thoughts are the basis—which they are the basis for a lot of creation. That's why people are so interested in your thoughts and which thoughts you're having. They need you to be on their

collective page in order for their illusory realities to come true. God forbid you think for yourself.

So we have these three spheres here and that's what's self-liberating. That is what we place in the state of cessation. *Rangdrol* in Tibetan: self-liberation. So if I abide here now, talking to a whole bunch of people, maybe I have some insecurities come up about speaking or my tone of voice or the words that I'm choosing. As I'm speaking to you, this is visible. I can let it come and go instead of making a deal about it.

And make no mistake, a real awareness practitioner embraces their anger, their jealousy, their pride, their confusion, their insecurities. We say thank you. I'm the first to see it. First and foremost, because you have a lot of people out there that love to chastise you and say, "Look how angry you are. Look how bad of a practitioner you are." And you could say, "I know. I see it even more than you see it."

Nobody should be psychoanalyzing you unless you have scheduled an appointment with them. That is for you to do as awareness practitioners. Awareness is constantly psychoanalyzing without effort. So we enter the stream of cessation. You understand? Why I don't get on board with Nirodha Samāpatti being a zombie state? Because we actually go into that kind of stuff—we witness great cessation, great self-liberation happening within the view.

So not only can somebody like me who just wanted to get away from their trauma, just wanted to heal some wounds—but I also get this magical freedom that's coming along that I didn't expect actually. I was incredibly skeptical, perhaps even cynical. Yeah, thankfully the Dharma is holding up to its name. It's the truth.

So that's where we get into this reference point, the subjectivity. It's not for everybody. That is your safety mechanism. That is your eggshell. That is your comfort zone. When that starts to go away and your stories and your identities go away, you're going to lose everything that you thought you were—which is a bunch of negativity usually. We don't think so good about ourselves. I just didn't want

to hurt anymore, but I ended up finding lineage, luminosity, friends.
Freedom.

Recorded February 9, 2026.



May
all
beings
benefit