So, today is Martin Luther King Day. And just wondering what I could talk about today. I was very happy that last year when we had Martin Luther King Day, Alan Sanok, he came and gave a talk, mostly reading, I think, speeches from Martin Luther King. And, and I thought perhaps of saying something about Martin Luther King's teachings on non violence. It seems quite fascinating, quite marvelous that one of the secular saints of the United States, in that, you know, we have a holiday after him is one of the great champions of the 20th century champions of non violence. And it's nice that America has someone like that there's a cultural same cultural hero cultural role model for the power in the value of non violence. I've given talks about Buddhist teachings and non violence in the past. And so now I didn't quite sit for the talk about that. But what I wanted, what I decided to do is not quite directly liberated Martin Luther King, but it's a talking about fear. And that was a little more up for me as a topic. And there are definitely seen the connection because the kind of work that Martin Luther King did, and the kind of thing that he was advocate for, I think requires coming to terms with fear, or somehow not being limited by fear. And one of my first interests in Buddhism was when I was in college, where I was a pacifist in a time when people like men like my age were being drafted for Vietnam. And so there's a lot of active discussions in the dorm college dorms about war and violence and non violence and civil disobedience, nonviolent action. And in being a pacifist in these very kind of 10 times and very active conversations we used to have became very clear to me that if I was going to fall through my ideals of pacifism, I would have to be willing to put my life on the line. For example, doing some act of civil disobedience. And, and I was very acutely aware of how afraid I was doing that. So I felt bad about my inability to live my ideals because of my fear. And that was one of my, one of my first doors to Buddhism then was that at all, I was looking for some way to deal with that fear to come to terms with it. So it wouldn't limit my past might be from limit living the life that I want to live. And somehow I settled on Buddhism as being as offering the tools, the skills, the practices, that would help me come to terms with that fear. I haven't tested it in that kind of screen way. So I don't know whether how well Buddhism has done that done for me since That quest that ideal. I would like to think that I'm
less afraid than I was some 30 years ago. I do remember so also, I mean, some almost 30 years ago reading a study. I don't know how good a study it was. But the study was correlating people's different kind of people, different religious affiliations, different life experience, people had to see people's relative fear of death. And among the people who had the least fear of death, were people who meditated a lot. It didn't specify what kind of meditation but I thought that was very interesting that meditation somehow has an impact on our fear and something as deep and and, you know, says the fear of death. So fear, as we know, is a very popular emotion and it seems to be Relatively pervasive. I've come across a couple of people in my life who seemed to be without fear. And one of them seemed to have a lot of conceit with that. So I don't know where the balance was and what's good. And, and others seem seemingly born that way. I don't know why some people are that way. And some people, most people are not. Some people, of course, have a lot more fear than others. And there's many causes and conditions for that. In about seven years ago, Dharma see tape library, which is the nonprofit organization that gathers together all the Dharma tapes of all the big vipassana teachers in America and then distributes them sells them and now they're all available for free if you exchange exchange for a donation. They sent me the list of their top 10. Selling tapes for that year in 1995, or

And one of the surprises for me was to say that of those top 10 Best Selling tapes, four of them had to do with fear. And he's, you know, very important issue for people.

And then in thinking about fear, first certainly felt to be assured little bit that it was a good topic since I thought chances are the 90% of you, at least have some really some haven't have to deal with fear in some way or other. And so something that's common to all of us, most of us but in thinking about it, I also was thinking about how complex it is. It's there's so many different kinds of fear and so many different things we're afraid of, and so many different ways of understanding fears. Like you could write a dictionary, you know, all kinds of different kinds of fear words for fear. We have, you know, worry, I don't know if maybe there's even lighter words than worry, but worry and maybe concern I'm concerned, we say, on the light end of what we're being afraid, and then there's worry. And then there's fear and there's anxiety and there's terror and panic. And there's probably other good words to in the fear camp.

It may be a surprise to some of us, some of you that in Buddhism, fear by itself is not considered in and of itself is not judged or catalog, categorized, categorized as an unhelpful emotion is an unwholesome emotion. Whereas I think many times in the west to kind of automatically assumption is oh fears, wrong or bad in some way. I shouldn't be afraid. And there are there's a helpful fear in Buddhism and unhelpful fear the most common helpful fear is called fear of doing wrong, or fear of moral transgression, fear of doing something that will cause us to feel somehow. You know, like we violated our own integrity. So like you go up against the edge of maybe worrying, you know, doing some some transgression, hurting someone to our speech or stealing or hitting someone or something. And you see Oh, and there's a kind of recoiling from that, that kind of fear, oh, the
consequences of that are not only bad for the other people, but bad for myself and just kind of healthy
kind of fear that's connected to conscience, fear of conscience. And then Buddhism, this kind of
conscience is called the guardian of the world. It's considered very important, what prevents people
from doing all kinds of horrible things to each other. The unhelpful fears What many of us are most
many of us are most familiar with. And unhelpful fear is often in modern psychological terms
connected with imagination. It's we imagine something is going to happen in the future, when there's
actually no fear, nothing to be afraid of actually present in the present. If some of you are sitting here
in this room afraid of mountain lions coming into this hall, you have a very active imagination. And it's
your imagination which is producing that fear. And so psychotherapists will point out that a lot of the
anxiety that people feel some psychotherapists will say that anxiety in itself involves our imagination
and projection into the future of what might happen. And some people have stronger imaginations
about that than others. But a tremendous amount of difficulty arises for people from how they use their
imagination, imagination being a great tool that opens a lot of wonderful doors for us, but also closes
others, especially with the help of fear. And there are many things to be afraid of. There's a fear of
pain, of separation of loss of rejection, of failure, of solitude, of death of strangers, of walking alone at
night, going to the cities, going to the suburbs, going into the countryside, fear of illness, food, fear of
food, different kinds of foods, fear of others, all kinds of ways, fear of heights, fear of ourselves. Fear
of fear, red wines that some person defined anxiety as the fear of fear. I don't know if that works, but
that was interesting idea, at least fear of fear for some people is quite debilitating. Then there's also
the kind of fear that fear concerning other people. Some parents have the fear of the children, or
children have fear for their parents wanting their parents well being, especially as the parents get older
perhaps. When my son was younger, I don't forget two and a half or something three, he seemed to
have been a little bit tuned in to death earlier than most young children. And at some point, he was
concerned that his parents were going to die before him, you know, before him or something, you
know. And that was a fear of his fear for your parents. biggest fear of lost their fear for our friends or
family, fear of our country, fear the state of the world. There's a lot of things to be afraid of in the world
we live in, and people carry a lot of fear. There are people I know now who, who will turn on the radio
to listen to the news to find out if there's been some terrorist attack. They're just kind of things carrying
things out. with them, and they will find out make sure nothing's happened. And any of you do that?
I've heard it. I've talked to people and done that do that open newspaper with some trepidation in a
way that maybe you didn't do two years ago.

So what are the benefits? And what are the costs? What are the harms of being afraid? And are there
times when it's useful to be afraid at times when it gets in our way? And it's pretty easy to think of
situations where fear might be useful. And the kind of things people will say is, oh, it's good to be
afraid of, you know, big truck coming barreling down at you. When you're in the middle of the street
crossing, crossing the road, or good things be afraid of mountain lions when the mountain lions
actually there are good things to be afraid of heights, you know, if you're standing with, you know, with
your toes over the edge of halftone. Though, I've also heard that maybe that kind of fear is overrated
because in a situation of great danger, which is actually real danger. Some people report that they
don't care. They're not afraid at that time. They seem to know what to do something clicks, and they

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somehow do the right thing. And afterwards, they're afraid. So that justification that fear is useful.
because it keeps us kind of on our toes, it keeps things you know, you know, maybe that's good. But
we have to, I think we need to look at a little bit lightly because of the, you know, often when there is
real danger, the system seems to click in, in a way. And maybe what's required is not constant fear,
but constant mindfulness. Be more mindful and vigilant, be aware presence. In the teachings of the
Buddha, mindfulness is considered to be a protecting force. In function, one of the functions of
mindfulness the guard us, guard, the person who's mindful what are the What are the costs of fear?
What are the problems of fear and probably all of you can feel in your own body, your shoulders, your
stomach, your stress levels, the cost that fear has. But, you know, fear certainly can be inhibiting. If we
can hold back, and in that form, it can be a lost freedom. You know, we have maybe we are free to
some degree to act, or to speak in certain ways, but we're afraid to and so we hold we don't even
exercise our freedom. It can cost lost relationships. We don't even create building relationships
because we're afraid of being in relationships. It can cost us love. I've known people who've been
afraid to love because of the pain that's potentially possible. In the disappointment of love that can
happen. in various ways people become close they shut down because they're afraid they get stuck.
Chronic fear You know, crises creates a tremendous amount of stress on the whole system, but also
predisposes us to be more afraid to be afraid again, to walk around being afraid. And I one of the one
of the interesting things that happens to people when they meditate a lot, especially like if you go on
retreat, is we've been tracking our mental processes seeing much more clearly what's going on. And
we're not being so distracted by entertainment by friends, all the things we have to do and all kinds of
things and use really see what's going on in your own mind. And some people that are become really
surprised at how pervasive their fear is. I hadn't I people come to me said, I had no idea how
pervasive my fear was. I'm always afraid. It's a very subtle level but it's always there operating always
there kind of vigilant and concerned and worried about something that Oh, no, no, we sure what I'm
worried about interest worried. You know, it's kind of always there kind of hovering in the background.
Chronic fear Oh another benefit of fear, which is almost rises together with unhelpful fear. Almost
anything which is unhelpful in Buddhism can become helpful if you know how to pay attention to it.
Isn't that great? That's why sometimes to talk about using everything as you know, as compost, you
can compost anything. And but fear is like on retreat, for example. You know, you're in the valley, one
of the safest places you're ever going to be sitting on some of these Buddhist retreats. And people
come there and talked about how safe it is, you know, they leave their wallet, you know, in the ground,
and it's there when you come back or someone collects it. And if people don't lock their doors, I've had
people come in to come tell me so this is the first time I've ever been in an environment where I felt so
safe where I didn't have to feel like I had to lock my door before when I came in left and anytime and it
is very so it's a relatively safe environment, though spirit rock does have mountain lions. And people
have seen them out there. And it's one of the environments where I've seen people terrified.

People have come, you know, to the teachers, you know, asking for help, because the cookie pail and
sweating and having panic attacks are completely petrified. And, you know, it's a safe environment
and the fear arises in this safe environment. Why is fear there? The strength of the fear that we have
the strength of the fear we have that comes from imagination of imagining things or anxiety, the

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greater the strength of the fear, the greater the opportunity is, to go into the fear and understand some very deep attachment to holding pattern, some very deep aspect of who we are, that needs to be transformed, that can be transformed. It's almost like fear is showing us our rowing edge. And so one of the benefits of tuning into your fear is to see Oh, this is my growing edge. This is where I can this is where I should tune into and pay attention. So then the question is, how do we practice with fear? How do we tune in tune into it? How do we compost our fear? How do we bring it in? Where's the compost bin? What do we do with it? And I think the first thing is a willingness to be present for it. That's like 90% of it. And fear is often something we're not willing to be present for this kind of a running away from fear. Fear Itself is a message sometimes to run away or close down, shut down. But to but to be willing to be present for it, to be willing to stop for it to see it. Not to turn away from it. It said in a distant in a suttas that before the Buddha was enlightened, he made a vow that if fear rose in his practice, he will continue doing whatever he was doing until he saw through the fear. So if he was doing doing sitting meditation, he would just sit until the fear somehow passed. He was doing walking meditation, he would walk until fear passed. So somehow he just kind of be with it, look at it, stay with it with a fear. So willingness to see it as a subject worthy of attention and investigation. And this is counterintuitive, I think many of us it's counterintuitive to go towards the pain to go towards the fear and actually look at it much more clearly and deeply. And what happened we learned is that often enough focusing and observing fear will disarm it. And then greater skills you have learning to focus and observe the observer and what's going on the probably the greater the disarming effect the practice will have on your fear. One of the things that I found very helpful with fear, which is a classic be passionate thing to do, is in observing it is to name it. And sometimes when I'm afraid, like I'm sitting in a conversation with someone and for some reason, I'm starting feeling a bit anxious or afraid in the conversation for some reason or other. I can be aware of it and know it's there. But if I might, in my mind, name it Oh, this is fear. Here it is fear. There's that naming of it actually becomes a more fully embodied or fully fully fully acknowledgment of it. So I like to stay things to stay you know, stating what it is makes it much more disarms it are kind of clearly kind of, I see it more clearly then or hold it or I feel it more, you know, it's like, oh, there it is. So naming it just fear or anxiety, naming, naming and whence they're naming it a few times. Oh, here it is, fear, anxiety. Once fear has been acknowledged, once we stop and look at it and be willing to look at it Then there's a number of different approaches a person can do around the fear, different strategies that person might have. One of them might be to realize that maybe it's not helpful to pay attention to your fear anymore, sometimes fear, you know, it gets onto a loop that creates panic attacks. And if you feel yourself kind of going into one of these loops, then perhaps the wise thing is not to pay attention to the fear anymore, but to do something that breaks the trance to break the cycle. But you know, if you really have learned to stop and pay attention to the fear enough, so you can see that, then perhaps you can have a wise relationship to it.

One of the otherwise thing you can do around fear is simply continue being aware of it. It doesn't have to be any further strategies of try to fix it or manipulate it or go through it. It just simply Oh, here it is, and I'm going to hold it in my awareness, however long it's going to be here. Remember that awareness and love are very closely connected. If you bring awareness to something like fear, it's like bringing awareness maybe even with the little mantra. He says it's okay. It's okay. Mr. Joseph
Goldstein was saying that you have a fearful you know, fearful five year old shows up. You don't try to say, you know, stop being afraid or go away into not afraid or, you know, I don't like you because you're afraid, you know that that just adds, you know, wound upon the wound. What you do is you tell the five year old Oh, it's okay. It's okay. So sometimes we need to do that for ourselves to our own fear, just to hold it very gently in awareness. Maybe have this mantra, it's okay. It's okay. But doesn't have to be even wisdom or the mantra simply holding things with awareness and learning how to hold it without being for or against it without trying to do something with it without hating it without fighting it. Because one of the one of the things that happens is that if we Fight or fear, if we hate our fear, we're actually fighting and hating part of ourselves. And generally, that's not a very useful strategy for most of us. So can we find a way not to be at war with ourselves have a nonviolent approach to what we see within ourselves to see your fear. So simply hold it in awareness. It's just doing that can be phenomenally healing, though it's not healing necessarily, that quickly that requires patience. Um, the other thing that another strategy around fear is to learn to relax around it to find some way to relax the body relax something and sometimes you know, for example, if their stomach is tense if you're afraid to relax the stomach or relax the shoulders or relax different parts of your body. If relaxation of the body's available, it can have a big impact and taking the sting away from Fear. Somehow in the body is tense, there's a way in which the unconscious or that's the right word, but the way what we've become less conscious when the body is tense and holding, and become more conscious my experience as I learned to relax my body, so finding ways of relaxing the body in relationship to the fear, one of the classic ways of doing that is to breathe, breathe deeply, have long explanations and panic attacks, they teach people to breathe, don't think. But there are other ways of relaxing, besides, you know, physical relaxation for Buddhists. So for someone who has a deep kind of heartfelt connection to the Buddhist tradition, taking refuge is a form of relaxing, kind of taking refuge in that which is you as what you can deeply trust. So you're finding that what you can really deeply trust and kind of rest there. But that kind of, then it's easier to be with a fear. If you're taking refuge in something deeply your trust, taking refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, taking refuge in that practice. For me, there are times when situations are very challenging. And I don't know how to respond I don't know how to do what to do. Sometimes even as a teacher I'm that way sometimes people come on retreat for mostly in retreat, but sometimes outside with a very difficult to personal circumstances. And know that always so clear to me what to do. And it's not always so clear for me, you know what I could offer or what to do or how to help the situation. But I trust the practice. And so I'll try to practice as best I can in that situation. And which means being present to the situation being present to what's going on within me and with the other person, being honest with what what's going on. Be mindful, hopefully being compassionate, hopefully not being in opposition to anybody or what was going on and Over and over again I found I find that the practice somehow finds its way in these situations. So for me, you know the practice of taking refuge in the practice in the Buddha Dharma Sangha is helpful in situations sometimes where I might be afraid.

Compassion is another form of relaxing or holding fear, to feel compassion for oneself compassion for the situation, to meet the situation, meet ourselves meet our suffering with in a compassionate way. And remember the resource of compassion in the midst of fearful times. One of the ways to feel
compassion is to realize the universality of fear. We many of us will take our fear so personal, it just it's all about me myself And mine's my fears my situation. And it's not even personal sometimes the fear so universal aspect of being a human being, and if you realize the universal aspect of it sometimes can be easier to be more compassionate more open to it more and not be oppressed by it not feel like it's a personal failure. Another strategy around fear, which is one that is often taught in Southeast Asia, in the Buddhist circles there is to strengthen the mind. And primary way of strengthening the mind is through developing a concentrated mind. So here in the West and the Vipassana teachings in the West, there's a kind of much more of a psycho analytical, analytical kind of approach. Well, let's go into it and understand it really well. It almost kind of be therapy, like therapy kind of going in and understanding it. But in Asia, where they don't have very strong therapeutic. They're psychotherapeutic like a logical approach to practice. There's a very strong emphasis on kind of avoiding it, in a sense, knowing it's there, of course, but then trying to develop a strong enough concentration, so that you override the fear They're always wonderful stories of monks, and perhaps nuns who would go out into the forest and sit there intentionally waiting for the mountain lions to come back then in Thailand, the Tigers and these great stories of at least the ones who survived, they, you know, they will write about it and how great it was. And you know how they sat there and they close their eyes and they could feel the breath of the tiger and, and that's why they say, you know, this is how I'm going to die then let me die. And, and I'm going to just going to go camping, dusting, I'm going to die anyway, I just won't die in the Dharma. And so and so they would just kind of zero in on the breath that just released be focused and tried to develop that concentration, and then feel very happy with themselves. When their concentration in the breath became strong enough it overrode their fear. This is a little maybe aside, but there's a wonderful English terabyte monk by the name of john su Cheeto. He's Kind of like the second in CMOS senior monk in England after john cemento and some years ago he did a pilgrimage in India we was going to walk around India he's going to walk in in Bihar state of Bihar which is weird guy well reported by a lot of important food sites are are good guy is we Buddha was enlightened. Now that particular countryside around there is known for its banditry and so it's not a kind of place you usually want to go out at night, and it's not the kind of place you want to go out at night by yourself. But he was a Buddhist monk and he felt that he was protected. So he he had an attendant with him a layman, and they were walking around in Bihar at or after night or walking by themselves. And sure enough, the local bandits showed up and confronted them I think with long swords or something and certainly with weapons of some sort or other and I don't know Cheeto just the degree calmly and apparently said or thought to himself this is how I'm gonna die at least you know this is good way of dying I suppose. And his attendant runaway and then from the bushes far away kind of felt bad about he's supposed to be the attendant who's helping and protecting the monkey so he ran back and gotten a scuffle with the bandits for a while and ran away again Bruce and an audience that you don't know exactly how to store and what he did literally but he in some way or other he got on his knees or did something and kind of put his head out and say here, I'm ready and these guys were so impressed by this, you know fearlessness of this monk and so they spared us Life. But the only other thing they spared was his under rope was kind of like a like a slip. And so everything was taken away from him. Besides the slip, he had to walk into town and slip.
So the Asian way of kind of just developing a strong mind, and it shouldn't be undervalued. Because I think sometimes I feel here in the West, some of us at least are some of the messages we get. There's a lot of emphasis on relaxation, letting go letting go of what you're holding on to, and not a lot of emphasis on developing qualities of the mind to become stronger and stronger. And it may brings me back to Martin Luther King, where he talked about soul force borrowing a term from Mahatma Gandhi, and where he championed the idea that you can develop the software so you want to rely on it.

develop his tremendous inner strength, that your soul force your truth and your ability to confront situations be greater than the force of the other person's violence. And, you know, he, I think the whole civil rights movement was training a lot of people in how to become strong, developing inner strengths that changed America. And so, part of Buddhist practice is not just letting go not just but also developing strengths. strength of character we can say, strength, concentration, strength of honesty, strength of personal integrity or virtue, strength of compassion and equanimity, strength of patience, a lot of different strengths that can be developed with practice. The next kind of important strategy, which is very much in line with the mindfulness teachings is to investigate the fear. So certain more than more than just simply hold it in awareness, but really get in there and explore it. What is this fear of mind? How does it manifest Where, how do I experience it? What's goes on when I'm afraid and there are many different things to investigate when you investigate fear. I find it very helpful to investigate my fear in my body, and to drop into my body with my fear, feel what's going on my body to feel the sense of tightness or tension or weakness or vulnerability that I might feel in my body when I'm afraid. And it's interesting to watch different places that nobody they react to fear, maybe depending on the kind of fear that it is. And it makes it more interesting to kind of, you know, how where's it today, the chest or the stomach or the hands or the shoulders or the face or the jaws or the lips or the eyes or the legs or, you know, it could be anywhere right? And one of the one of the values of experiencing fear in the body is going to actually be a lot easier for many people to be present for fear. When you feel your body like the body becomes kind of the place to ground the attention. The body is not another story, the body is not another imaginary idea of what might happen to you. The body is, you know, as much more concrete and sort of to drop into the body and Feel it. Feel the fear in the body can make it a lot easier to process it and to hold it to bring presence to it. We can also investigate the thoughts around the fear, we can explore is my imagination operating here. Is there really a mountain lion here? Or am I thinking there might be a mountain lion here next Monday because Gail keeps talking about it? Sure. This means it's not safe to come here next Monday, or whatever, you know, it kind of look what's going on here to really stop and really look as honestly as you can. And this also is a skill that we developed to become stronger over time. The skill to be able to turn the attention to look at our cognitive patterns or beliefs or thoughts and it builds over time, just kind of look and begin investing. Exploring what's going on here. What are my thoughts? What am I thinking? What am I believing here? What are the assumptions underlying this particular fear? Who told me? On what upon what authority? Do I believe what I believe around this? You know, why believe these things to do a kind of cognitive exploration of this both silently in terms of mindfulness, but also actively in with reflections and thoughts and massaging it What's going on here?
One of the great skills that incites develop with mindfulness practice is that you don't have to believe your thoughts. And I think people are on initiated to the world of self reflection. Often every thought is to be believed. And when you realize you don't have to believe your thoughts, you can take them or leave them as you wish. It's very empowering, very freeing. One of the Ideas is, realize your thoughts are not you. If you don't identify where your thoughts don't take this, this, these thoughts are me define who I am, then you can have thoughts, various kinds of bizarre thoughts, and then you're not going to be hooked by them as much thing just pass through and you're not going to be much problems. One of the realizations is to realize that fear itself doesn't define who you are, and not equate fear with you. So it's not my fear, but the fear can be very freeing sometimes, and to realize that, you know, because there's a kind of a contraction, that kind of holding around when it's my fear. Also, when we have knee involved in it, then we start to sway one of the investigations into fear to thoughts, the ideas, the assumptions or beliefs around it, is that often we'll discover that this part of our fear can be related to our sense of self, or self image, how we want to represent ourselves in the world, how we think we need to be in the world, in order to be safe, how we need to show ourselves to the world who we need to be, we need to be kind, we need to be smart, we need to be non revealing. You know, if I really show people who I am, people are not going to, you know, accept me. And this is one this is where the great panic I've seen on retreats arises among some people is to realize that our attachment to self attaching to self image, the attachment to the way in which we're trying to present ourselves to other people and to ourselves is a fiction. And that needs to be let go of, if we want to be free is to be let go of, and to come up against that edge we see the possibility of letting go of that particular clinging and not be familiar, not feel safe in that realm beyond self definition, self image, we orient ourselves organize ourselves in a relationship to others in our world through various kinds of ideas that we hold on to and cling to. And we start letting go those clings, then we don't have the same or any reference points anymore for, like, Who am I? And how am I supposed to be with people around me. And it can be very frightening until a person gets used to just kind of street smarts and learns to relax and learns to the benefits of taking that great leap beyond self image and self representation, self definition, as a way that we cling to and hold on to. I remember very well for me, the point where I came in my practice where I could really clearly see what I needed to do was always beat what practice is asking me to do in terms of letting go certain ways in which I was holding myself in the world and carrying myself and being in the world and talking to people in the world. And not quite being able to do it because I was afraid Oh, I can't do that. And you know, right you know, you know, for you know, took quite a while to writing that edge and taking little baby steps beyond and kind of testing the waters rushing back and kind of exploring that. For me, it was very helpful to be on retreats. Because what happens on retreats, there's Vipassana retreats, like silent retreats, there's so little social interaction. And in so much of the sense of self is often related to how we relate to other people and comparative thinking and all that, that it was a very safe place for me to just let go, let go, let go, let go of all these holdings that I had, and find out how to be in a very open and clinging way without definition needing to be anything for anybody.

So I think any spiritual practice that involves personal transformation, will sooner or later, bring a person up against the edge of fear. So you should know that maybe we should advertise that, you
know, we have the big stuff upside This is Inight Meditation Center winter This is a common be afraid I
guess no one would come then. And but hopefully you have a sense that the great value of coming
being come and be afraid the value of doing that because coming be afraid means the possibility of
potential interfere is to go beyond it to learn how to go through with resolve it to, to not have it stand in
the way either because it goes away which you can or because it no longer has a sting. We can learn
how to act in the world and actually in spite of it without it bothering us because we are grabbed by it.

So I would challenge you in various ways here today this weekend. One way is to challenge you all to
stop and pay more attention to your fear. Give it more serious attention and ease. In the subtle fears
that arise it, because what happens on retreat is that people say, Oh, it was also subtle. I didn't really
notice it in daily life. It's so pervasive and so central to how my whole personality of how I see myself
in the world now I act. Chief, you tune in to the subtlety of your fear. The other thing I challenge you to
do is to question the assumption, that fear your fear is helping you to keep helping to keep you safe. If
it's not helping you to keep you safe, then you should be afraid of it. Then, you know, maybe it doesn't
have you know, much real important function. Remember, the Buddha said that mindfulness is the
great protector. And then please remember compassion. Remember, have compassion for other
people who are afraid have compassion for as you realize how much unhealthy behavior in the world
arises from people who are afraid. How much of the violence that we see in the world arises because
people are afraid. Hopefully as we begin to be, honestly face our fear, we will understand other people
at the level of their fear maybe ways they don't even understand. And so we can be more
compassionate to the suffering of even the people who produce who perpetuate violence in this world
of ours. And certainly compassion for ourselves. The world needs people who are fearless, and the
world needs people who are compassionate and what better role model for compassion and
fearlessness than Martin Luther King. So May we all take the best of his And let that inspire us as we
go forth in our practice in our lives. And I hope that this has been helpful talk, if any of it has not been
helpful, leave it here. And also try to have fun with your fear. See if you can enjoy it. enjoy practicing
with it, investigating it. Enough. Thank you very much.