

2009-01-11 Sense of Self

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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

So good morning, everyone.

But last week, I gave a talk on the Four Noble Truths, which centers around clinging, grasping with the idea that one side if you claim you'll suffer, and the other side if you let go of clinging, you'll be free of that suffering. Today I want to talk about one of the very primary forms of clinging that people have. And that's clinging to self. And some people even argue that it's the most fundamental, most basic clinging. I don't think that Buddhism says it's the most basic, but it's among the most basic and for often provides the cornerstone of a lot of other attachments. And if you pull out that Cornerstone, the edifice of many attachments will crumble. There was a cartoon I saw many years ago. Calvin and Hobbes, Calvin's walking along, and it's he's underneath a magnificent night sky is awesome. And he's there this beautiful, open, natural setting and comes to one panel and he with great confidence expressed in great confident body language, He kind of looks up into the sky and says, I am significant. And then he walks along. And then the last panel is body language is that of kind of kind of despair collapse or kind of being really small, hunched over. And he whispers, said, the dust mote.

So one is self assertion, and the other is self deprecation. And some people's lives oscillate between those two.

The issue of self, here today is not so much the philosophical issue of Is there a self or not a self. But it has to do with the issue of clinging to our ideas of self, what is self. And one of the places where in my life where that really got highlighted for me, was from myself was when I was living at a Zen monastery in Japan. And my Japanese was pretty basic. At that point, I was still learning Japanese. And, and so when I spoke Japanese, I tended to speak Japanese as you would speak English, rather than how you would be if you're Japanese, and one of the things became clear to me when I was there was an English we use a lot of pronouns, we use a lot of pronouns. And in Japanese tend to be pronoun shy, or they don't use a lot of pronouns that often. And the pronoun of the sentence, the person, the subject of the sentence is understood in context. So if you're walking out the door, and you say, in English, you say I'm leaving. In Japanese you'd be you just say leaving and you know, you're the ones leaving so you don't need to add to I just that's clear enough. And so, there is a way in Japanese of saying I, so if it's needed, if the context is not enough, of course you can add it in. But it's kind of not used that often. And when it is used, the word for I is three syllables long. And you have to use. Usually when you use it that those three syllables, you have to add at the end of it to kind of know what the grammatical term is, but this word that connects that to the rest of the sentence, which is the word wa. So you have to end up saying four syllables. And in English, when it's translated when it's translated to English, but Japanese use of Watashi wa, it's usually translated to some like, as for me, so it's a little cumbersome,

you know, garante, as for me, I'm really I'm leaving. As for me. So here I was in Japan is monastery, trying to speak Japanese. And I don't notice, after a while that most of my sentences began with Watashi wa. And it stood out like a sore thumb. And, and I just couldn't, you know, it's very hard for me to stop talking about the way because there was such a strong habit in English to refer to I I think this I think that you know, and, and so I stood out for me, how much of my language was self referential? And, and that became an interesting area of study what's going on here with me. Why so? And why was it was it needed? And when I tried to not be self referential, I felt kind of a little disoriented. I mean it you know, if I stopped, I didn't use the pronoun, like, Where do I where am I in this was a little awkward. So I found that a very interesting area of study in myself. And then we came to come to meditation, of course, of course, but at least for some of us, it's interesting to notice how much of one's thinking is self referential, as well. And in fact, I think many people find it, if they tell it, what they're thinking about, one way or the other. what they think about is mostly self referential. When he was with me or my relationship to others, or what happened to me or what, what I want or some wonderful fantasy where we're an actor in the fantasy or

So there's nothing inherently wrong with starting sentences with AI nothing inherently wrong with having thoughts, which are your the main subject of the drama. But it is certainly it is certainly worth it certainly worth looking at. And looking at what motivates that, what prompts that and what goes on, with a self concern with this self assertion, whatever. And in this regard, it's Buddhism had this very interesting teaching about conceit, that there are three kinds of conceit in Buddhism, the usual kind of conceit that I'm special, I'm better than someone else. And then there's a conceit that I'm worse than someone else. And sometimes in Buddhist circles, it's pointed out that people who are very, very shy have Have a lot of self, a lot of self identity. And that goes a little bit against the usual idea of somebody who's shy, who maybe doesn't check, or that person doesn't have much self, it's kind of like, you know, shy is kind of like withdrawn. But to have that energy in that activity of being withdrawn or shy or hesitant, sometimes sometimes comes along with a very strong sense of AI that we're trying to protect, we don't want to be, you know, be threatened or something. So one form of conceit then is to consider oneself less than others. And a third kind of conceit is that we're equal to others. And which is a, you know, a great American ideal, we're all equal. And now we're told that it's a conceit. So what's left and what's left is actually very significant. And what's left is don't play the comparison game. So don't compare yourself to others. And just kind of live your life without that comparison. So if you need to walk down the road, or Calvin walk across the mountaintop with a great sky to neither assert, I'm significant or the assert that I'm insignificant, but rather simply walk. And then they say when you walk you walk you know doctor compare you're walking to others, my walking well my walking poorly and all that kind of stuff. The my, kind of, tongue in cheek definition of self is that self is when the drag, lift, you put out your hand in the car and you create wind drag. you assert the self drags you down. Drag slows you up. So there's many ways in which people so itself, and one of them is to be somebody. People want to be somebody in fact, we're supposed to be somebody was a grew up and become something. In a sense, in many ways, it's quite expected and appropriate to grow up and some have roles and work and activities we do. But there's also a lot of clinging to being somebody. So the example maybe I've given before is that of when I was in seventh grade, and our teacher told me he had no artistic talent. And it never occurred to me that I even should have artistic talents. And I didn't care by artistic talent or not, but here this authority figure had told me I had none. So it must be the case. And so I didn't bother me. I one bit, but, but I took it on as part of my identity. Oh, I'm a kind of that kind of person. Thanks to this In this great teacher and until I was kind of tricked into doing art by my born again, artist roommate in college, and I started doing a lot of art. So much so that I took art classes and became an art major.

Mostly I became an art major so I can get into the art classes that require you to be in the major wasn't like I was planning to be. I wasn't that was kind of deceitful. I suppose. I was just going to take those

classes. So I became an art major for a while. But then it became this magic day where I decided that I was now an artist. And it's kind of an amazing story. It's hard to believe perhaps, but this is how it worked. is the day that I decided I was going to be an artist was the day I stopped doing art. Because somehow in my mind, then I had to kind of have to be a certain way I did do it for, you know, for the sake of identity. And I couldn't do it for that reason. And so I kind of stopped that day. And many years later, when I became, was living in Buddhist monasteries, and the creativity was just flowing out of the context of the practice. I started doing some again, but this idea of the identity, you know, someone gave me an identity, which limited me. And then at some point, I assumed an identity. And that also limited me. So, and what's you know, and so what's it like to do art, for example, without an identity, in my particular situation, it worked a lot better, to to look much more enjoyable to do art without being the artist. There's no need to be the artist. You know, what's, you know, if there's a need or if there's a delight or a love, it's doing the art The issue of my better artist and someone else, am I a worse artist and someone else should hopefully be a distant second, distant third, fourth, from just the expression, the delight, the joy, the what comes out for its own sake. So how much of life is lived in comparison, and then its wind drag its limits us, and how much of it is just lived for itself without needing to compare? a huge amount of human suffering arises out of comparative thinking. And a lot of the suffering around being a self being someone also rise out of that movements of comparison. And so to somehow find a way to be present without comparison is very significant. And then, so there's being somebody you can probably consider in your own life ways in which you try to be somebody or ways that someone else tried to assign somebody to you And how that was so limiting, you know, you're someone's spouse or your son or your particular role. And you want to just kind of hit them over the head and say, I'm more than that. Please don't limit me in that kind of way. Then there's also the movement of being nobody. And this is a trap for people sometimes doing Buddhist practice. So, of course, we're not supposed to be somebody, we're supposed to be nobody. So I'm going to be the best nobody around.

And so, you know, that just becomes another way of being somebody that somebody who's nobody. And the dangerous way of doing that is to then start denying parts of who we are letting go of parts of who we are, shouldn't shouldn't be let go of it.

So you know, sometimes we let go. Some people let go their feelings. Well, if I'm nobody, if I'm just empty and radiant, then I'm not supposed to have never supposed to be angry. So we'd let go and we kind of basically deny it. But trying to be nobody walking around, like I haven't had any feelings. And I haven't heard about this for decades, but there was a time in the 70s, where there were usually young, idealistic men who would come back from Asia doing Buddhist practice. And, and they would, you'd ask them how they were. And they would say, oh, there's a lot of energy coursing through this system here. But how are you? Oh, the energy is moving up and left and right. But you and you know, you couldn't get them to say anything about who they were, you know, just how they were feeling. And it just seemed odd. It's like it was kind of like a very, it was Big kind of conceit You know, I'm, you know, I'm not that kind of person. And it wasn't quite human. And they were, you know, they could easily easily have said, I'm fine, thank you. And so there's kind of you know, deny sometimes feelings or denying certain kind of movements within us something people popular forum back then people who had this kind of being nobody ideal was to not deny their sexuality. And it's sometimes pointed out that people who did not deny their sexuality take up as a substitute take up anger. And so, that's another one. So then also or money, you've denied money or deny any kind of self assertion. I know someone who it's a bit irritating to go to restaurants with because what restaurant you'd like to go to. I don't care, whatever you want to do. You know, maybe that person thinks it's jet. They're generous, but you choose. And then when you come to the restaurant, what would you you know, you've time to order Oh, what are you having, you know, what do you order for me? And no ability to, you know, willingness to make a

choice, such simple things or you know, and it's one thing to say, I don't care where we go, it's another thing to say, Well, I think I'd like Thai food, but whatever use whatever you want is fine as well. So to offer something a wish or something to add to the conversation. So kind of deny that my I have needs to deny wishes, and kind of just be there and kind of an empty kind of way can be a very, can be inappropriate as well. We're attached to it. So that these someone is a problem. To be nobody's a problem. And what's the alternative? And for some people, the idea of an alternative seems pretty cool. And so, you know, not only bleak but maybe frightening. I find that in myself. When I look at it like I'm doing now, I assertions and why am I saying I even talking about myself again? Look at that they're questioning it. Or look, you're studying it. I have a variety of emotional responses to it. Depending on this circumstance. Sometimes I'm just tickled by it. There it is again. And it's kind of like, I can't seem to, I can't seem to do without it. And it just kind of like an odd thing. And it's here it is, again, I'm just tickled. Sometimes I'm humored by it. Sometimes I'm irritated by it. Sometimes I'm a little bit anxious by this whole looking at and questioning and wondering about it. Sometimes I feel a little bit guilty about it. Because it feels cool. Here I am again, asserting myself. So there's a whole variety of spectrum of kind of things that can arise. Buddhist practice offers an alternative to being somebody and being nobody. Just like the alternative to being a good artist, or being a bad artist, or being an artist and not being an artist is just doing that artwork just doing that activity. And the alternative that Buddhism Buddhism gives, or at least one of the important alternatives to it, is feeling really good and happy. without it being like being tied to the notion of a self. being tied to ideas or clinging or concepts of this is who I am. This is who I'm not to be free of that, that kind of comparative thinking, that kind of conceptualization and one of the ways to discover this is through a meditation practice.

Meditation practice. As the mind gets calmer, the activity of selfing also calms down. So the idea of needing to be somebody and assert oneself is an activity of the mind. Calvin is doing something when he says I am significant. Calvin's also doing something when he says, collapsing on the ground, it says the dust mote. Both of them are activities of the mind. The mind is thinking certain things, when that activity calms down and we sit in meditation and allow a wellspring of well being to come. Then there's a sense of well being that's free of self assertion or self deprecation, that sense of well being that kind of they are independent of needing to be somebody how many of our feelings arise? Because of our sense of self or ideas of self, and how many feelings and emotions arise, independent of needing to be somebody, it's been pointed out, it's often enough. boredom, especially in social situations, has a lot to do with how we think of ourselves. How we hold ourselves, when people are praising us, praising myself, there's a lot of good energy there. When people are criticizing us, there's a lot of energy, their response when someone is neither praising or criticizing us, when someone doesn't have some kind of role and kind of our self identity. The sad thing is that sometimes we certain people get theirs boredom arises. What about guilt? guilt, often a time arises when the when the self our self definition or self ideas, is guilt is feeling bad, it's wrong and I will As an expert at guilt Gail is short for guilt and so I really saw this very clearly when I was a new Zen student and I would open I felt guilty about the way I opened the door to the meditation hall. I feel guilty about the way I walked across the meditation hall floor you know, it's you know, that's an inch feel guilty about but I was so good at it. And but there was so much self involved so much concern about how the people saw me and, and who I was and what was the right way and the wrong way and all this stuff. I was just kind of completely caught up in this self selfing world. And so, that came then with, for me, it came with guilt. Fear, often how much of fear as well. arises in the context or in relationship to ideas of self self assertion self deprecation how people were people are gonna think about myself, who I am. I think that much fear social fear has to do with our idea of self, our self thing that we're doing. And probably we can go through the list of a variety of different emotions and find an interesting one is joy, or delight or happiness, how much joy and happiness arises because of the idea of self, the selfing idea is, is being successful, is being praised or having good things happening to it.

And what's wrong with that?

There's nothing wrong with that. I have a good good macho identity. Thank you. And I win California, Grand Prize and mazaraki I feel great in my macho self. Thank you. Is he wrong with that having that kind of joy? I think it's when when when when a clinging to self is reinforced by being successful, it reinforces it strengthens it. And it is set up for problems, to set up for it to be disappointed or discouraged or the rug gets pulled out from under it. So be very careful even with even with the joy and that the light that comes in our life, when that joy and delight comes from this kind of clinging to self. There's a whole other series of emotions that can arise or maybe some of the same ones that can arise that don't arise based on self selfing and some of the greatest forms of happiness and peace, joy and love that are available to people are available when they're not playing the selfing game. In fact, the selfing game is a limit limits, the full blooming of some of the most beautiful qualities human being can experience. So meditation can be not always or not necessarily quickly, can be one of the places to discover a sense of well being. That is, doesn't involve the selfing game. And as I started saying earlier, it's because we quiet down the selfing activity. And it takes a while, not so easy. So almost like we have an addiction to something. And, you know, keep pointing keeps wanting to assert itself or do this net or defend itself or do something and to have enough trust in just being alive, just trust just being to be able to let go of the selfing movements, the selfing attempts, takes a while. And but eventually the trust is there, the letting go is there and then maybe they'll be kind of stepped in. go past the maybe the fear the anxiety about not having a self and then find a sense of well being that wells up that comes from a deeper place, more core place inside of us than the place that selfing comes from. In a sense selfing I think is more of a surface phenomena and in relationship in comparison at least to this deeper wellspring of peace and well being. And I use the word wellspring of choice because the Buddha talked about joy and happiness arising from within like a like a refreshing spring flowing into a lake. You have a very steel beautiful lake. And deep below is a natural spring and this water flows up and kind of kind of flows out and spreads across the liquid is refreshing water

So one of the reasons why meditation can be so radical is that, that well being that can happen there becomes a contrast to, to the well being or the lack of well being, that's there from playing the selfing game. And one of the things that you're encouraged to do as meditators is if you start feelings, some modicum of well being or calm or peace is to start appreciating how, how that exists in relationship to selfing in relationship to being self assertive or self deprecating, or having self concern, because you can see could watch Oh, it's kind of like when you have some deeper calm or peace. It can highlight how much we're selling and they can show us An alternative. So it might be easier to notice it when it happens. And be tickled by it or humored by it or a guest. And also then see it as there's no there's no alternative to it. As we begin finding and living more and more in the alternative to selfing, it also gives us a certain kind of power that comes when we haven't given our power to others. Because a lot of the self in game has to do with how we want to be seen by others and recognized by others. And when we we give a lot of power to other people that way, and not being concerned with that anymore, the power comes back here to us. In fact, the the, the early Buddhist texts, they some occasionally will call an enlightened person, a great self Having a great self, you know, like Mahatma Gandhi, the Mahatma, his name is a title it means the great self the Maha ultimate. And, and even back in time of the Buddha they use that phrase and Pali Maha, Maha, great self. So the absence of self doesn't mean that you can, you know, there's a comes as power as well. And that power doesn't mean that we don't care anymore about what other people think of us. And that's part of the danger of all this kind of approach. Oh, now I'm not supposed to have a self I can just be an artist. Come with me. I'm not It must be an artist. I'm not gonna be an artist and I'm not gonna be an artist. I'm just gonna barrel ahead and do art. I'm just gonna go home now and I'm just gonna paint draw, sculpt, and, and well, and who's going to diaper the

kid and make the dinner and pay the taxes. You know, what I've noticed what I say here is that we don't want to let go of consideration about how other people see us and how other people relate to us. It's important feedback, it's important information. It's important to notice how other people are. But it's important to, but it's possible to do it without it. Relating back to our sense of self, and our clinging to self. So it might, someone might think that you're, you're a terrible person. It's good to know that. But you don't have to buy that or take it in or be troubled by it. But it's good to know it. And then you can go talk to them and say, What gives? What's going on here? We'd like to talk about this. Or someone thinks you're a great person. Wow, you're the best. Well, you don't have to question that. You should question you should use it again, you don't take that on as well. You just don't take that on as a coach to where you say, Oh, that's interesting, that's good to know that person sees me that way. Maybe I'll be more cautious now. Or maybe you know, it's, we'll celebrate together a little bit, but I'm not going to pick it up and buy into it, I'll just kind of appreciate that. That's what's going on. So be free of self. Doesn't mean that we don't live in a social world, where we understand how we fit into the social world. But it means that our core happiness and well being is not tied to that social sense of self is not tied, not tied to that social self sense of self. I think there's a greater power to be had. And this becomes very important, especially when so many people so many people's experience in social life is that people are trying to take our power away from us.

People do terrible things to each other in their way they self for us. They put us in selves, prejudice and things. So I think it's a very radical and profound, maybe even revolutionary thing to do to discover wellspring of happiness and peace. That's not dependent on some notion idea of self. So we have about 10 minutes. This is a good time for some of you to either assert yourself or something with your questions, comments, testimonials, or protests about this. So please Hi.

My name is Scott.

People call people call me Carla.

Get some of this, this idea of better than not worse than or equal to one comparison. I'm moved.

I get stuck.

I spend a lot of time learning how to give our messages

when relationships instead of saying

you're just all wrong, or you make me so mad, right?

Are you never listened to instead say, I feel ignored.

I feel upset.

That kind of thing. Great. I think, I think in our current current culture, maybe it'll change when we have, but in our current culture, it seems to work really well to make I statements People are less defensive. It's less attacking just what what this experience here is without some statement interpretation of what's out there. And I advise people to learn that skill of making statements. But it's possible to do that use the word AI, without being fooled by it. Without kind of assuming that there's some kind of reified sense of self here, this is who I really am. So Oh, when you said x, I felt hurt. Without You don't say, Oh, I'm a hurt person. That's who I really am. I'm going to walk around being this identity being hurt, you better

see me as being hurt. And I'm going to prove to you that I'm hurt. And it just, oh, I felt hurt and leave it really simple and light treated as software as opposed to hardware, you know? And so I think it's actually why so we have to learn how to use the word AI. And not be fooled by it. And you see it in teachings or in the discourses of the Buddha. He was quite freely times use the word I and refer to it that way. But you know, just that, you know, we're not fooled by it.

So taillon ending your last statement, it would be using the word AI without ID.

Thank you. Yes.

I'm trying to think of how to phrases. So I understand. It seems a little black and white, but you're saying so, and not. So. I think the self is very complicated and has a lot of components that maybe the Buddha didn't talk about or know about. And I do think it's important to understand all these components of the self without becoming attached to them, but to speak of it as if it's this one thing is a little confusing to me.

So I think it's very wise what you're saying. I think it's very complex, the whole phenomenon itself, the ideas, associations, the social context of self. I think it's a very rich topic to explore and get to know better to do. I think it's important to see there's a very subtle cultural conditioning cultural ideas that are come into how different people understand what it means to be a self. And it's very interesting to go study in different cultures and see have different senses of self that are almost not even conscious of. For example, I also when I was the same monastery in Japan, I woke up one day kind of we every day we did this very intense cleaning of a temp About 20 of these young Japanese men and me, we do a very intense soji cleaning period together. And one day in the middle of doing this, after doing it for a few months with them, I kind of woke up and realized that they were living in different social universe than I was living in. And, and I was living in a universe of independent cells, autonomous, independent selves, individuals, who somehow bumped into each other and worked kind of around each other with each other and all that, but the unit was the self. for them. The unit was the group. And they were elements of the group, this one big hole. And it was it was like, all the different social universe. I had no idea but reading all these people for months, and I had no idea they were living in a different universe that I was living in. I didn't feel like one was bad and one was good, is just different cultural ways. So I think there's a lot to understand about All this, I think it's well worth spending time studying the ideas of self, of our cultural, a personal and all different elements. And maybe you would like to list some of the things of complexity. And at the same time to do that study that work is a lot easier, if you know have a sense of being a presence of peace of well being. That's not dependent on all this self. And but now I'm very interested for you to give me a list of some of the complex elements.

I don't want to give you a list of my complex.

I remember one time you said when Gil speaks Italian it's a different Gil. Gil, Jeff don't know.

What I noticed is there are times it's

certain certain things glom around

there's a bunch of cells

And you can respond from a very different

I don't know why. And I don't know if it's true of everybody, but I think that, that there's not one self you're working with most, maybe, at least I'm not.

I think that's what Buddhism would say is that there is no nothing, there's nothing, no one thing nothing and no congruent kind of the word consolidated, very thing, things, which qualify as the self enduring, permanent, lasting kind of self, that if at the best, what is considered self is a constantly shifting and morphing, phenomena that changes and morphs, morphs based on the situation we're in. And so who I am, changes and I'm very aware of that my sense of self the way I am as a person changes and morphs, sometimes subtly, sometimes in big way. And so dimension one, for example. That's maybe what interests you here. So I've been teaching this group here since 1990. And, and so I started teaching this group here when I just started becoming a teacher. And so I could, I watched how my sense of self or my sense of myself as a teacher, got shaped by this mutual interaction between the group and me, knew they could watch the shaping and forming of that, and it was kind of fascinating to watch that my sense of self and variety of things change is shifted. And I could see it happen in that kind of in the, in the, in the relationships and mix and the feedback and all the stuff that goes on. So, Gil, as a teacher was a mutually created phenomenon. You know, it's not like, Oh, that's I'm really a teacher. That's who I essentially permanently truly am. And I made it I you know, I'm a self made teacher. You know, you know, just this thing that happened, you know, and I just can't hold it lightly, it's gonna happen and it'll change and shift and, and, you know, someday you guys will all just, you know, turn your back on me and sit up here by myself and try to hold forth and no one will be here and I say, Oh, I guess that that particular one is over and then I'll go do something else.

Yeah, there's a painting that I want to do that I'm just kind of where am I gonna find time for that painting? So, it's gonna be the last one. I

really should be introducing myself because I saw a lot that give me a look. I like I should. I'm new here. But a quick question. So hopefully some of you I can relate to it too. I'm not quite sure what I'm going to ask. So hopefully you will understand. So what I've realized is that you know, it's I guess having a balance between meditating and then having your daily weekly or yearly goals. So what I realized is the when we get into meditation, the less kind of important the conventional goals etc, are become. But at the same time, I also feel that when you're not pursuing such goals, etc. There is a sense of discomfort. So I just like to hear your

views on that. That's a great question. Great question, and I think it deserves a long answer. I'll give a relatively short one. I think that maybe at the heart of the question is not so much what the goals are, but rather what motivates our pursuit of their goals. So, there are a lot of worthwhile things to do in life. There's also a lot of things which are not particularly worthwhile, that people do pursue. And not, I met a lot of people who have given up careers because they realized this wasn't really worthwhile to do that particular goal. But there are also goals that are very worthwhile to do. And, but what motivates it and if what motivates it is a strong attachment to self to proving oneself being the best in your field so you can stand on top of everybody else, and stick your tongue at them. That's not a very good, that's one kind of motivation and I fall away. But so someone might pursue the same career, same goal, out of compassion, because this is the way To help a lot of people, this is the way to feed my family. And I really need to take care of my family and raise my family properly. And so I really need to have this kind of worldly success enough to do that in a way that has some security to it. So I'm going to pursue the goal for that purpose. So look at the motivation, look at to see what what motivates you, what are we trying to accomplish? And, and what I believe what is that there are very, very powerful motivations, healthy motivations and human being that can for certain individuals set very, very powerful goals and directions for their life. It's not meant for everyone. There's so many different ways of being in this life.

You don't have to have a goal. But some people find that is that a satisfying enough question or you want to ask further.

Maybe you don't have time I can have a chat with you later. So I guess We, the question was with, you know, how do you find the balance kind of because I do find a lot of joy while meditating and doing all the stuff. But at the same time, I also find it satisfying to

be involved in certain activities.

So, so I don't know again or no you but I think that some people find that that setting priority is really important to some people, you can't do it all. And so it depends what's most important and so one of the, one of the things I encourage people to reflect on it spend some time reflecting on it. Sometimes I say this is actually more important to do than meant to meditate. If you had to choose between meditation and this, choose this, that is spend some quiet time and reflect on what your deepest intention is. And it's meditation and support That deepest intention, then meditate. If it doesn't check the meditation, what's your deepest intention? And that might help clarify. You know, how you find your way among many, many healthy and good things to do in life. Can't do it all. We can't do it all well, since we usually have to choose something. Okay.

Many thanks