

# 2011-05-09 Mindfulness of Emotions

Tue, 8/18 11:08AM • 44:29

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

emotions, people, mindfulness, feel, mind, foundations, unpleasant, happening, body, experience, unpleasant emotion, buddha, meditation, pain, carefully, helpful, thinking, anger, pleasant, called

## SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

Good evening. And I'm going off on Sunday evening to start a retreat teach retreat at Spirit Rock. And then Nona Olivia will come and give the talk. Nona is a longtime Dharma student and kind of partly partly scholar Buddhism and, and she has done a wonderful presentations for us here in the past per se center on women in Buddhism, early women. I don't know what she'll talk about next week, but she'll be our guest. So this evening, I'd like to talk about mindfulness of emotions. And I think you know, emotions are very important for people. And it's well worth paying careful attention to them and becoming a bit wiser about the ecology of emotions and how emotions come come into play. And important part of mindfulness training as we teach it here is to become aware of emotions and to become wisely mindful of our emotional life. So that when I teach the introductory course in mindfulness here, I go through a sequence of instructions, the first four weeks for basic instruction, four basic areas. There's mindfulness of breath, mindfulness of the body, mindfulness of emotions and mindfulness of thinking. And separate from that the Buddha has, in his teachings of mindfulness has what's called the four foundations of mindfulness. And because what I teach is four and because he says four foundations, sometimes people assume that they're talking about the same thing. But his four foundations are different than what I teach here. The four foundations for the Buddha, from mindfulness are the body and within the category that Body includes breath, but other aspects of being in touch with your body with a thing called feeling tone, that no, which is the basic raw way in which all experiences we have, can be experienced as being either pleasant, unpleasant or neither pleasant or unpleasant. I'll talk more about that. And then the third category is something that's called mind states. So this is the general state of the mind, general mood of the mind, quality of the mind. that's separate from the particular details of how the mind is functioning. So the mind might be expansive, or your mind might be contracted, the general state of awareness might be very open and clear, or might be cloudy and dark. So the kind of general states of the mind and the qualities of the overall character character of their, of the consciousness. And then the fourth foundation for the Buddha is what's called Dharma damas. Which are simply can be saved stated as the teach some of the teachings the Buddha had about how the mind works. But more specifically, it has to do with the particular mental patterns that come into play, that either keep us in mental bondage, or help us to become free. So and in terms of mindfulness of emotions, what's interesting is that nowhere in the Buddhist teachings, does he give instructions for mindfulness of emotions. And in his four foundations of mindfulness, there is no category in there that fits our category of emotions. You could squeeze out of it a little bit maybe, and say, Well, this Sid refers to emotions here, kind of, but he doesn't actually give instructions how to pay attention to emotions. So then the question is, you know, so only as modern people that have emotions, they didn't have Back then or, or did the Buddha not was he kind of like an emotionless person and didn't focus on emotions, he was certainly explain a lot about Buddhism or at least some Buddhists. The but how I see it is that in the four foundations of mindfulness, the Buddha is encouraging us to pay attention to primary

experiences. And the argument can be made that what we call emotions in English is secondary experience or constructed experience constructed out of more primary steps.

So, the so what I mean by that is that you can talk about, for example, buildings and you don't know what a person is talking about because as many Different kinds of buildings. But say buildings are built out of bricks, or out of wood. So you can talk about bricks in a very particular way. And most bricks are the same, I guess. And you can talk about how putting bricks bricks together in different ways. So if you want to know about the basic elements that constructs a building, you look at the bricks and the mortar and the wood and all that. So the same thing with emotions, emotions are, for the most part, to a great degree constructed out of other elements. And if you understand emotions, you want to understand the elements that they bring him into play. Now, emotions are often can often very easily be seen as solid unitary experiences. that emotion is just a saw there. I am not feeling angry, thank you, and it's just anger. And it's hard to see that it's made up of different things. Same thing with pain. Pain, physical pain is often seen as a unitary experience of singular experience. But in fact, what physiologists of pain, people who study pain point out is that experience of pain? Well, it's experienced as being singular, is made up of many different factors, physical, mental, intentional, many factors come together. And that the and depending how those things come together at their meeting, we have the experience of pain. But if you start changing some of the threads that come together to create pain, to change, some of them, the pain can can change quite a bit. And one of the classic examples that people give is a lot of you know, this, the that our evaluation, around pain can affect how much strongly we feel feel pain, or our fear that's connected to the pain can can have influence how strongly we feel the pain. So when there's a big unknown factor, people often feel more free. And the pain level goes up, maybe it makes some sense because part of the function of pain is to be a danger signal. And if you don't know what's going on, you want more dangerous signal, better pay attention. But you go to the doctor and the doctor gives you a diagnosis and said, That's no problem at all, and you feel relieved, and then it's not such a big deal anymore. And you don't feel quite the intensity because part of the intensity comes from the emotional involvement with it. It's been pointed out that people can have similar kinds of injuries in a car accident on the freeway as they can in the battlefield. And some reason people on the battlefield often don't feel pain the same way than people in a car accident, because of the different kind of mental relationship to the experience. The same thing with emotions and emotions also involved in meeting of many different factors. And, and as we want to try to understand what an emotion is, it's helpful to begin looking more carefully and to apart the different elements and not treating them as unitary. Some of the great manifestos philosophies people had about emotions that I've seen sometimes here in the West are often focusing on them as kind of, there's a one policy about this what you do with an emotion in one classic policy has been repression. Well, you know, we should just not have emotion should repress them or certain emotions and other policy that was popular in the 1970s 60s 70s or so. Was that of expressive catharsis and you should get it off your chest, you should yell and scream and pound pillows and tell everyone exactly what's on your, your mind. And it mostly became, you know, sometimes it was helpful for people especially for the request people to do that. But, but sometimes, you know, didn't, you know, didn't really help it was kind of annoying for everybody else. And, but more importantly, what Buddhism has said for sending But now they've what they found is that when when you repeatedly expressed some kinds of emotions like anger just can keep venting it, it might relieve some of the pressure temporarily. But the repeated use of it reinforces the at the expression of angry more likely to feel it. So rather than helping you become free of it, it actually strengthens the pattern of it. So sometimes the catharsis approach is not no longer as popular as it used to be. So there's a kind of answer, but usually I've known people who seem to be willing to take the word fight you over their attitude about what you had to do with emotions, like people have very strong opinions about emotions some people do. And certain families have very strong lessons that people learn about how

you know how to relate to emotions, you're not supposed to express your emotions or you are supposed to express your emotions or there's many things so. So if you look at this, you look at the teachings of the Buddha And in ancient language, there's no word for the English word emotions. You can't it's very hard to translate the word emotions back into Pali, ancient language the Buddha taught. And there's one word that kind of fits the word Baba, but it does, it's kind of hard to get it to fit well. So, did they not have emotions in the time of the Buddha, the Buddha not have emotions? No, because you see that particular emotions are mentioned in his teachings. They talk about anger, despair, greed, hatred, joy, happiness, contentment, you know, a whole range of different kinds of emotions are named. But the overall category called emotions, doesn't appear there. And so I have one theory of why that is, and the theory is that human experience is made up of many elements. Many bricks made different kinds of bricks, bricks in words and everything and imagine taking all that The different elements of human experience in making a pie out of it. And then you can divide the pie many different ways. You can divide it, you know, in quarters and fifths and sixths, you know, you can divide in different ways. And you could also make your, your knife cuts in different parts of where the pious so depending on what's on different sides of different parts of the pie, so it's not a homogeneous kind of thing. Different things would fall on different sides of the knife cuts depending on how you cut it still a pie right? So the human experience the same way you can divide it up in different ways. And is one way better than the other. I don't know I mean, is it better to use the metric system than the you know, the English measuring system you know, some people have an opinion but which is which is which is truer, which is a true measuring system. It doesn't make sense to talk about true it just different ways of dividing up measurement. And so perhaps the Time of the Buddha a different way of measuring or dividing up human experience. And so that overall category called emotions, wasn't there. So I say that to all of you all this is an introduction, to encourage you maybe to be ready to take a new look at what we in English call emotions, and your experience your relationship, your attitude towards your emotions, maybe willing to look at it maybe in a new way, fresh way. So if you look at the four foundations of mindfulness, the Buddha taught one way of seeing them, which is this is a teaching that I learned from Thanissaro Bikkhu Taan. Geoff, who was here a couple of weeks ago, is that these are consignors, four different frames of reference with which to look at our experience. So four perspectives from which to look at what what's happening to us. And it's good to have different perspectives with different perspectives. Help us break through a kind of set mindsets opinions we have help us see things fresh. Maybe in new ways, deeper ways. So, you know, a lot of things are happening to us. And it's helpful sometimes to look at it from the perspective of our body, our embodied physical experience, our sensations in our body, how our body experiences something. Some people live busy lives that they're, they're sometimes very stressed out. And they don't even know they have a body. And finally, they pay attention to their body and they say, Whoa, I need a vacation or I need to work less or I need, you know, I need to pay attention to my body here. But it took a while to learn that because they weren't paying attention to it. So it provides a different perspective. We can pay attention to the perspective of the feeling tone, is it pleasant or unpleasant? The experience and sometimes that simple question can make a very complex thing, much easier to deal with, if what we're trying to do is to figure it out. How to relate to our experience how to deal wisely what's going on. If we see the situation in complex terms, then we could be scratching our heads trying to figure out what to do. You go into a crowded room of, you know, of all your relatives and all your former lovers. And they're all together.

You know, and you know, someone who's at home idea something someone's idea of surprising you and, and, and all your bosses you know, you can imagine some kind of collection of interesting people, and, and they're all there. And so you can say, What am I supposed to do now and this is a complicated situation and iOS memory and history with these people and obviously different attitudes to different people. And in fact, I I act differently with different people. And now I have to, they're all going to see me in the same room and it's all very complicated you what do you do? Well, one way Cut through the complication perhaps that helps you kind of become a bit freer from it a little bit step back and not be so

caught in the, in the in the mix at all is to say is this pleasant or unpleasant? And if it's unpleasant, so clearly recognize, oh, this is an unpleasant experience. I've been an unpleasant experience before. What I've learned to do when things are unpleasant, it's best not to, it's best to relax. It's best not to get you know, pulled in so tightly into the into the fray, maybe step back a little bit, go outside and get some fresh air before I come back in. But somehow seeing it as as unpleasant or if it's pleasant seeing it as pleasant. It can be helpful. So for example, seeing some things as pleasant as can be helpful when you're addicted to something. You know, so people can some people are addicted to computer games, or to watching pornography Or to alcohol or drugs or different things. And one of the things that sometimes happens with these kinds of addictions is the activity is stimulating the pleasure centers in the brain. And the hook that keeps us engaged, is the pleasure that's being produced. And we were pushing a button, and we're producing more pleasure and more pleasure. It's kind of addicting. And so people in computer games fine. And so you could, you know, say what someone asked you why are you so interested in pursuing computer games all the time. And you can lay out an elaborate, complicated philosophy, about the tremendous value and sophistication of the games, and all the ways in which you've been trained to become a brain surgeon or fighter pilot by using your thumb in a certain way. And then to justify what you're doing. But that's, you know, and justify it to yourself even. But really, what's happening is you're just going after the simple pleasure. That's there. And if you could see, that's the case, maybe you can, you can maybe find a little bit more wisdom or, or freedom from the addictive quality. So what I'm trying to say is sometimes by simplifying the analysis of a situation to seeing whether it's pleasant and unpleasant can cut through a lot of the complications and help us be freer from the situation. It's been pointed out, I don't know if it's always true, universally, but some philosophy, philosophies of life, and even some political philosophies that can be quite sophisticated, have their origins in someone not liking something was unpleasant. I don't want any more of that. And then they kind of justify that with all this. So and then, and then the third foundation is they know the quality of the mind. We could be doing something and we caught up with the details of the thing. And they get like we didn't pay attention to the body. We didn't pay attention to the quality of the mind that we had when we're doing it. One way to kind of get a different perspective, a different frame of reference to the, what's going on, is to ask, in this in this situation, what's the quality of my mind? Is it relaxed? Is it open? Is it spacious? Is it stressed? Is it tight? Is it concentrated and focused? Is it scattered and distracted? What's the quality of the mind? And, and that also can make things very much simpler, and perhaps give a very important piece of information. Because maybe the quality of your mind is more important than a lot of other things. And so, safeguard and quality of the mind and think that's important, can change your choices in what you do in a situation. So the four foundations of mindfulness are four different perspectives that are useful to apply it or experience. So with emotions, we can do this with emotions. We can We can have an emotion. And then we can say, Okay, let's look at it from different perspectives. So the first perspective is to look at the emotion we're having for the perspective of the body. William James and famous American philosopher pointed out that his point of view you cannot have an emotion unless there's some physical manifestation. You wouldn't know what your emotions you're having, if it wasn't somehow expressed in the body. You know, you get

you get angry and you get a hot, you get frayed and you have your stomach was in knots or you have butterflies in your belly. Or you feel really depressed and you so you your energy drops out of your body, your body feels lethargic and tired. There's all these different ways that our emotions kind of play out in the in the body. With the blood flow circulation gets affected by emotions, that the Tensions of muscles get tight and loose. And depending on what emotions we're having, we hold our posture in different ways. There's many different things that go on. And so it's possible to notice how emotion is playing out in the body. One of the reasons why this can be very helpful is that the physical manifestation of emotion is always happening in the present moment. The catalyst and the thinking that might be producing the emotion might have nothing to do with the present moment. So for example, I

could be sitting, meditating, minding my own business, feeling quite peaceful and nice. And then my mind has other thoughts. My mind suddenly remembers 35 years ago that high school girlfriend How could she you know, and that thought could come like that. And, and I suddenly feel a surge of fire and energy and tightness, and you discontent phenomenon that in my mind is just racing right away. I was peacefully minding my own business until that memory came back. The heat and the fire in the energy is here now. But the story about her that's the past, she might not even be alive anymore for all I know, he knows what she's about. But and then I started having and I started thinking about it. Oh, yeah, that thing that she did and, and that was really unfair. And, you know, if I hadn't, you know, what I should have done back then is I should have told her I should have you know, this and that and, and, and the more I think about it, it more it stirs up the energy and the feelings and the emotions. And the emotions are clearly being fueled. By the way I'm thinking about. Got it. Now, maybe, you know, it's useful to do that sometimes. But, you know, if you want to be free and not caught, one helpful way to do that is to drop into the body and feel the emotion in the body. And, and because the body is not a story, and so it's a way of kind of helping the mind nudging the mind away from the thinking mind and the repetitive nature of the story making mind and come back and feel what's happening here and now. And that can help lessen the way that our thinking is reinforcing and repeating and renewing the emotions. There was an amazing study I read last year or something that you some of you read, if remember better than me, but some psychologists or scientists were studying how long emotions last, like the lifespan of an emotion and they claim that emotions don't last more than seven seconds. Summary definitely got to. It's kind of amazing, right? Unless we so that's crazy, right? I mean, you know, probably most of you have don't see that most of your emotions last longer than that. And the claim is that what's happening is we're emotion happens. And then we reinforce it we repeated we renew it, by how we think about it that are involved in it. So I don't know if that's actually true that it's seven second thing but, but the idea is true that we often reinforce and renew in ways that we can't often see unless we stop and look more carefully or mindful. Notice. So the body can be so it's fascinating to drop into your body and discover what what's going on in the body as you feel an emotion. All the different ways and different days how it goes on the body. And there are lingering effects in the body. If you Kind of regular chronic emotions than it takes is chronic effect on the body and you can have, you know, chronic tension in your shoulders or in your belly or different places. But one of the reasons why it's so helpful to experience emotions in the perspective of the body is that it's as you as you step out of the thinking of it,

you're probably not interfering with it that either you kind of step you kind of have to be enforcing it or interfering it. And it's easier to let, just let it be let the emotion be and let it let the emotion itself move through you process through you. I believe that mindfulness meditation is meant to be very respectful of our emotions, where any emotion you have, is fine to have while you're meditating. Outside of meditation, you might have to be wise about which emotions you express to your boss. But in meditation, this is a beautiful place where it's safe to let it all come merger, murderous rage, let it come. And why it's safe is because you're committed not to move. You can have, you know, the most amazing, fiery lust for your best friend's spouse. You know, Boy, that's strong. Okay, I guess Buddhism says it's okay. No, it's not, you know, it's not okay to act on it. But just sit there and Don't move. Don't act on it, but let it course through you. And as you as you experience it, a number of things can happen. One is you can learn it, if it's powerful emotion, you can learn to have confidence that you don't have to give into it. Because emotions many emotions come with motivation. You have to want to act and do something. And to learn that you can sit still and pat let it pass through and pass See the other end of it is very encouraging. When you realize you don't have to listen to the tremendous authoritative voice that says, Now, something has to happen. The other thing that feeling in the body and taking time to feel it is that the processing the movement, the body kind of knows what needs to happen if you don't interfere. And so it but feeling and emotion in the body, makes space and allows better the flow the unfolding, the relaxation, the unwinding, that needs to happen. The body knows better than you do.

Unless if you interfere with an emotion you can freeze an emotion and like resentment is frozen anger. You can freeze grief. Maybe Charlie Brown only had Good grief. When he left and let her suppose you know, he let it flow and whatever. But but bad you know, I guess bad grief would be frozen grief. Plenty of people freeze their grief, because of guilt because of anger because of many reasons. And, and, and but if you can relax and feel the grief, feel the anger in the body, don't add to it and don't interfere with it, the body will know what to do, doesn't necessarily get better right away, sometimes it gets stronger. But that's part of the process of the healing of the movement that has to happen. So it's going to be very helpful to experience emotions in protective and body. So one of the bricks one of the building point building blocks of what an emotion is, is its bodily sensations and feelings and energy that's here. And so we pay attention to that. The other perspective is this. The second foundation is pleasant and unpleasant or most emotions are either one or the other. And so it's a way of simplifying the whole situation or on what's going on with the emotion. Is it a pleasant emotion or an unpleasant If it's pleasant, are you holding on to it? Are you reaching for it? Are you trying to keep it going? Are you? This is the kind of addiction to it? Are you building a philosophy of life on it? Or is it an unpleasant emotion? And so you aren't You're so uncomfortable with unpleasantness that you're trying to push it away, destroy it, and you're reacting to the unpleasantness. Sometimes it's simply to feel or this is an unpleasant emotion and say that to yourself and see from that point of view, sometimes it's a lot easier to relax and just let it be there in a simple way without being caught by it. So sometimes it's useful. And so the pleasant and unpleasant is one of the building blocks of what we call emotions in English. So then we have the mental state, the mental, overall state of the mind. So you can look when I'm having this emotion. Is the mind contracted or is it expansive The mind clear or is it cloudy? Is the mind focused? Or is it scattered and distracted? What goes on? What's the overall quality of the mind when I'm having this emotion and emotions come with a certain quality of mind? When there's strong desire, it comes with say, with rose colored glasses, the quality of the mind is such that we tend to see things

sometimes, you know, you know, that beautiful person is only being desirable. When there's a version we can see things through. You know, I know what tempted is with tennis as aversion, desires rose. And so it kind of sets a tone, a mood through which everything is seen. So if you can kind of say rather than focusing in on the overall emotion if say, step back and say what's what's the This quality of my mind while I'm having this, that also can help us step back a little bit and not be caught and entangled with the emotion. And then the fourth foundation the Buddha gives a different perspective to look at emotions. He has a series of different ways in this last foundation. One of them is very simple exercise or perspective, and that is its Buddha refers to it as the not kn OT, the entanglement, the fetter. So there is an experience that's happening. There's you and what's the knot? What's the attachment? How have you gotten entangled with that experience between you and experience? What's the knot that has you tied to it so And so when there's certain emotions, it's like saying, Is there an attachment that's playing itself out when I'm having this emotion? So, you know, if there's strong desire, there probably you're attached to something, you're entangled. If there's strong aversion probably have some kind of attachment to or, you know, negative attachments going on. If there's no fear, is there a strong fear? Is there an attachment? This gets very interesting, I think because most emotions that I think modern people in our society feel are secondary emotions not primary. And what that what I mean by that is that a primary emotion would be if a mountain lion jumped in here in this room, I think most of us would feel afraid, you know, some fear and concern which happened kind of pretty quickly, and that'd be pretty primary. And the reason that examples my mind Is that I'm teaching retreat this week at hidden villa. And, and in fact, when we arrived, they said, oh, there's a mountain lion. last few days, it's been eating some of the chickens. So we were told to pay attention and be mindful. So the, you know, the mountain lion jumps in and it's a primary fear. Worry is considered a secondary because worry is an evaluative emotion that comes with evaluation or judgment or a story. So, I might sit here in front of you all, worrying about the mountain lion coming in because I might not behave Dharma teacher appropriately.

And I would be worried about worried that I might not act calm and relaxed or wise or I might be the first When running out the door, which you know, then you would not have a good opinion of me. And your opinion of me is very important. Now, now we're into a whole other story making an evaluation. That's not as primary as the mountain line itself, right. And so it turns out that for many modern people who live far from mountain lions, most of our emotions have a strong component of being evaluative. There's some evaluation, some assessment, some story, making some belief, some judgment, some interpretation, that's comes into play for that emotion to be there. And probably all of you, I hope, have had the experience, maybe I hope not, for my sake, for example, hope that you've had the experience of having a strong emotional reaction to something that turned out not to exist. And you realize you were interpreting the situation one way and then you got more information. And it was actually quite different. And you realize your emotion was, you know, was really an evaluative emotion, because it was a story that you made up.

So so what is the so what is this? So one perspective for looking at your emotions is, what is the story I'm telling myself? What's the evaluation that I'm making? And then Am I entangled with that? Am I caught with it? So the classic thing on retreat because I'm on retreat this week teaching I think of this often is, it's pretty common, fairly common for someone to come to me as a teacher on a retreat and say, you have to talk to that person, the other person on the retreat. This person comes into the meditation hall late and comes in like a lumberjack, with the boots on and then sits down and is all winded and takes five minutes for the breath to settle down and it's heavy wheezing. And then once the dresses down, rips off the Velcro jacket. And then takes the water water container and guzzles the water. And then after a while, puts the Velcro jacket on again. And you have to do something because this person is disturbing my precious meditation. what generally happens is that teachers like me will say, Well, why don't you go back and practice with us? And we'll say something very irritating. We say, in our practice, there's no such thing as a distraction. So that's irritating after that kind of problem, right? So. So but then you go back and you have to you have to sit there and you pay attention. And what happens generally, is a few days later, people come back and say, lo and behold, no longer bothered. I paid attention. I noticed that I was there was enough. There was a hook for me. I was so attached To my meditation, my progress, my calm, and I was holding on to it. And I felt this person was disturbing my thing that I was attached to. But when I no longer was attached to my meditation, then there was just sound passing through. And it wasn't really that person who was disturbing me. I was disturbing myself by how I reacted to it. And part of that reaction had to do with this whole story I told about my I'm on the brink of enlightenment. If it wasn't for lumberjacks, I would be there today. And so sometimes it's very helpful on retreats. We don't we don't design retreats this way and hire actors. But, but maybe we should. But it's very helpful sometimes to have these kind of people who sometimes sometimes are clueless where they are Because it helps people understand, you know what they're doing. Now Now, one of the perspectives that Buddha gives, for also looking at all our experience, but also emotions now, as I'm saying today is, is to look at the experience the emotion of having from a perspective of what is the self concept that's operating around this emotion, what's the sense of self that's operating. And it turns out that a lot of these evaluative emotions, these secondary emotions that we have, often come together with a particular self concept that we have, or self identity we're holding on to or want to have some idea we have about ourselves. And so sometimes, for example, the experience or maybe much of the time guilt is when the self is bad. Anger maybe is when the self is threatened. Fear is when the anger is when maybe maybe also when it's threatened but also when the anger maybe when the self is hurt, fear when the self is threatened, said maybe when the self is disappointed. Now, let me explain a little bit more if I may add my sight sound fine. But let me give you an example. So I'm there with my little car hidden Villa today. And it's a it's a farm kind of nature, nature preserve and has this big dirt parking lot. The wind blows a lot today and it goes all as dirt on my car. So I might have, you know, let's say that I have a self concept of a person whose identity is tied to the kind of car I drive. And you

really understand what a great Dharma teacher I am what a great man I am. By the car I drive and I walked my parking lot and the cars dusty and dirty.

So now I'm afraid. I'm afraid when I get back on the freeway to drive here, one of you is going to see me in this dusty car and you are not going to realize what a great person I am, you know, as I'm afraid of my concept of self kind of speed going to be challenged. And some afraid but then maybe I see one of you and you see my car and, and that ties into all my feelings of being inadequate and not being worthy and not getting you know what I deserve in my life and, and I just feel so depressed and discouraged because and then maybe someone says something What do you say something my car say Gil, that's a dirty car. And while you what you don't realize is you just it said much more than just a dirty car. You said something about me. And so now I'm angry. I'm gonna defend myself show you something so it's a terrible example I apologize but but it's ridiculous right to have those kinds of feelings emotions around what I you know, my you know my identity about a car right? But maybe it's easy to think to see that's silly. But often that's the case in some way or other. If you're a parent, how much is your identity, your self concept tied to how you're seen as a parent, and it isn't so much that your child is bothering you, but rather, you're concerned about how you can be seen for how your parenting like the classic thing is, you know, in the supermarket and your two year olds having a temper tantrum you and you know, everyone's seeing you you don't you can't cope. You can't change it. You can't help nothing you can do for your kid could maybe take them out and you're holding them into screaming and yelling as you leave. And everyone must be thinking that you're torture you torture kids. What do they think of me? You know, I think a lot of parents have this, it comes with a territory. And I don't you know, it's not you're a bad parent, it's just, just parenting is an odd. And so one of the perspectives to look at when we have an emotion is, what is a sense of self that's operating? And is there a story and idea we tell ourselves? And is that sense sense of self being activating one way or the other? And is the emotion we're having, how closely connected is it to that self concept? And chances are, you'll find that more than a lot of times it is. It can be very hard to step away from the self concept to see the story or step away from it. And that's why it can be very helpful to drop into the mindfulness of the body and to feel the emotion the body. It can help us step out of the orbit of the Thinking and story making. It can help us to relax, let things on wide enough until we're calm enough and stable enough, then then perhaps we can turn around and look more carefully and more in more refined Li it what's actually going on here? Oh, there's a threat myself a sense of self. There's this, there's this, there's an idea that I have of what I need. And I'm attached to that. So when the Buddha looks at human experience it I don't think he sees what we in English would call emotion. But he sees these these events that we have, they're made up of different elements. And part of the task of mindfulness practice is not to just look at things in the conceptual gross picture we have of it, but to look more carefully and see the details or see the elements that make up the experience and that takes willingness to look more carefully, not to settle for the first impressions, but to look again and look more carefully. And in that regard, I like to think of mindfulness as being a very respectful thing to do. Because the Latin word for respect is to look again, respect. And so it's very respectful to stop and look more carefully what is going on here. And when you stop and look more carefully, chances are, you're not as caught in the emotion as when you didn't look carefully and you can be caught in in pleasant emotions just as much as unpleasant emotions. Because

if it turned out it had rained that hidden Villa and clean my car beautifully. Then when I came to IMC today and all of you saw how beautiful my car I would have felt joy and happiness and floating on a cloud. But that joy is not so good either. The fact that you feel joy doesn't necessarily mean it's healthy joy, just like that one. So thank you and you're welcome to judge me for my car.