So greetings. And so we come to the last and fifth talk of the roots, the roots of the wholesome and unwholesome, skillful and unskillful. And it's the turn to talk about the last of the roots, delusion and non delusion. And sometimes it's said that this is the fundamental one, because in the sense that without delusion, there would not be greed or hatred. And without non delusion, there would not be non hatred and non greed. And sometimes it's considered to be maybe the most difficult one to understand because the logic of the idea that if you're deluded, how can you see the delusion? That somehow that doesn't quite work together. But it is possible to see delusion. And that's has a lot to do with the strength of mindfulness. And some of it might have to do with the choice to translate the Pali word moha, m o h a, as delusion. Some people translated as ignorance. Some people translated as bewilderment. And sometimes we see the word confusion. And in the classic ancient texts, all those words are used kind of as synonyms or as explanations for what moha is. And the idea that sometimes it means confusion, sometimes it means just ignorance. But it's considered unwholesome, skillful and I've kind of been translating this word kusala is ethical, so kind of unethical. But what's very interesting about this is that these three roots of the unskillful behavior, they're more like impersonal forces within us. We don't have to take them personally in the sense of defining ourselves by them, that when human beings are born and grow up and just are without any kind of practice or self reflection, self awareness, these forces operate within us and to some people in greater degrees and others. And life conditions, the conditions of our life, or society and all kinds of things, affect which ones get predominant, or the wholesome roots which are predominant And as we go deeper and deeper into the mindfulness, we start seeing these, we're less inclined to see these as something we define ourselves by, identify ourselves by, but simply as forces within the mind that arise and exist. And our role is not to judge ourselves for them or be angry for ourselves for it, but rather to choose how we relate to them. And sometimes all we have to do is choose not to pick it up for the unwholesome things, we can see the forces of greed, hate and delusion arise in the mind. And we say no thank you. Don't have to go there. Sometimes we develop the conditions, the healthy condition to wholesome that's part of the function of developing the wholesome qualities, skillful qualities, is to
create a whole inner landscape. The environment and ecology were what tends to grow, the species that appear, are all wholesome as well. And so we're changing the condition, the ecosystem of our inner landscape. And so the greed, hate and delusion don't have a chance to really grow or don't, you know, don't predominate. And then eventually we can uproot them, they somehow get uprooted. But it helps if we don't take it too personally. And so this idea that delusion is also the root of unskillful behavior and delusion itself is unwholesome, unskillful. So, sometimes it's ignorance. And what it's ignorant about in particular, is what brings happiness. That whenever there is greed or hatred. Whenever there's greed or hatred, there is... I got distracted from something that happened on the screen here not nothing to do with YouTube. So, I forgot where I was. Sorry. So, this greed, hate and delusion is impersonal as we see it that way. And so yes, so the delusion, the confusion about what brings happiness. And whenever there's greed and hate, it can be seen as a misunderstanding and misdirected way of bringing welfare, happiness, something to ourselves And the delusion is that somehow being greedy and having and wanting is somehow going to make us happy. And certainly greed can bring us pleasure. It can bring us a certain kind of delight and all that. But it doesn't really bring lasting happiness, the deep wellsprings of happiness, which the Dharma is looking for. What represents this deep wellspring of happiness is this beautiful idea of a clear mountain lake that has this spring, a fountain of water from the bottom of the lake that flows up into the lake and flows out in all directions through the lake, equally refreshing the lake everywhere. So this deep wellspring of happiness that arises from within that's not dependent on what we get from the world or how we're praised or the relationships we have particularly, but rather we learn to settle and discover the wellsprings within. And so the delusion that other things are going to do it for us, that if I just have a better job, or better money, or better recreational opportunity, or better relationship, or better this or that, or if I just have more power and can dominate more people, or if I can just express my anger more and get my way more and feel like I'm an important person, that all these kinds of ways our attempts to try to be maybe happy. But those are all unskillful and unwholesome. They're kind of delusion. And so to be ignorant about what really brings happiness has a lot to do with this kind of this third root. So sometimes we're ignoring the fact that things are not going to provide us what we're hoping they're going to provide us with. Sometimes we don't see the dissatisfaction or the unsatisfactory nature of some things. And so we get confused about where the happiness is. Sometimes we are looking in the wrong direction for our well being. If we're looking for the surge of good feelings that come with being praised, I don't know if that's necessarily a good place to rely on happiness. Sometimes praise is nice and we can feel delight and joy, if it's appropriate. But to depend on that for our happiness, and then keep searching for and want more of it, that is a kind of delusion. The other kind of delusion that the Buddhist tradition emphasizes a lot are all kinds of delusions or confusions or bewilderments, this application, this projection onto experience that there's a self there and kind of relegating to the philosophy of self. We do a tremendous amount of projecting. We have these ideas of who we're supposed to be, the shoulds, interpretations, what should be, shouldn't be. But maybe sometimes more painfully, we have projections about the self out there and others. And so this delusion also has to do with prejudice and bias that we have. And also infatuation with other people. And all these judgments, we have others and to judge them or to have this bias or this infatuation or with people. We're kind of solidifying who they are as a self and projecting this view on
them, this idea on them, that also is the delusion, that also creates bewilderment. And so we also do that towards ourselves. And this can be seen and this is part of what mindfulness can help to do. If the mindfulness is strong. And you're living a life which is unhurried, hurry, rushing, hurrying, doing things fast. It's not necessarily hurry. In my vocabulary doing things fast you can stay sometimes very present. Hurried means you're kind of ahead of yourself. You're thinking in the future, you're, you're not really here for this experience, because you're into going into the next thing. When we're hurried, there's very little mindfulness. But if we can be unhurried and aware, it's possible to watch thoughts, interpretations, judgments arise in the mind. That's when you have a chance to really pop the bubble of delusion. We can see something arise. And we see that the mind has an interpretation, has an idea, has a thought, has a reaction, judgment. And because we see it so clearly as a thought, then we can question it. But if we don't hurried, or if we're caught up or the mind is just, you know, filled with prejudice, for example, and we have no awareness of it, then it fills all the space, and it becomes our reality. Becomes this is what's true, we see through that lens. But when can be mindful, we can watch that arise those thoughts, and then we can question Is that really true? We can give it a second look, is you know, is that really true? That person really that way? Am I really that way? Maybe there's another way or maybe that's partial or maybe that's not really accurate? So this delusion around self has a lot to do with the delusion of the projections onto us of all these ideas of self that can be quite debilitating. And sometimes, if awareness is the medicine, is healing, many of the ways we glom on or hold on to self, projections of self, or self and others, is little bit the illness that we're trying to heal. And then finally, the one other delusion that tradition emphasizes a lot is that of permanence. The idea that anything is fixed in any kind of way that's more than even just a short while tends to trip us up, tends to create a unhealthy relationship that sooner or later is going to cause suffering. But if we can really understand and see experience, how much life is a river, how much is a stream and flow. Not only do we see more accurately and we're more fluid and we're not projecting permanence on the experience and trying to hold it a certain way while it's actually changing. We're actually allowing the healing forces of our own psychophysical body to flow, because that healing force of our own body is flowing, is a current almost like a change within us. And as soon as we freeze up and hold tight or seize up, some kind of healing flow, current begins to quiet, begins to not be available to us. So, delusion. Delusion is if not an illness, it actually gets in the way of the natural healing, liberating momentum force processes that exist inside of us. And this freeing ourselves from the illusion of these projections of self, of permanence and kind of inappropriate ideas of what will bring happiness. To free ourselves from that is to liberate, is to allow the self liberating, the natural liberating forces inside of us to unfold into open and allow. Our system our hearts does not want to be caught in greed, hate and delusion. If we allow ourselves, allow the flow allows, the healing, the liberating forces within, then our hearts will sing. Our hearts will feel happy in this deep wellspring of care, of love, of happiness that awaits us will be available for the world as well. And I hope that what's really good in you and all of you have a tremendous goodness, that's, if you're not, you don't know it yet, it's there and that if you if it is allowed to come forth, and that you share it with the world. So that this practice we do really is understood as a direct way of bringing benefit to the whole world. May all beings be free of greed, hatred and delusion. So, thank you. And so I'm happy to stay here for a while and try to answer some questions in the chat box. And we have a little system today that maybe will make it a little bit more easier for me to follow
them as they come up. So if any of you would like to ask some questions and stay for a while, I'm happy to try to do that. And for those of you who are going to go I thank you for today and for this week, and I look forward to seeing you next week and as our reminder next Friday, I won't be here. So we'll just do four days next week. So thank you. "So please compare the concepts of non hatred metta and the Christian concept of loving one's neighbor as thyself." So a concept of loving one's neighbor as thyself. The Buddha talked about using yourself as not not that love others as yourself, but to care for others as you would as you'd want others to care for yourself. So that just as you wouldn't want someone to someone else to harm you. So they don't want anyone to harm them harm themselves, so please don't harm them. So we use our self as a reference. And, and then the assumption sometimes in the Buddhist tradition is that it's a natural thing to love one Self, though I think in the modern world that's can be quite difficult for some people. But the idea that if you love yourself, then you can understand better how to love others. And so the idea of starting here and discovering what's here and discovering the love here, discovering the goodness here, then it can grow and go out into the world in an effective way. And so in terms of the Christians concept, loving one's neighbor as thyself. It's a beautiful concept. And so what Buddhism has to offer is how to love yourself, how to let that Wellspring exists. So you have a reference point for better loving your neighbor. Recommendations for meditating while your body is shaking. Yeah. Through the many reasons why the body can move or shake while we meditate, so it's a little bit hard to give just one answer and sometimes if it's a issue, it's better to talk with the meditation teacher a little bit to explore what's going on. But generally, the general unless the shaking is really violent or strong, generally, if it's, you're not going to hurt yourself that the general idea is that it's okay that something is working itself out and, and not to be too worried about it, the and the advantage of just not being troubled by it is you bring attention to it, allow it to be free and feel it get to known it. And then sometimes you can start kind of find your way to the, the source of at the beginning point of where the shaking seems to come out of like the, the, the little spring at the bottom of the lake from which it flows the current and then you might be able to stay there and something needs to be settled there. If you can feel that place of a source or sometimes if you allow the shaking toolkit to be there and you pay attention to really feel it and make space for it, open the body to feel it more. Sometimes that releases someplace where the body's being held where the energy is bottled up, and it can then finally some can relax and let go. Sometimes shaking is a comforting of ourselves, and we need that comforting, maybe a swaying or something. Occasionally, it's useful to experiment with holding the body still, and then really feeling what's going on. That's motivating the shaking. And so that can really be revealing and allow. And so there's more I can say. So I feel this is quite inadequate, but it's certainly something to, to be mindful of and learn from and experiment with different things and see what's useful. "So couldn't find Your Online retreat on your website. Can you direct me?" Yeah, you go not, it's not on, on the insight meditation Center website. It's on the insight Retreat Center website. And that's our, but there's a link to it on our website and the very top of IMC is website. There's a, you know, just above the menu bar, there's a says insight retreat center if you click there, and then if you go on the Schedule page for there, you'll see that on. On July 16, we have this three day retreat July 16, to 19th. And, and for those of you who weren't here yesterday, that retreated a little bit kind of a maybe a continuation of these morning sittings. And those of you who'd like to go a bit further and practice and I'll do there'll be about
five sittings a day, it's and I'll do there'll be likely guided a little bit like how we do these here. And, and there'll be some teachings that I'll do as well and, and so hopefully that Those of you who enjoy these mornings will find this kind of a nice continuation. And see the they're kind of disappearing too quickly these so I just have to go down now to okay. I've been using the Buddha mantra as taught by ajaan Cha in meditation. boot with inhale, would boot and then dough with exhale seems to really help with concentration insight. What are your thoughts about this? Generally, generally, in Vipassana practice, if what you want to do is mindfulness practice, we don't use any kind of mantra because the idea is to see clearly what's here without the filter without the support of any other means. So that's a general principle. However, sometimes it's very helpful to use them. Use A phrase like food dough or, or to use counting the breast for example, if the mind is really out of control, it's very hard to be present and mindful. Then it's, it's the you know, you want some medicine, you want something that settles the mind. And having something like Buddha can really help with that settling. And, and so yeah, if it's if it's helpful, remember skillful means. Is it helpful or not helpful. And if this is helpful, then do it as long as it's helpful. And if you do it for a long time, then at some point when you're really settled, and calm, you might experiment with not doing it and seeing if you want to do mindfulness if the mindfulness has its own benefit. So there are disappearing the numbers I think I did three and now I see a five okay? "Is a healing touch, like a caring touch? Healing conjures up wounds, and not all that arises feels like a hurt." Sure, I like that I hadn't thought about healing conjuring up wounds. But maybe so and so. I was just thinking of, you know, any kind of medicine that heals and, you know, more broadly and so healing the. Yeah, any kind of hurt any kind of way that we sometimes we do injure ourselves sometimes we do hurt ourselves. Some of the deepest injuries and wounds that we have are in our hearts. So maybe then, you know, healing works well. "How do I resist righteous anger when I feel I've been wronged by the delusion or ignorance of another?" Yes, righteous anger? Well, I don't feel like I'm the best person to answer that question because the righteous anger has a long history in western thought, and Western religions. And it probably has very specific meanings that I don't understand. You know, the word righteous, you know, for me growing up kind of in the 60s, word righteous has a kind of negative connotation. That somehow judgmental and domineering and forceful. But you know, it's, so I've seen some people translate damata Dharma Dharma notice as righteousness. And maybe there’s positive associations with the word righteousness as well. You know, has to do with the, what's true or what's appropriate or what's right in a sense and so So, you know, in this range of what anger can be from the wholesome to the unwholesome, there, the issue is, do we have the ability personally, to feel the cost or feel the benefits feel really what's going on inside of us in the different forms of anger that we have. And if it's a unwholesome, righteous anger, then I think we'll feel the self harm that's doing. If it's if there is such a thing as wholesome, righteous anger, then probably won't feel the way it's grading the way it's diminishing the way it limits us. And that's the best I can do is to say that we have to become our own arbitrator of this question. But a lot of has to do about this as seeing for ourselves deeply. So I think I'm jumping down now. "Is delusion that I that operates in the world. If so, can I ever completely, can ever be completely non deluded?" Well I don't know if we can ever be completely non diluted to the degree to which sometimes we believe what other people tell us what our society tells us. And you know, our culture's have delusions have projections of ideas that were true one time, and then they're not true later. And we discover more we discover, oh, it's not like that, after all. And, you
know, having having to do with, you know, comes to mind is there, you know, there's trends and what kind of foods you're supposed to eat and not eat and what's right and wrong. And, and, and so, you know, I don't think any of us can be sure about what delusions we've kind of learned and to be a kind of hold on consciously. Sometimes I kind of would like to come back and 100 years or 200 years and look back at us today and Only then will we see Wow, boy, were we deluded, I had no idea at all seemed like true to me, it all seems so obvious to me. And so in that sense, maybe we can never completely be free of delusion. But the delusion of AI that operates in the world, I think we can be free of that as a delusion. If we understand that some of the I that's operating is a necessary part of how to find our way in the world and be in the world. And we put on eyes, like we put on roles, like put on a jacket or a shirt, and that in different situations we put on, we embody different roles, in a sense, we embody different eyes, different selves, for the purpose of that role that's useful and important and necessary. And so if I'm home with my family, you know, I'm a father and how I behave as a father. And my roles and responsibilities and, you know has a particular and how I am as a father at different ages and my kids growing up, that's a role. And it's possible to get attached to that and delude and this is who I really am. Or it's possible to see it. That's who I am in this context and situation. This is what I'm called to be called upon to be and to do. And I kind of put it on kind of like a coat. And as long as I'm there, when that's appropriate coat, I wear it, but I'm quite happy to put it down in a different situation. So that's a way we can have this idea of self provisionally in a sense. And but we see it as such, so we're not deluded by it. "Can you say more about a version as a less intense manifestation of hatred?" Yeah. I've heard Buddha some Buddhist teachers who are a little troubled by how often we English speaking Dharma teachers use the word aversion in a negative way. Because the word literally means to turn away to a vert and there is healthy averting, you know, if we're going to, if we have a thorn in our foot we avert it in a sense we pull it out we don't expect it to not want to get take the thorn out, oversee ourselves about to step down on a nail on the ground. We avert our foot so that we don't get poked by the nail. And that's what's a healthy kind of caring for ourselves. And that healthy averting can also be for things like anger, like we see anger arise, or and we see, you know, or hostility arise. And, and we see it arise. And we say, Nope, I don't have to do that. We certainly avert ourselves from it. That can be done without any attachment clinging forcefulness. It can just be what is. And, and, and we turn away from it. So the word aversion Some people say should be allowed to be an umbrella term for what's healthy and unhealthy, skillful and not skillful. And it can, but I think the question has to do with when it's really subtle. And you know what, it's not so large. And in this in the way that hatred is seen, and I don't know what more to say, except that the more sensitive we become, through mindfulness, the more we're able to pay attention carefully. Even the most subtle things that we never even thought that it was hostility in it. We never imagined that we were a little bit hostile to the end. Something Wow, even that is there. Even the ways that we use our eyes, the ways our eyes are focused on someone. There's a teeny bit of hostility there. And I had no idea that I carried it in my eyes that way. So part of the advantage of mindfulness is to be greater and greater, greater, greater sensitivity to what's very subtle, and subtle doesn't mean inconsequential, sometimes more subtle forces, actually, the more the ones that carry us more and more dangerous. And, and the fact that with mindfulness, we become more and more sensitive to the subtlety in the provision of these things in ourselves, hopefully comes along with as mindfulness grows, we have a greater capacity to
be aware, without selfing without judging without criticism, that there's a healing touch. There's a generosity in the awareness. And so it's more and more okay. For the awareness to show us the bad news, you know what that which is, you know what we're actually doing what is unwholesome, a subtle as well? Is the healing touch more than awareness of the object, the thought, emotion and so forth? How is this similar or different from equanimity or from the allowing of whatever arises? Yeah, it's a great question. And I find myself a little reluctant to answer it. Because maybe, if I try to parse apart what's actually going on there, maybe we lose something and whereas the word healing maybe is evocative of something for us, that that is useful. very personal, what healing means that maybe we start losing if we start kind of defining or looking more carefully what's there but But certainly I associate healing with healing awareness, with one that's very allowing and open that give space for things to self heal and reveal themselves. I see the healing touches one that comes with a lot of care, there's a caringness like things are respected and cared for. And this is important and valued, that this process of practice of ourselves of, of engaging in this process in a careful and loving way or caring way, generous way, is a is a very important way of caring for ourselves and the world around us. And so the sense of valuing this process, valuing ourselves, valuing the potential we have the willingness to touch the places where we're hurt or wounded or that feel kind of like an illness inside of us the fever of, of hatred. To touch it and be with it in a kind way, not in a versiv way or critical way. There are some things I associate with so it is awareness. Maybe awareness has more than just kind of clean, clear awareness. It's not like awareness without any other attitude. There might be some very gentle and easy attitudes that come along, that some people might say are inherently part of mindfulness. Some people might say, come along to support it. And I say, I don't know. But they're so such a beautiful part of what what's possible, and if it's possible, please bring a hit a healing touch to the world. Can you speak a little about the wholesome and unwholesome need to belong, and how to be with a sense of not belonging? He's speaking about the need to belong and how often Yeah. The wholesome need to belong. Belonging is such a fundamental human need to want to, you know, it's and one of the things is hard now in this COVID-19 time for some people, some people live alone, some people stay indoors in their apartment for days, weeks at a time. And they have very little contact with other people. And you know, the contact we have on YouTube or zoom or on the phone, it can be nice. But in terms of, you know, there's something I think deep, physiological, deep psychological ways in which we're social beings and being in touch with people in contact with people is a huge like, huge kind of need that we have, and probably don't even understand all the ways in which we need that and so now after you know, these many months of for many people have this sheltering in place and not being in touch with people. It's starting to be a weariness and a tiredness from it because partly because of things deep kind of sense that some people have have a need. And, and so how do we differentiate what's wholesome and unwholesome? Yeah, I don't really have a great answer for you. I think that certainly there's a lot of neediness, a lot of deep kind of feeling of emptiness inside or inadequacy inside. As there can be as belonging can be the drive for belong, can be a desire to feel like we're important or desire that we feel like that we're distracted from ourselves that somehow we are entertained by others and or the strong need to be identified with others and How we get our old sense of identity, or a strong need to be loved or be cared for be respected or, or there can be fear. That fear of being alone the fear that comes with being alone, by being with other
people, that they relax us, they kind of makes us feel more secure. So to kind of get a sense of what's underlying what's behind it, and whatever it is, needs to be respected, you know, whether it's wholesome or unwholesome, it all needs our love, it all needs our respect. So in some ways, it doesn't matter too much. If, from the point of view of this, we bring our character this we bring our attention to understand and to see. And then as we see more clearly, it's all equally deserves our love and our care. It doesn't all equally deserve our action, that what we do based on it, and that's where we want to be careful that we act wisely. It's the action that how we live with these things were the biggest choices have to be. And we want to try to live act on those things that are wholesome and skillful and helpful. And to avoid the actions that are the opposite. And the rest of it, what goes on in our hearts we want to just care for and look and see him better and better. And I'm confident that if we really slow down and really begin looking underneath that sense of belonging, that a lot will become clear, and you'll begin to answer the question for yourself. So I'll do maybe one or two more. Could you talk about loneliness, please? No, no, I said another one. "Can you say more about what non delusion feels like?" Oh, what a great question. What does non delusion feel like? I think that strongly associated I have to it is a sense of absence of clarity, that there's no agitation, there's no filters over the sense of awareness through the eyes, there's a sense of possibility. There's a sense of unboundedness that there are non delusion, there's a sense of even freedom and non delusion. That's what I associated with I think other people have a different associations. And what I didn't talk about today, which maybe it was supposed to, was to talk about, non delusion itself, and often that's associated with wisdom, and, and wisdom has its own kind of feelings or experience how that's experienced. So there's a lot of different flavors of non delusion. And so I offered you one of one of them for me how it is. Maybe wisdom has a different flavor, sometimes wisdom has a flavor for me of clarity of there's sometimes there's a feeling of no penetration really. Oh, like I see clearly into something. Sometimes the wisdom has the feeling of sometimes it's less heart centered, whereas non delusion maybe more heart centered for me kind of an open possibility or something. And maybe wisdom has a little more sense of the mind becomes more open, open mindedness. Maybe. Could you talk about loneliness, please? Am I being greedy for wanting to feel different? Good question. You might be greedy for wanting to feel different, to not not be lonely. So, that's certainly possible, but it's not necessarily so. There are healthy desires and desires. To when there's a feeling of loneliness, there's mate as I said, there's many different implied there's many different, different states that it person might name as being lonely. If we have a need for some human contact, then it just might be a need for touch for contact for being with people that maybe has a different we would describe could describe differently than loneliness. And maybe loneliness also is one of these words that has a range of what you know. So umbrella term. So always the thing in mindfulness, look at it, really feel it, be with it. Generally all the things we have and feel whether the wholesome or unwholesome, it becomes a whole different world to live in, if we can hold it in our awareness and mindfulness if we can really touch it and contact it and then we'll start to really being with it and making space for it will get a sense of what's really happening for us. And so to, to not let these forces like loneliness, or the forces for belonging or all the things we have, never give them the upper hand, never believed them automatically. Never to never to identify with them or define yourself by them automatically. But stop and take a good look, the stronger the mindfulness is, the these things become part of who we are,
rather than who we are. So we would never say I am lonely, in the sense that this is who I am. We would say there is loneliness. And then we can look at that loneliness as a part of who we are. And it gives us a chance to see it more clearly. And to hold it. It needs our love and care just like everything else. And then you start, we start teasing apart and seeing what's there. It's possible the loneliness is not needed and it represents something, some kind of tension. There's some holding that if we relax with the mindfulness, it goes away and something wonderful happens instead it's possible to represent some deeper need we have or some healthy wholesome desire and, and then we might feel that wholesomeness or feel how that feel, yes, that feels like an aspiration, not a need. That feels like a, you know, that feels like a movement of the heart that just seems, you know, healthy. So maybe this is what I should act on. Or if I can't do it, I can't act on that desire. Now, can I do something comparable? Can I do something else for it? Can I think something about something else? And what is it that how does that need need to be? be supported. And, and done. So. So thank you very much. And I hope my answers were adequate. I think that these were very important questions you asked, and when they're such important human questions and issues that many of us have, and many things going on now that I think mostly we need a lot of care and attention and time to explore and get to know. I feel, you know, one of the challenges of answering these kinds of questions is, in a few words to say something that it touches in a useful way and, and not to assume that it's too easy or simplistic or to be only partial or kind of missed the question entirely, because there's not the kind of feedback to understand. So if I missed your question, I apologize. And I really appreciate getting these questions and finding out what's going on for you all. And so I want to thank you so much. And I look forward to our time next week. Thank you very much.