So this is the fourth talk on mindfulness of emotions. And I'm going through what the Buddha called the four foundations of mindfulness to offer four different perspectives on what in English we call emotions. In a sense, we're also kind of deconstructing them a little bit to look at the component parts of what builds up to what we think of as an emotion. And the value of that is that when we see an emotion as a solid unitary thing, as an entity almost in itself, it's much more complicated to relate to it sometimes, than it is to actually see and be sensitive to the different pieces that come together to add up to the emotion we have.

And when we look at these four foundations of mindfulness of the Buddha, there's actually a very important distinction that's made. Because it's a literary, you know, it's a set of instructions, it has a kind of literary structure, and that structure has a pivot. And that pivot has to do with the distinction I talked about yesterday between feelings of the flesh, with language of the Buddha, and feelings not of the flesh. Some people translators will translate it as feelings, worldly feelings, and spiritual feelings. I kind of like to think of a kind of surface feelings and deep feelings. So for example, if you're sitting having a wonderful meal in a friend's kitchen and it's very cozy and nice and warm and very friendly and peaceful and loving place, if you're sitting there and really enjoying the flavor and savoring the flavor of the food with your tongue, that's maybe nice, but that would be of the flesh. But to feel so peaceful and content and feel like you can relax and really settle into who you are. And that deeper feeling of deep settling that comes with being in such a safe place friendly place, that would be considered not of the flesh. That's something deeper inside. If someone says a mean words to you, and you get angry, that's might be a little bit more considered of the flesh. It's more on the surface of our mind of our life. It might touch the place where we feel insecure about ourselves and someone's
angry with us. Then someone mean words to us, we react because it's touched the sensitive place inside where we feel insecure.

And so it's kind of surface response might be anger, but deeper inside, there might be a different layers that are going on. We might feel hurt, we might feel phenomenally uncomfortable. And we react from our discomfort. Or we react because we're trying to protect ourselves from our hurt. But to turn in, go deeper in and feel the hurt rather than staying with the anger begins coming closer to what the Buddha might call not of the flesh, that which is the inner, the deeper. The place where we feel hurt might itself represents a symptom of something even deeper, a place where we feel desire for safety, and that might come out itself as a desire for self care, which is a beautiful thing to have. And so to begin, not staying on the surface of things, but to be able to kind of start being mindful enough and sensitive enough to find out what's going on inside and more deeply is part of the art of mindfulness in this this pivot of the Buddha's instructions, moves in the direction of becoming aware of what's deeper inside.

This plays itself out in the third foundation in a variety of different ways, two different ways. There's the instructions, they're divided into two categories. One I like to think of as being the motivations, the desires, that come with emotions, with some emotions.

So emotions, some many times are part and parcel of the motivational movement of peoplem what we want and what we don't want. And so, emotions can be deeply connected to our desire for things and when our desires are frustrated, we get angry, for example. And so to start tuning into the desires that are there, and some desires are wonderful, healthy and appropriate, and some desires are causes of suffering.

So the Buddha then starts making a distinction between those kinds of what we call I call desires here that are wholesome and not not wholesome, helpful and not helpful. And he says that when you have to interpret him or die for this purpose of emotions, we want to notice are there is there craving is there unhealthy desire or for something? Or is there a desire against something to want something go away, which the Buddha calls dosa, our hate, for desire, he calls it rāga, which I like to think of is craving, very strong, borders on lust, somewhere between lust and passion, so I think of craving. Or is there a lot of delusion and confusion and perplexity and uncertainty around the emotions we have? So that's kind of on one end, the other side of that divide between kind of what's on the surface and deep inside are those motivations, those desires, which come from some deeper place of health at the inside of us. So, the Buddha just calls them non craving, non hate, non delusion, but it's well understood in these ancient texts that the, the non refers to the opposite. And rather than just being, the advantage of saying non craving is that rather than saying for example, generosity, it's allows for a bigger span of positive emotions than just naming one. And so, in the language of the Buddha, this non craving implies the all the opposites. And so generosity is a kind of desire too. And goodwill is a kind of a
desire. And wisdom it's not quite a desire, but it's the opposite of delusion, which is kind of understanding what we can do and how we can benefit the world.

So it's possible to notice in the emotions we have, is there a desire? What kind of desire is there? Is there a wanting desires or aversive desires? Are those desires kind of wholesome and useful and nourishing? Or are they actually not that not so nourishing, not really deeply connected to what's deep inside? And so like, like sexual craving, as biologically important as it is and powerful and physiological as it is, all too often will lead to kind of a surface movement of even so point to some kind of alienation from ourselves and even from other people at times. But if there was generosity or love or goodwill, that's also part of sexual expression, then there's a whole different way in which that plays itself out than just a surface pleasure versus some deeper kind of wellspring of something going on.

So to ask ourselves, you know, what is what's the nature of the desire that's in play in the emotions I have? Or what's the nature the aversions that we have? What is going on here? So to make that distinction is to be able to then to differentiate between what I'm calling surface and what starts to become deeper and deeper and welling up from the health deep health of a deeper. It also begins tuning into the quality of what's going on inside of us. The quality of craving, the quality of hate, to what goes on inside is not comfortable. The quality of generosity, the quality of inequality, of characteristic of of love, feels so much better inside. And so be able to distinguish between these and be sensitive to that requires us to stop being externally focused only. And wanting things out there and having things out there and or only or being at the surface level of judgments and interpretations and commentary about what's happening stories and dropping down deeper to really feeling what's really going on here. How do I really feel?

So in this third foundation of mindfulness, the Buddha instructs people to notice is there craving or is there non craving, is there hostility or is there not hostility? Is there delusion or is there non delusion? He goes further. And he also notices, instructs other kind of dichotomy between things like is the mind contracted? Or is the mind expansive? Is the mind settled? Or is the mind unsettled? Is the mind concentrated? Or is it not concentrated? Is the mind liberated? Or is it not liberated? So it's possible to feel also the quality of the mind or the awareness. Generally, if we're really preoccupied with unhealthy desires, like real craving or real hate, and you really start sensitive to this inner life, we'll start noticing the mind gets narrow and tight and constricted. But if we're really kind of resting in, or allowing in a generous way, generosity and love and wisdom, there's a way in which that is more conducive to an expansive mind and open mind. As we meditate and we're less preoccupied, the mind becomes less narrow and small, and the mind starts feeling expensive. Some people call it big mind. It just feels like the mind has no boundaries and feels very spacious and very open. Or, when the mind is caught up in greed, hate and delusion, it's often unsettled. As we practice, we start noticing a deeper settling, relaxing into ourselves and to start feeling that difference between unsettled and settled is important part of this becoming a caretaker for our inner quality of our inner life.

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And then this thing about being liberated, this beautiful feeling of free, of not being caught in the vise of things and the grip of things, not being caught and preoccupation, not being clinging, nothing glued to, not having this compulsivity driven this kind of in the mind and that takes over and then doesn't really allow as much choice or freedom and the feel of that like in the mind, and then to feel what it's like for the mind to be free, the absence of those things. The mind to get to be kind of find itself and have choice and freedom in what it does and have this spaciousness and openness and open to possibility and ease to it. To be able to understand a liberated mind and an unliberated mind. And this also speaks to this kind of surface and what I'm calling deeper inside. That an unliberated mind is usually kind of caught up in the surface or of the mind in a sense. The liberated mind is not only deep, but it's expensive. And this is where what I said earlier in the meditation, that Buddhist meditation practice is to discover and awaken our inner life, and then shine that out into the world. So saying inner life might sound like we're disappearing from the world. We're kind of going into a little kernel inside and tuning everything else out. But it's more like we're turning ourselves inside out, we're going in deeply and becoming free. And that turns ourselves inside out. And we are now sensitive and you know in the world with that inner life, and now it's no longer inner, then its inner and outerwards, its whole.

So to start tuning in to what's more feels like on the surface and feels uncomfortable. And what's deeper inside or freer, or more expensive, we can do that with emotions. And one of the things that's interesting about that, is it's kind of stepping back from whatever emotions we're having, finding some degree of freedom in order to recognize what's there. And when we recognize what's there we can see start making a distinction between what of the flesh, not of the flesh, what's on the surface, and what's really deep inside, deeper and deeper. And those are part of the distinctions we can make to really start deconstructing what an emotion is. Not disrespecting emotions, but to really respect them and see clearly what's actually happening in this domain of our life.

So thank you. And so we have one more talk on this emotions, the last foundation that the Buddha gave, and the one that's most connected to liberation. And before we end, I just want to mention that so tomorrow after we finish it this time tomorrow, those of you like, we can switch over to zoom and have a community meeting for our YouTube community. And that zoom link will be listed if you put different places on What's new at IMC's website and the calendar at IMC and also on on the chat here a couple of times in the chat. And I look forward to those of you who want to come tomorrow and just hang out a little bit and have a meeting together. So, thank you.