

Shift Into Freedom Home Retreat with Loch Kelly

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1. Overview of Retreat

LOCH: Welcome everyone. It's really great to be here with you. Such a great space, great place, and a great opportunity to take a really long weekend and both do a retreat, meaning coming away from your everyday life.

In some ways the theme of this, rather than a retreat, is a return. The invitation is to return home to who you've always been, to find that which is essentially who you are at the deepest, most essential level that is both here and wherever you go. That is the sense of what we are looking for.

Often in a group that starts like this, with one person up front, then you are listening this way as if information is going that way, as if there is something coming from here to there. But much of what we're going to do is really present you first with just an overview or a hypothesis of what is possible, of what has been reported by many of the wise gals and wise guys from around the world from the beginning of time. What have they reported? What brings freedom? What brings happiness? What brings wellbeing? How have they found a relief from suffering?

The basic theme is a relief of a kind of suffering which adds onto the normal everyday ups and downs of everyday life, comforts and discomforts. There is a kind of suffering that is created by an identification, by a certain process of orienting identity and knowing. Once we relax that and discover what the alternative operating system is, people are reporting—not just the ancient wise guys and wise gals who sit in caves-- within an hour and a half, a few weeks, or a few months, a relief of suffering, a recognition of a dimension of your own consciousness that is already here and available. That can be accessed and includes everything about you, except the mistaken identity and the misinterpretation and the neurotic suffering on top of neurotic suffering.

That perpetual looping of thought and judgment, perpetually going to the past and projecting into worst case scenarios into the future, can be relaxed. What comes forth, and most importantly, is the discovery of the intelligence and the new operating system from which you can then live. So this isn't really about learning a kind of calming meditation. This is really about calming the agitated, chattering, mind only to discover this awake awareness that is already calm and clear, that is already accepting and loving, that is already connected and perceives a natural sense of unity without having to try to do that; without having to create a state.

What we will discover is, where we live from most of the time is, the altered state. What we are doing is we're returning to a natural condition which is underlying and essentially already available. But we haven't known how to step out of the current constellation, which is a very strong habit, and wake up from that.

Waking up from this looping pattern of the mini me, that's a little identity inside our heads, looking outside of our eyes, that's creating a lot of discomfort and perpetual dissatisfaction. Waking up and then in to this new awareness-based way of knowing. Then, as that, waking down into our bodies, including everything. Then discovering a kind of heart mind, non-conceptual intelligence, from which we can use our thoughts and experiences without becoming attached to them. Then we begin to perceive the kind of interconnected, non-threat based, non-shame based way of being with

what is. Being who we are essentially are without all the fear, worry, anxiety and secondary agitation and striving that is happening on its own, almost.

In some ways that's the premise or the hypothesis. Much of what we are going to do is learn a set of experiments, these pointers, these small glimpses. There are a variety of ways to do the same kind of unlearning, more than learning, in order to let go and uncover or discover this subtler dimension of consciousness which is now hidden. It is basically making a background- foreground shift. The faster moving thoughts and the stronger emotions are now being organized and looked to organize who we are and what's happening. We are going to step out and discover this-- drop down, look back, relax into, rest, turn around, tune in to this dimension-- which is empty but awake. Then that awake awareness will be able to include all of our thoughts and emotions from a vaster, more supportive, dimension of consciousness.

It's really just this figure ground shift that we've been trying to do with our minds, with our attention, with our will, with our efforting, with our best intentions but with the wrong dimensions of consciousness that aren't able to know the subtler dimensions. What we are going to discover are not only what we are aware of, but what can be aware of that. When we discover that, things will begin to show themselves.

The premise is that there is an awareness that is already awakened, inherently, in each of us, as each of us. It's as close as our breath. The whole interesting project that I've been interested in, is if it's close, if it's who we are, if it's here, if it's already available how? How do we access it? How do we recognize? How do we realize that's who we are? How do we abide? And, how do we live from there?

In some ways, those kind of movements of awareness basically give us a simple map of our own consciousness and some tools to navigate. Once we have these tools that can navigate and shift, it's not like we are leaving or transcending or denying our human condition. It's actually that we are able to transcend and include. So, we can include and, maybe for the first time, be fully human and feel like we are really embodied. Everything is accepted because what is accepting it is what's changed. We haven't monkeyed with the contents. That is not our interest this weekend—the contents or the symptoms or the personal constellations that each of us have that are different.

What we are looking at is the common human hardware, the common human consciousness, that is the same. It has a particular developmental constellation, the way it tends to be culturally reinforced and developmentally stuck in a certain pattern, a certain way of perceiving and knowing. If we can loosen that, step out of that, and discover this other natural potential, then it's like everything that we've been looking for outside is already here. Those qualities, those natural qualities appear as having been here all along. And, our sense of relief and freedom from striving, and from fear, relax. What shows up is something that you'll be telling me—I don't need to tell you. Once you do these experiments then we'll hear your honest report about what's here ... who's here ... what's going on ... what are you aware of ... and what's aware. In doing that, you are speaking truthfully from where you are.

By speaking from there, you are actually starting to rewire your functioning, your whole brain and your way of not only being, but doing from being. It starts to get you to live from this awake consciousness rather than making it something esoteric; really beginning to embody and talk and walk from here. By doing that you, are supporting its awakening rather than spending long periods of time in certain states. Those can be very restful. There is a time and a place for those and often they can be preliminary practices. This is a way of navigating. The dimension of consciousness that is reported to be found out after the preliminary practices is reported to be here fully, easily, and can ultimately live this

SHIFT INTO FREEDOM

Home Retreat

With Loch Kelly

life with some daily retraining of your ways of perceiving—which will be done through small glimpses of who you are. Small shifts. Small returning. Discovering and speaking from here.

That is pretty much all I have to say for the whole weekend. That is the premise. That is the thesis, the overview, the approach. Most of the rest of it is, how to do it. Where are we going? What's shifting? How, as we're shifting, which dimensions of consciousness are we going into? Where are we getting caught? How do we return.

Any questions or comments that came up while I was giving a sense or approach of both this weekend and of this approach to awakening in the midst of your daily life?

2. Question and Answer

Student: What would you say about the small self? At times you kind of divide the Buddhist perspective of “does it really exist, perceptions, thoughts, etc?” Where are you at with that issue—the relative self, the small self?

Loch: That’s something we’ll deal with right away. It’s important in terms of this approach. When you step out of this constellation of looping thoughts that’s become a kind of mini-me that you take to be the controller or the organizer or the manager—the ego managing identity—when you step out, you realize “oh, that’s not me; that’s not real.” But, what you then discover is, “oh, I still have a name, a body, a history, an ego function.”

The me, this me as a human being, is not lost. The only thing that is realized to be unreal is that patterning of commentary that tends to be felt like it’s a separate sense of self in my head, behind my eyes. That is the only thing that is unreal. Then you actually find that you are more human and accepting of your particularity, even while you start to realize unity with others and your sense of freedom from having to become anyone to be okay.

Yes?

Student: I think you were treading on theology at one point, yes?

L: I’ve studied a lot of things.

S: Okay. How does the soul fit in there?

L: The soul? I leave religion up to everyone’s individual preference. This has traditionally been taught by meditators, many different religions, often spiritual but not religious people. But the essence of making it common, the deepest expression of this expresses in different theologies yet meets at a place of common human consciousness that doesn’t need any of the theological leaps to be free on this level. So, you can bring and are welcome to bring, any religion and theology here. In some ways this is the heart of most contemplative religions and yet doesn’t need any religious language or metaphysical assumptions to actually be awake and free, which is kind of amazing. But it doesn’t exclude it either. You can bring your own—that’s you, your expression, your language, your culture. Whatever that is, great. It could fit in and make everything make sense. Or it could be, “Oops, maybe that wasn’t.”

The key is that we are exploring this language of human consciousness, but on the other hand it’s not just psychological consciousness. It’s not just psychology, it’s consciousness. What they are talking about in the deepest most subtle dimensions, where they are talking infinity and vastness and unity and interconnection and things like that. Whatever that is, that’s up to you.

We have to keep it on this awakening level and not get into theological, metaphysical debates. That way it remains very palpable. What’s here now, from where you are aware from.

Track 2

Yes? Anybody else with that?

S: You need the self to get to this other thing?

L: You tend to have your current self of self, so you start where you are. Maybe that's a better way of saying it. Because you have a self then it's fine because you tend to feel like you do. The way you are perceiving, the way most people perceive is that way. That doesn't get in the way.

On some level you could realize the awake ultimate nature at any level, from an infant on. But what we are talking about is the ability to live both as a functioning adult and from your ultimate awake nature. That takes some maturity or development of skills in the world so you know how to drive a car and you know how to go to work and type. Your vessel is kind of trained to live in the world. Then the identity is upgraded and the mistaken identity is relaxed and there is a sense of what just went away and what's here. Then you'll see from that. Does that make sense?

Yes?

S: How did this happen?

L: How did this happen? The how part is pretty good. The how is almost like a why or something. I don't know about the why or when—like, what was its origins; who knows?

There tends to be some way you can follow it just within our developmental scheme. One part of it is that as we grow from infants who are not able to function in the world by ourselves and are dependent. Then we develop some early state of independence. What happens is the consciousness develops—which is interestingly called in academic psychology, self awareness—at about 18 months to three years old. A child recognizes themselves in a mirror as a separate object. They recognize that they have a name. And they start to internalize "I shouldn't touch the hot stove ..." What they do, is they self reflect themselves as a subject and an object and the subject becomes a process of self reflection—it's thinking about thinking, about doing. So the thinker then isn't just about me—the human animal with a body—but it's about "I better not do that or I won't get what I need ..." Then it makes up all sorts of identities and stories. It creates a sense of shame based or fear based feeling of internalized identities like, "something is wrong with me ... what should I do?"

That little pattern of self-representation is really a function that is important for learning how to self-reflect about "what should I do? Should I cross the street or not?" But it's not the place of identity. That is the pattern that that you'll see. When we do the first couple of exercises you will see "what just went away? What relaxed?" It's that chattering mind. "Then what did I lose? Does that mean I can't make a decision?" No. That's like an extra developmental place or pattern that we can function from ... which is the problem, actually. We can function but we haven't learned how to develop to the next level of identity. That is really one way to look at it, is that you can grow beyond this self-referential ego identified sense of being a separate sense of self in your head that is trying to solve a problem about its problems, not about your problems in the world. Just about now. Even though there is nothing threatening in this room, if you thought about it just quickly, logically, there is probably a little problem solver like, "Uh, oh ... could be dangerous ... I hear

some sounds outside ... " It's monitoring hyper-vigilantly. But, it's about the safety. The little looping program has co-opted the body's boundary program and is taking itself to be a little entity that has a body and that's living in your head. You can't see it because you are looking from it and listening to me from it.

I'm only saying it ahead of time so when it goes you'll see what just changed and you will start to realize "it's just that pattern, not me. I didn't go. I'm here. I'm awake. I'm alert." But that little feeling of an entity that feels like it needs to get satisfaction in the world, and it needs to protect itself from threat of death, is perpetually dissatisfied. That is the Buddhist word, translation, for dukkha or suffering—this feeling of perpetual dissatisfaction. The low level anxiety that is always piggy-backing on anything else that is going right or going wrong. It's always trying to solve a problem. "What do I need to get? What do I need to do? What do I need to push away? What do I need to get in order to be okay?" It's always on this level of its own identity, then it piggy backs on other dimensions of external life, so it gets confusing. It feels like "no, that's just me that feels that it's really important to do this or that ..." So, it's looking for relief but it can never get it because it's not a real entity and there's nothing to satisfy. So, its perpetually dissatisfied.

If we step out of it and into our awake nature, you will see that everything else about you is here, except this perpetual dissatisfaction. That freedom from is the waking up from the separate sense of self. Then we have to discover what is the alternative for the intelligence and the operating system. Then we can begin to retrain to speak and walk from this sense of well-being and sense of connection.

This self-referencing, thinking, has co-opted the boundary program—meaning it thinks it's an entity. It's trying to get satisfaction ... piggy-backs on other things ... but it's perpetually saying 'is there a problem? Is there a problem? I have to solve the problem. ' Problem of threat ... problem of getting something to be okay. Then, for a moment you relax and it comes back and says, 'no, that's a problem. That's a big problem. Something is going to sneak up on me if I relax too much. I have to get back on the job and solve the problem."

It's happening in the background so you think 'no, I'm fine. I'm fine. I have a little twitch but I'm not that anxious today. But I better go do something. Maybe if I do that, I'll be okay. If only I can ... No, I won't. I'll stay very calm. I'll just accept everything as it is and then I'll be very loving to people (laughter). Then 'how come they are not loving to me ...?' It's always trying to move the pieces on the chess board; we're just going to step out of the chess board of that problem solver.

To start with, if that's its job, what if we were to relax that job of the problem solver by simply asking yourself this simple inquiry—just ask this question and then have awareness look to see what's here. Just ask yourself not, what's here now when there is no problem to solve on the level of ...

3. Inquiry - What's Aware Now?

Loch: So just now, just relax, let go. Let awareness look back. Nowhere to go. Nothing to do. What is this that's aware and awake? Just now, if there is no problem on any level of who you are, or what's wrong, or what's needed ... What shows up?

Just feel. Let awareness feel this, which is already awake without the problem solver as the manager. What do you notice? What is absent? What is aware? What are some of the qualities?

What's here now? What is this, that is aware, when you are not the problem solver? When there is no problem? You don't go to thought. You don't go to sleep.

Yes? What do you notice? Say a word or a phrase ...

Student: Emptiness.

L: Emptiness

... S: Peace.

L: Peace ...

S: Stillness.

L: Stillness ...

S: Awareness.

L: Awareness ...

S: Reality.

L: Reality.

S: Spaciousness.

L: Spaciousness ...

S: All.

L: All.

S: Completeness.

L: Completeness, yes.

S: Sinking in.

L: Sinking in ...

SO it's this that's aware of this. This is aware of this, not aware or orienting by thought. Curious. Palpable. But empty. What else do you notice?

S: It's at rest.

L: It's at rest. So, something already at rest, that was resting even before ...

S: Sensations.

L: Sensations, yes. When the awareness is not orienting by this entity, then we feel our body from within. This is what the aliveness, is part of our reality... sensations ... effervescent ... aliveness ...

And then something about the awareness ... spaciousness. Anyone feel that spacious dimension, either a little open or boundless or sense of your awareness being bigger than your head or your body? That kind of quality ... openness ...?

That is because we've moved the sense of identity which was located in this one small area, looking from here at everything. When it relaxes, the actual feeling of identity is spacious, open and fluid. That is the normal, natural sense of what relaxed, open... and you feel simultaneously your sensation and particular-ness. But you also feel, on the level of identity, there's an openness or a non-boundary. Identity is not boundaried in this little spot so it's everywhere, nowhere and here.

Getting used to that kind of feeling, which includes here in the chair feeling the weight of your body and feeling the aliveness. But, also on the level of identity, some kind of spacious flowing or interconnected dimension—unity, non-restriction, non-separation, non-dualistic feeling of being so solid and so separate.

Anyone else want to say it in their own words?

S: A continuous open here-ness.

L: Yes, continuous, open, here-ness. All three of those qualities at once. Here-ness is very much here; openness is the space and continuous is the flowing interconnected dimension. These are all the potentials when you are looking from this subtle dimension at this most subtle first. Then it appears as the more dynamic and then the more solid.

What is this like?

S: Wholeness.

L: Wholeness, yes. There is a wholeness too, which is like ... what's that?

S: nothing missing.

L: Nothing missing. In some way, all at once, everything is here all at once—wholeness, unity. Other people said that too.

What did you use?

S: Complete.

L: Yes, complete, wholeness ... that kind of feeling, like nothing to get. Acceptance ...

Anyone else notice anything?

S: The swinging door thing really becomes apparent.

L: In what way? It feels like it's going out and in?

S: Yes, through nothing.

L: Through nothing, yes. It's like breath is outside, breath is inside, but there is no inside and there's no outside. There is just breathing ... or maybe being breathed ... or some continuous ... that's the continuous part, that feeling.

This is the key, this is not an altered state. This is the feeling of the natural condition. When you walk around like this you also, simultaneously, feel very much ... "Hey, how you doing? I'm feeling like an open door, spacious, and interconnected. I'm also feeling a little like 'Hey what's up?'" Unlike here, I feel very ordinary and my body is fine. I can talk and walk and type. But the feeling of identity has changed from this (anxious sounds) with the face which is like this, "hello, how are you? Nice to see you ..." (laughter) to like, at first, like "Woww ... really?! Yes, really, that's really okay."

What are the effects of being a swinging door? There is some commentary that might have a little "I'm not sure about this ..." But the rest feels like ... what's the feeling ... tone ...?

S: Space.

L: Space. Freedom? A sense of freedom?

S: Yes, it's definitely swinging but it's in space.

L: Yes, so spacious and ...

That feeling, just letting that happen. That's the kind of returning to a more a subtle sense of consciousness as being included with the denser dimension. Denser dimension is still here. You are not just transcendent or spaciousness but the space is also feeling the energy, the continuity and the solidity. It's called Simultaneous mind.

There are simultaneous dimensions but the key is that we've freed the sense of being a separate sense of self that is dualistically perceiving and orienting by thought and living a second behind direct perception of what's going on by reflecting. "What just happened? What just happened? What just happened ..." You are not really right here. But now, do you notice how there is not anything? Because you are not going to the mind to reflect on what you are perceiving. So, there is direct perception ... unity, completeness, openness, aliveness, simplicity. What else?

S: awareness of being awareness to awareness being to awareness of this system, not that system.

L: Yes.

S: You see sections in this system ...

L: Yes, while remaining as awareness of awareness too? Or is it like one ... and then two? Either one is possible. Awareness of awareness and now come into this while remaining open?

S: Slipping back in ...

L: Slipping back in. Yes, that is the usual meditation experience—experience this dimension of consciousness ... and back to work. Like, "I had a good meditation retreat and now it's Monday morning ... gotta get some stuff done."

What we are going to do is discover this spacious dimension of awareness and, while feeling that that is the ground, include very much our body while remaining this continuous field that is also, on some level, connected to the person next to you while being very distinct on the physical level and somehow spacious. On another level you are not even connected to that person. You are like the space in the atoms of your body—you are in your body but you are the space in the atoms, which is 99.9% of who you are anyhow. Then, you are also part of the whole field of human energy and aliveness inside and out. So, simultaneously, you start to feel very free and you develop another dimension of embodiment, a different kind of embodiment.

You get a sense of that continuous now? You see how you can navigate it or play with it, so you don't go one/two—open/closed. As the openness you remain open while, from the openness—as this awareness—the awareness is out here and it is also in here. Then it's also everywhere else. That is the way it is. If you look from an electron microscope, you'd see there is no boundary between here and here; there is energy and space. On that level that is true. On this level this is still true. So, you are not one or the other. You are not spaced out; you are not just restricted to a separate human being, existential being.

Yes?

S: It has a palpable ... it's like empty ground is stable. It has a feeling like it just sits ...

L: Yes, when you are aware of this awareness, when there is no problem to solve, and this awareness is aware of itself, and then that awareness is where you are looking from, and it includes you aliveness both inside and out, then the

ground of who you are feels like the door is swinging. But on another level there is something like wholeness, completeness, all-at-onceness or something here.

Anyone feel that quality of ground? Or safety? Or solidity?

This is only the first half hour of the (laughter) ... We start at the end and then go back to the beginning ... go to the middle and then go to the end again. But the end is always here—the end meaning the ability to shift into this. Then, get used to it. Familiarize ourselves, support the sense of a new normal, which is pretty good. (laughter). Pretty much fun ... it's good on a lot of levels! The transition can be a little disorienting but once you realize “that is part of it because I was oriented in a way that was causing a lot of suffering ... so I have to get this oriented in order to be reoriented.” Then the reorientation is like, “Oh, this is great. This is the flow.” It's like being in a flow with life without struggle, without fight.

Yes?

S: You go from spacious awareness, this spacious love, to ordinary awareness. I don't want this ordinary awareness. Then you try to abide by the practice to get back to the spacious awareness and, personal where I get stuck, is that the try-er becomes the impediment.

L: That's right. What we are going to be working with actually, is what is moving, is the local awareness. The awareness is going to unhook from the try-er or the do-er. And, it still feels like that awareness is looking to this field of awareness. But then it hands the baton off, or it becomes a bubble of air into air, or drop of water into water, and then you are the air. That do-er/try-er is gone and then you have to feel—or what helps is feeling—that the awareness is what is aware and what you are aware from. That is called realization.

The first part is called recognition—you recognize spacious awareness. Then you realize that you are the spacious awareness that is aware of thoughts, feelings and sensations. It's that YOU-turn that we are going to play with quite a bit—that handing off, discovering the awareness, the awareness remains primary while it now includes. You are not going back and forth; it's not an either-or. It's this discovery of this move here—this dimension of consciousness—that becomes primary that then allows for the rest of it to not be going back-and-forth.

S: I wonder, is there a problem here with naming these things? Because I find that naming them is in part of the trying.

L: Words, if you get caught in labelling or in conceptualization or in the mind that is involved with labelling ... Distinguishing, if you say “here is how you ride a bicycle and this is called balance ...” Just naming it isn't hurting it. In fact, it's all about the feel. When you are doing it you could call it Magoo, or something, you don't have to. You know what it is and it's a distinct feeling that is really important. It's palpable but kind of invisible. Labelling it or thinking about it, is a problem but distinguishing it from other dimensions of consciousness is really helpful. That's the key.

The key is that the new knowing, that is non-conceptual, is what knows it to be true. Then that non-conceptual knowing can use words, thoughts, and concepts very easily without getting caught back in it. That is what we are going to be going to and we're going to explore these different traps—that system one, thinking based knowing, is always going to

try to co-opt. And if you are in that, you are not in this. If you are looking from there, you can only imagine that. But once you shift out of that, then it is more like a feel and you are like, “oh yes ...” But, it’s very distinct and you know “I’m here ... Oh, I’m here ... I’m here ... oh I’m here ... OH I’m HERE ... yes ...” then you let it be. Then poof ... you are living very easily and you know when you lose it, you go back to that. “Oh, that’s where I’m located ... here we go, let’s return ... okay ...” Then let be ... talk and walk from here ... and you start to distinguish it.

So distinguishing rather than labelling.

S: I hope this isn’t too personal ... when you wake up in the morning, fist thing, what state do you find yourself in—first thing, for you?

L: Many different states. But many times the awake-ness is resting before I’m waking. It wakes up before ... it’s already awake when I wake up. That can happen, and does happen. Sometimes I’m smiling in my sleep because I’m awake while I’m sleeping ... and sometimes I wake up with a thought that pops right back in, then I’m aware of that thought or it takes what it takes. But that’s the process.

The process is, everyone is always mixed with levels. Nobody is ever perfect and pure. Nobody, I don’t think ... supposedly Buddha died of eating bad pork (laughter) ... nobody is a super person. It’s about shifting the primacy. And, you are always mixed; you always have human dimensions of consciousness. Never perfect on the human dimension but that awake-ness, when it becomes primary, even 51%, just changes everything. That is discovering that that is what we are kind of about here.

Anyone want to say anything? Report? Question? Yes?

S: When I was listening to you talk about riding a bicycle by feel ...

L : Yes?

4. Grounded in Being

Student: What was interesting for me was “Oh wow, there is a difference between when I feel in balance, a sense of balance ...” The feeling comes first. The label is like an afterthought to cognitively make sense of what happened. But, I don’t identify with the word balance; I identify with the feeling.

Loch: Yes, that’s it. Beautiful.

S: I think that’s what you were saying I think there’s a sense of “Greg.”

L: Yes.

S: But my struggles, why do I keep identifying? As if that is who I really am? No more than saying “balance;” the word is what riding a bike is ... the feel.

L: That’s right. That’s right. It’s the feel of being. And when you feel being—and that’s what we are going to do ... what does being feel like?

When awareness comes back into initial inclusion of your human dimension, you will feel a sense of being which doesn’t have to think to be, and doesn’t have to do to be. That means doesn’t have to refer to the past, doesn’t have to label your name, your job, your resume, your current thoughts that are going by and go by all the time—all the automatic thoughts that you are used to—worry thoughts. All that is no longer who you are, your feeling of being.

Awareness plus humanness is a feeling of being. When you really get that sense of being, that is like a balance. That is where you are “ah ...” where it’s all like “I’m okay. Everything is okay ...” There is an innocence. There is a non-shame, non-judgement, non-worry, sense of okay-ness. From there, you can then include whatever situations you are dealing with in your life—from past, present, future planning or anything that is normal human life. But it’s that returning home to the ground, and then let’s see what is left—in terms of what stuff or issues, or problems. Or, what’s the next thing to say? How do we feel? How do we speak? What’s interesting to us? What’s our motivation now that we don’t have a “should” or a driven-ness or an “if only ... then I’ll be okay ... when I do this ... or become that ... or get this ... or do that ... or show them this ... or have people realize this ... or accomplish.” It’s now.

It’s not like, can you try to tell yourself through positive thinking that “I’m okay now ... I’m really okay.” That is just as much as a problem as the other. They are both systems of thoughts fighting each other in this dualistic world of the mind—positive thoughts are fighting and we’re trying to replace them. We are going to get out of the whole system and discover what is essentially already here ... establish that as primary through felt sense, through a balance, through a feeling. Is it true or not? Not, believing it but doing an experiment and see. Then familiarize. Familiarize and get saturated with that feeling of the new normal. Then be able to move, walk and talk from there.

That is the thought of how we can move from here. Any thoughts or questions about that at this point? Comments? Feelings?

Yes?

5. New Habits of Consciousness

Student: I think I am getting it and losing it. I'm very good at that (laughter). Losing it ... It's like I remember that I felt good but I cannot get back to that. I know it was real, it was real... then I couldn't get it back. I remember that it was true, but it was hard. It's hard energetically. I sometimes wonder ...

Loch: Yes, the old habits are very strong. They've got inertia. So the new habit is these small glimpses.

The first level is like somebody else playing the role so you don't have to play both roles in your mind to help you, or listening to a tape and being guided to it. Then, you have to learn how to do it. So, I'm saying the words or guiding, you are following ... unhook your awareness ... let it drop into your body ... don't look up to thought ... don't look down ... now let it open to the space ... and become aware of space ... now aware of awareness ... Eventually you start to go like this ... (long pause ... laughter) That's it.

You will just feel how to do that. That is the whole thing. It's making it your own at some point. We are going to break it down so you really feel "can I unhook from the mind and drop ...?" I'll lead you through it; now you do it on your own. What was hard? Okay, let me show you two other ways to do it ... now do it this way ... now do it that way ... go out this way first ... how was that? "That I can do ..." Okay, do it again. "Oh, yes. Yes, I can do that ..." Half a day later, now do that again.

Just like learning any new habit of consciousness you will learn how to do it on your own. Once you do, people report it's like any skill. You can learn it ...

What's that?

S: It's like riding a bike?

L: Yes, it's like riding a bike.

S: Someone can tell us 'til we are blue in the face how to do it, but you have to do it and fall down a few times.

L: Yes, that's right.

I was just watching a little child—very young, very young—with two parents trying to help them and they were like boom ... boom ... They were not even coming close. I was watching like, it may not be today ... (laughter) They may not get this today ... they will get this but ... They had helmet on ... elbow pad ... "Just peddle ...!" It was like, I have to watch this! I was going to watch the whole scene. I was like, this is a good metaphor but I don't think I'm going to get the balance metaphor today, it's not going to work (laughter).

It takes what it takes. It isn't easy, because it's new. But it's simple—meaning it's not complicated. That's the thing; it's not easy because it's new and we have other habits. But it's simple, meaning ...

S: It's simple but it's still a miracle, even ...

L: It is (laughter) ...

S: Like "Oh, what happened ...?"

L: That's right.

S: I want to give a quick report. I'm not there right now but it was interesting. I have heard many talks ... colonoscopy. And the cooking is very fast and tense and then the doctor does not appear. So I'm all cooped up and the room is humming. The IV is going, and the blood pressure contraption is squeezing. I hear this beep that I think is my car ... I think if I pay too much attention to it, I'm going to go crazy. The anesthesiologist is on his cell phone ... he also texts. He doesn't say "well I'm going to perform work ..." or anything. So I'm thinking I have to unhook from these things; I cannot keep waiting to see where to operate. I'm going to say "no, don't leave me. You can't do this ..." That's when I thought I would unhook myself—first there is going to be blood pressure pain, then there is oxygen ... last thing ... Then it's like why did I take that retreat for? Your retreat is in five days ... why did I take it? But I have to unhook from these things, the thought. I'm wonder now ... but it happens. So I go down, I'm going to do it ... these guys are talking to me. Who knows when I will get out of here? The room is humming. I go down and immediately I go up and I remember saying "stay ... stay ..." which works wonders. So I stay like a dog ... stay, stay. I don't know why, but I stayed. Then nothing mattered. The room kept humming, kept beeping, the doctor was still late, the anesthesiologist is not talking to me and I felt so relaxed and I was happy. That's amazing.

L: Yes. Beautiful. Why don't we take a 7-minute break? Stretching break, bathroom break, then we'll come back.

S: (personal with Loch) I do have something to report.

L: Okay.

S: It's inside, like a tickling ...

L: Tickling, like bubbling effervescent ...

S: It's better than getting high.

L: (laughter)

S: I'm just telling you.

L: It's bliss.

6. Shift in Orientation

Loch: Yes, just to say that it's wonderful to hear from all of you and connect. We'll be doing a lot of, as I said, pointers and experiments and individualizing them for you through our common human consciousness and your experience.

Everyone will go at their own pace and we'll discover that it's really not about learning or understanding or knowing that will help us; it's about this felt sense of a shift and how to do this subtle maneuver of awareness that you can't over think. It doesn't help if you intellectually understand the theory behind it or the theory behind Hinduism, Buddhism, contemplative theory. It's really a shift of location or where you are orienting from in what has been a common map of consciousness.

I've taught it where I don't even say anything. I've said "this is something called meditation, just try this ..." and then the reports are always the same, using language that is always similar about spaciousness, unity, interconnection, without ever introducing those words. That is my own little experiment to show, am I leading the witness by telling them the words? What if I don't say anything? What if I just say to a group of people who I walk into and they say "We have a meditation teacher." They say "What's meditation?" Then I lead them through. It seems to be a common human experience that these dimensions are available and, when you shift into them, out of this contracted state—into this spacious, embodied, open-hearted awareness—that the qualities of your ability to choose, to move, be non-reactive and to be natural qualities of love and connection seem to show up by themselves, as if they are inherent and just being covered over.

That is the important premise, that we are not trying to create positive states, that we are actually going to have to be more playful in order to try this ... You will also see that as we go through—like tomorrow morning we'll go through five different doorways for the same kind of principle—and for some people only one of them will work, some only three. The first one, no. The second one, no. Third one, no. Fourth one, Oh, that's what you're talking about?! Just be kind with yourself. Always have a beginner's mind. Don't worry. If the technique doesn't work it's not your fault, it's the technique's fault. There is another door that, when you find a good match, it will open. Then it will be like, "Oh, I thought I wasn't getting it ... and here it is ..."

The do-er, the try-er, the one that says "I don't think I can get this," is actually correct because the I that you are starting with, the one who is trying to get it, trying to meditate or trying to achieve it, that one can't get it. So, the move that we are going to learn is stepping out of that do-er and try-er. What is actually stepping out of it is that which is already awake in you. This is the strangest thing, that I'm actually talking to, through, your conscious conceptual mind and your organized ego identity that is trying to do something. I'm saying "We'll talk to you later. You can get on board, you are involved in this, but I want to talk to YOU, through you, to the awake you. Then, that awake you will unhook from the mind and open to discover its awake spaciousness. And, that awake spaciousness will always be where it's always been located, which is also embodied and inter-connected.

How is that for a crazy premise? (laughter) That you can't do it. This is what I finally discovered. I said, is that really true? Could that be ...? Yes, I think that's the only possibility. Otherwise, you have to sit until the other thing settles down. You know that other direct path, this is more of an inquiry method or a looking method or a direct looking method, surrender or turning awareness around. Whereas, the other direct method is the resting method or sitting method, which takes longer and the premise is "muddy water let stand becomes clear." So if you sit and do nothing for a long time, although it's painful in between, the chattering will slow down. But it may take joining a monastery or going to a cover for it to happen. Whereas, what we are doing it is we are going to learn to step right out of the cloud, into the sky, and then—as the sky—come back and include the cloud because the sky is always in the cloud. But, if we are only

oriented by the cloud and trying to fix it, we are never going to get out of it. This is the method.

Just to say, to make this retreat your own, the options here are to make this a silent or non-silent retreat ...

7. Options for this Retreat

Loch: It can be partially silent, partially non-silent. This room will be silent except we will be doing exercises and talking, but in terms of coming in here. There are badges there that say "I'm in silence," if you want to make this a silent retreat. Or, one day you do; half a day you don't. Whatever you need.

There will actually be three silent tables over in the far corner as you walk in the dining room, to the close side, far left. They will be silent. If you want to eat your meals in silence, go there and eat your meal in silence. If you want to meet everyone, it's more of a Tibetan style retreat where people talk and interact, we do practices and then you kind of practice talking, meeting people and just relating as you are integrating. That is good too; whatever you need.

So, you are welcome to use those badges, to use those tables, to be silent, and then interact on the level of doing these practices. Or you can kind of be at camp here and have fun, relax and talk to people outside when we have breaks. Then let people know "I'm going to take a break ... " or hang out by the water, or wherever you like to relax. Any thoughts or questions about that? Does that make sense in terms of making it your own?

So, just inquire again, with this feeling of awareness and just look again. If you step out of the understand-er or out of the controller or the manager, the do-er, the solver or problems, what is here now?

8. Inquiry - What's Awareness Like?

Loch: Just inquire again, with this feeling of awareness and just look again. If you step out of the understand-er or out of the controller or the manager, the do-er, the solver or problems, what is here now, when there is no problem to solve on that level? Not getting rid of any issues in your life, but now, just here, what is this? What is aware and awake without referencing or orienting by thought? But, treating thought like sensation ... What is aware? What is awareness like? What is awareness that is embodied? Show itself? What is shown? What shows up?

What is this lucid quality when it's interested first in itself as emptiness and awakens, and then includes everything? What do you notice?

Student: It feels innocent and amused.

L: Innocent and amused, yes.

S: Everlastingly home.

L: Everlastingly home, yes.

S: It's moving with an unknown purpose.

L: Yes. Moving with an unknown purpose, but moving.

Certainly the curious thing is this feeling of knowing that isn't looking to thought. It's not exactly just feeling, meaning feeling or emotional feeling, is it? It's not exactly emotional feeling or physical feeling, but it's not thinking. It's aware, something that is alert, but not thought based ... and embodied.

What else do you notice about it, when you are that? Or, knowing from that?

S: Settled aliveness.

L: Settled aliveness, yes.

S: Vastness and connection.

L: Yes, vastness and connection.

S: It feels like it wakes up my heart.

L: Yes, wakes up my heart. That is the open heart. And what is the quality of this kind of heart, this particular ...?

S: Nothing is excluded.

L: Nothing is excluded, yes. Some kind of inclusive, unconditional love. Almost like some quality of love or tenderness. Anyone feel that?

Accepting ... Not changing your body; letting it be just as it is. And yet, notice the awareness that is here as well. And not changing your mind or your thoughts, but just letting your mind be tired, comfortable or uncomfortable, active or relaxed ... Letting it be ... Noticing it and also notice the awakesness that is not tired, that is not comfortable or uncomfortable ... that is not in pain.

Even while your body rests, this is resting deeper than sleep, as that which is wide awake. Just noticing that, first, from the awareness. What do you notice?

It's almost as if your body and mind can go toward sleep but it can't because the awakesness is so awake. You can rest even deeper in a stillness that is alert. Or, your body can just get ready for sleep. Maybe even take a deep breath in ... just feel like you can let go on the level of mind and body, yet feel this support.

That is a beautiful transition into sleep (laughter). Thank you all so much for tonight. We will play again tomorrow, 9 a.m. So meet here at 9, 9 til noon, and we'll take a bunch of breaks and little movement exercises and stuff so we won't always be sitting. We'll get to go through some of the basics pretty thoroughly so it will be nice.

Have a sweet night and I'll see you in the morning.

9. The Three Levels of Movement- Letting Awakening Be Normal

Loch: Good morning.

Everyone: Good morning.

L: I hope you all slept well and are landing here physically. Sometimes you get here physically and then the rest of you arrives a little later (laughter) in some sense. But, just getting adjusted and just be kind to yourself. This is your retreat; that is one of the most important things, to make it your own. Feel like you get that rest for your body, your mind and your emotions. Taking some nice breaths and enjoying the beautiful nature. Take some walks. Physically, take care of yourself by taking a walk, if you like the lake. Stretching, this whole area in the back can be used for stretching and moving. We may play some music at some point, maybe some Temptations or something (laughter), get a little dancing going.

When you come, you all can gather if you want to talk, outside to each other when we take breaks ... or not. Just feel like when we're here we have a certain intentionality of focus ... but not too tight. (laughter). That is a lot of what this is about, is not too tight, not too loose, right. You get too loose, you fall into a trance or you fall into a sleep state or, you even fall into a meditation state—which is not what we are really interested in. I'll talk a bit about that a little bit later.

Maybe I'll start with three quotes about silence. The first one is by a very famous person, called Anonymous, (laughter) who's written a LOT of things. (laughter) So, Anonymous says: *"Silence is not the absence of sound, but the absence of self."* Then, I would add to that *"Awakening is not just the absence of self but the presence of open-hearted awareness."*

Then Rumi says, *"When I am in silence I fall into a place where everything is music."* And, that's where we are looking. So the recognition of the transcendent, pure absence of this current self—the pure awareness—and then as the pure awareness is primary and comes back and includes this dancing aliveness in this particular precious human birth. Then, perhaps, we can be fully human for the goal—not to transcend the human condition but to access this dimension of transcendence that is including and is able to actually be sensitive and courageous.

That is the little preparation, that we are here for ourselves and that we are compassionately here for everyone. That we are dedicating our practice not only to our own personal freedom from suffering, but that we are interconnected to recognize, from the beginning, that we're interconnected to our family, our friends, and our circles, all the way out to all of humanity—past, present. We are grateful for those who have helped us in the past and we're passing this on, even if it's just through our own way of being different with others.

Does that seem like a good intension to have from the beginning? It helps us know why we are here and not get too precious with "how am I doing?"

I'm going to say a little about the approach, or the way of learning, and then we're just going to dive in to different practices.

Again, the unique thing about this is, in some ways, this is ²³kind of a direct approach to awakening, whose purpose is to live an awakened life—live from awakening. The sense is that this is the next natural stage of human development. This

isn't just an esoteric thing—like for Olympic athletes of meditation. This is our natural condition. It's possible, it's learnable, and teachable, just like other stages of development.

Around the world, we know now from developmental psychology and anthropology, that most kids in all cultures develop the same types of learning, naturally—like one through seven. They learn different ways, skills ... language comes on line, and all that. When you get to school age development, if you don't go to school and learn to read and write, you don't learn to read and write. You have the potential to read and write but if you don't learn to read and write, you won't learn how to read and write.

The natural stages of development happen in some ways. But, here we are, you have the potential to awaken and you can awaken if you go to this school of awakening. If you apply this, the potential is here to learn to shift from this way of operating to system two. System one is thought based knowing and ego identified sense of identity based on that pattern. System two is awareness based knowing and open hearted, heart centered, heart mind oriented being. So we are going to look a lot and recognize, when am I in system one? When am I in system two?

We are used to operating from thought-based ego –centered way of processing and, particularly, of learning. Most of what we've learned is through concepts—compare and contrast—learn information, repeat it back on a page to everyone else ... So this is not about that.

This is getting an impressionistic map of some of these new territories but not being too worried, as I put things up, about different levels of mind or stuff. Just get the just of it. Then when you feel it, you can call it whatever you like.

You don't have to feel like you need to understand it. That's part of why I wrote a book, so it's like a text book; you can go back if you are interested. You can go back and look at it. If you really want to know what it's like, it's all written down. It's clear. "Oh, that was in the first level ... Oh, that's what that is like ... Oh the second level, everyday mind ... subtle body ... spacious awareness ... embodied awareness ... open hearted ... Oh, that's that ... that's that ... okay."

It's a very simple map, but it's just to help you navigate your own consciousness. The goal is to give you tools at the end of this and have some support through the book, audio and other online courses and thins, to be able to do it on your own. To learn it and then apply it. Have the confidence and trust that you can learn it good enough, and get enough support that you can repeat it. First, through the support of asking questions here and checking it out—particularly questions about how to" Or, what's this? Or I seem to be here ... It's very experiential level; we are not here for a philosophy, a theology or any discussions around that. This is about the practical how to.

I ask that you have a beginner's mind. Not every approach is for everyone. If you are new to this, check it out. Give it a go. This doesn't work ... that didn't work ... that didn't work ... Just stay open. This didn't work ... "Oh wow! That one ... wow! I thought I wasn't getting it. I thought this wasn't for me." Boom, something shifts, then stay open and curious.

One of the main qualities from open hearted awareness, from the second system of knowing—heart mind—is a kind of natural curiosity rather than judgement. First, dualistic level mind—judgement, compare and contrast, or compare and despair (laughter) is the usual way of operating. The statements "how come everyone else is getting it? I'm not going to get it ... I'll never get it ..." as I said last night, that is absolutely true because the I that is doubting is not going to get it.

You'll get it but that one that says "I'll never get it," won't get it. The one that is trying to get it or "I should be getting it or I'll never get it;" all we need to do is recognize "Oh, that's system one. That's the little mini-me. That's the commentary from the doubting mind. That's the doubting mind, a constellation of consciousness that I awareness can be aware of."

This is very important because, as we learn, we are going to need to recognize what I call the mindfulness move. The word mindfulness is the ability to step back and observe. Mindfulness move is "I can't believe this... these people are all very nice people, having these wonderful experience, but I don't think I'll ever get it ... how come I never ..." Then the mindfulness move is "oh, that's a thought. That's system one. That's the doubting mind." Now you are here, aware of "there go thoughts ..." I can get on that train and then I am that, which I believe. Or, if I step back or, eventually, even go further and drop down, open up and come in and include, I'll see "that's one way of operating. If I believe ..."

It's actually more than believing the story, it's actually literally you are in the constellation of consciousness. The constellation of consciousness is looking out of your eyes. You are looking up to thought; thought is looking to thought—thought is going to past and future, it's scaring you into emotions, it's making you feel angry, separate, isolated. Those emotions are constellating and "that's who I am." Then, you step back, drop down, open up and realize "Oh, those thoughts are here ... and, there they go ... Now, another thought, feeling and emotion is coming by ... Isn't that interesting ... I thought that was me; that's not me. Oh, it is me ... it's not me ..."

We'll do that. We'll even discover that you can step out of your mind, step back in, just to get the sense of these different band widths or radio stations that are playing. If you are in the station, you think that is the only kind of music there is—it's loud, crash, bang music. If you step back, you get the silent music. Now, listen to the music and change the channels. Now you have access to your own consciousness the way you learn to have access to your body, by being able to walk somewhere or drive a car. You get to move your body in yoga or in other types of choices; this is a choice and tools to navigate your own consciousness.

Like in yogic system and in meditation system, forty years ago yoga was considered weird and very few people did it; they were just starting to know it. Now, in New York City, there is a yoga center on every corner where they replaced all the bars (laughter). It's normal, everyone is carrying their mats around. Yoga ... sure! Before, it was esoteric.

Twenty years ago mindfulness meditation, or other kinds of meditation, were considered odd, weird, or certainly even by people studying psychology ... then the neuroscientists came on board and then it became more culturally clear that scientifically there is tremendous improvements for stress, your brain, and blood pressure. Then all of a sudden the mindfulness movement—mindfulness and meditation—are a little more common.

The next progression is awakening. Mindfulness was weird. Yoga was weird; now yoga can be done. Meditation was weird; meditation can be done. Awakening is weird; awakening can be done. We are just normalizing it, checking it out. I have neuroscientists I'm working with that are showing ways to stabilize your body and brain through awakening, that it's different than mindfulness. It's the next generation and just as simple and measurable in its effects. That is where we are going.

Student: You gave that a term, the mindfulness move?

L: The mindfulness move is stepping back to observe your identification with consciousness. Any time you step back out of being completely identified with thoughts, feelings and sensations that are occurring, you become mindful. You are

actually moving to the subtle mind of the mindful meditator, the mindful witness, of, what a moment ago, was taken to be you.

We are actually going to go three more moves beyond the first mindfulness move. So mindfulness, great, wonderful, positive thing to learn. And, in the tradition that I learned, there's what's called deliberate mindfulness—is the first level—and then what we are going to learn is effortless mindfulness and heart mindfulness. There are two more stages of what's been taught for thousands of years but mostly, in the Tibetan tradition, in monastic settings after three year retreats. But then the teacher I met, Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche who I met in Nepal back in the 80s, had done three three-year retreats. He realized after doing that, that at eight years old, his uncle had given him these instructions that we are doing here. He had gotten it at eight years old and said, after three three-year retreats, it was the same thing; there was nothing added from the three three-year retreats that he needed. He decided at that point, "I'm just going to give it out to anybody who asks because not everyone is going to go to all these retreats. And, it doesn't seem like they are necessary."

So, I started with that fortunate introduction and said, "Good, let's learn how to do it," and particularly for our culture rather than just Tibetan culture. My project has been to simplify, clarify and check it out, keep checking it out, make sure it's true, it's working, it's real, and it's stabilizing. That's what we're doing here, is playing with this.

Just remaining open—open minded, open hearted.

Yes?

S: Would you repeat those three stages? Deliberate awareness ...?

L : Yes, these are mindfulness: deliberate mindfulness or basic mindfulness—which is one-pointed focus, attention on the breath, vipassana. Then, effortless mindfulness—which means we are going to shift out of the small mind trying to do one-pointed attention or the mindful meditator trying to watch contents, to pure awareness and, from the spacious mind which is called nature of mind or natural mind, it will look at our breath and objects and realize that our mind is not wondering because we are not looking from the wandering mind. So, we are able to effortlessly focus and attend and even do those programs—Luminosity programs, those brain programs; you can do it quick, better and have more concentration from this natural mind—so you can function better from awake mind.

You get all the effects of basic mindfulness/ deliberate mindfulness for your brain and your body and now we are going two more levels: effortless mindfulness. Then we come back into heart mind. Now we are like "oh ..." Joy and love ... well-being, non-fear, non-shame ... Now the psychological identities, the deeper identities, start to awaken and freedom from the driven-ness to become somebody ... From heart mind and a sense of being—there is being, well-being, safety, okay-ness. Then, being able to relate, create and function, is the last stage of open-hearted awareness; being able to live, talk and walk without going back to form an ego manager in your head.

We are going to navigate this by unhooking, dropping, opening, becoming aware, including, and then relating and creating. We are going to break it down a little bit. You can go right there. In some ways, that "what's here when there's no problem to solve" for some people—I'm sure for some people that wasn't the best or good enough

introduction but for many it was. It can take you right to the fifth level so you don't even have to go through it because it just shows up because it's natural.

Then we are going to give you some tools to move through so you know what they are. So when you get caught, you don't end up too spaced out, or too blissed in (laughter) although that is not too bad for a while, right? (laughter) "Hello ... I'm very happy ... (laughter) I don't know what time it is ... I may not make my next appointment, but it's okay ..." (laughter) You don't want to get too blissed in, or too spaced out. You can't walk around like that. But find out what that is, and what this is. This is the subtle body, subtle body presence/inner body presence which Eckhart Tolle calls it. Very calm. We'll test that out and then we'll open to pure awareness, which some systems say is the end goal. But then from pure awareness and as pure awareness, we'll embody, find this heart mind and then stay here instead of going back up to learn what it feels like to live from this—where meditation leads.

The systems of yoga lead from ethics to physical relaxation, to mental relaxation, to concentration, to what is called Samadhi. This is starting with Samadhi. The Buddhists' 8-fold path also—right livelihood ... up to right concentration and right mindfulness. This is right mindfulness.

Assuming that you've all done, and probably may not admit it to yourself, but I think you've all done the basics and are working on the basics of basic ethics. I say you all have very good ethics and people go "oh no, I don't; I can think of five examples where I ..." But basically what they are talking about, which trained as the first level to children in monasteries, you have got the ethics, basically working on it—you've got relationship, emotional/psychological life better than most, and you will continue to work on it. My feeling is anybody's that's here has the basics that is ready to awaken. You have the basic training. You have the basic creation of your vehicle of maturity.

In fact, you can only grow up to a certain level without waking up. Your ego identity can only get to a certain place where you actually start to become more neurotic and you become too smart for your own good. You start to go, "what am I doing to do? I'm trying to get better but I can't because every time I do, these thoughts come in ... I try to do that, but then ..." The ego-centered life can't handle a full emotional, intimate, life. It's too small an identity to handle full sensitivity to what's happening. It's got to control, repress, deny, fight, flight, freeze, please ... Right?

What we are doing is increasing capacity, going to the foundation of a new level of identity and knowing.

Any questions, comments about that?

S: About technique, is it better to practice with eyes open or close? Does it matter?

L: Yes. Ultimately eyes open. Learning it for this time, whatever you like to do. But the first practice I'm going to teach you this morning is how to support having your eyes open while you do all of these practices because why? That's how we live. If you can only do it like this (eyes closed), then you are in a meditation state. Then, as soon as you open your eyes, if the thought based knowing and ego-centered manager comes back, then that was only a nap. You just took a nice nap. You may be calmer ego but you are still in the dualistic struggle.

Whereas when you do it with your eyes open, now you start talking from here, walking from here, relating from here, talking from here, typing from here ... You'll start to actually support your whole full awakening.

Yes?

S: Excuse me, can we discuss air quality in this room? I find the air is very dead

... L: It seems like the fan didn't go on or something. Let's see what happens.

S: Last night was good.

L: It's on auto ... it's on cool. There you do. I think they set it high last night. Thank you for saying that. How is that?

S: Get some air. That's much better.

L: Yes?

S: Is effortless mindfulness like ethics call flow?

L: Yes, that's pretty close. That's as close as you get. There are a few more moves that help or make it even an enhanced flow. Flow-state is pretty much the first clear way that most people experience effortless mindfulness. That is the difference—with deliberate mindfulness you are very conscious "I am picking up a raisin ... I'm aware of lifting it ... I'm moving it to my mouth ... now I'm chewing it ..." You are very attending to the present moment. Whereas, in flow, you're just in a flow and you're picking up that raisin and you know it but you are also aware of everything else that's going on ... time has slowed down ... you feel in the now ... you can do two things, eating and relating ... and everything is like a unity.

S: So athletes trigger that physically first?

L: Yes, that's right.

S: There is a physiological response that turns into the other?

L: Yes. This is good to go into. This is one way to talk about it: when you learn something or do ten thousand hours of something—you play the violin, you play sports, you knit, rock climb ... or scientists talk about they do their science—you do any task that you have basically trained your memory and your functioning, ego function, to be able to do it, so you know it by heart. It becomes second nature, the functioning of it.

Then, once the functioning is online, you don't have to think about thinking, about thinking, in order to do that—to play the violin or even typing. I walk into an office in New York and "Yes, Hi. Can I help you?" The person is typing ... "they will be here in a minute ... I'll just get back to you." I'm like "how is that person doing that?" (laughter) If you think about learning typing, it's a good metaphor. Like riding a bicycle, you have to learn the keys; but once you learn the keys it becomes second nature—probably less than 10,000 hours, you are now in a flow. You are looking here and you are typing. You ever see these kids on the texts with their thumbs ...?

S: In the winter they go with their gloves.

L: Oh, yes? They do?

To say that we are going to experience this dimension of already okay, void, peace, infinity ... and yet that will help you be in a flow to be able to live a human life. That is the purpose of it, to live free of ... Does that make sense? That is the goal.

The 10,000 hours ... Usually you learn—and there's even websites like Superman—where you get into a flow by doing extreme sports. You learn extreme things in order to get there. What I'm saying is, that the actually the flow is already here; let's apply it to things we've already done 10,000 hours of. Which is? Walking ... talking ... language ... typing ... In other words, you've done 10,000 hours of basic human functioning. Now, if you can shift into this awareness base and just get it online. It just takes a little rewiring to make it flow-capable. Then it becomes more from open-heartedness rather than just from mental zone. You are actually in a more compassionate ... You start to see everyone as yourself. You start to feel, "oh, that's me ... there we are ..." There's a connection and a sweet tender compassionate quality that comes online.

So, we've got that going for us. Yes?

S: I imagine when we are able to take that for everyday things that we do, like you said, then we can move into other things with that much more ease.

L: Exactly.

S: Maybe it's not 10,000 hours ...

L: That's right, exactly. That's replying to hers; it isn't about the task, it's about the task will get you into a flow, whereas I'm saying no, let's get into the flow and then do tasks—you can do any tasks.

If you read this guy who did the research, Chipset Mahey—a Hungarian name—from Chicago, he says he makes these lists. He's a very academic. "You lose a sense of individual self. You enter a timeless presence ..." He's using these words about what the reports are from everyone. It's basically like an awake higher functioning state. That is kind of what I'm saying.

From consciousness, this is a higher capability of human beings that is already available, that people have found ... But often—athletes are a good example—they are able to do it on the court but then when they get out of it, their lives, they have the temptation on the other side of extreme—money and quick fame and stuff like that. They are not handling it so well because they are not in the flow. They are doing it in their sport but they don't know how to do it their life. They are actually feeling this rift. I've talked to some like that.

Any other questions? Comments about this? This premise that it's possible?

10. On Vision and Spacious Awareness

Loch: Interestingly—and also let me know if when the fan goes on, you guys in the back can hear me okay because we do have the option, because we are recording, to do a little sound that we can amplify a little when the fan is on. Are you okay with the hearing at this point?

Student: yes ...

L: Great.

S: Can I ask a question before we move ahead?

L: Sure.

S: I'll preface it with a little story. I don't know if any of you know the story of Krishna Das taking Maharajah for a drive? Maharajah was the guru or a number of people that we all loved, like Ram Dass. One day he (Ram Dass) asked him to take him for a drive to the beach. As he was driving to the beach, Maharajah was freaking out about everything—you're driving too fast ... be careful ... you're going to kill us ... He (Krishna Das) was like "this is my guru. He's an enlightened being. Why is he so nervous about driving?" He (Krishna) said it was all the way there; all the way back it was like that.

My question is, do you have any thoughts about meditation for ADD-ers? (laughter)

L: Yes. In fact, the effortless mindfulness, I've used it with many people with ADHD/ ADD and particularly teenagers (snaps fingers) like within 3 sessions I can teach them. This effortless focus dimension, which is actually an early stage of effortless mindfulness, is like the cure for ADD. It's ridiculous.

I don't know if it works for everyone, and I haven't put it out there yet, but those I've worked with, and just general distractibility that we all have because it's a way of focusing—not from trying to get the moving mind to try to focus on everything.

I have a little ADD/ ADHD and a little dyslexia. I'm sure that I learned this to help myself. I'm sure I became more enthusiastic about the results because I felt so different. So, it is something about ability to focus from a different level of mind. You will see a bit—we'll do a little bit of that in this first exercise.

One of the interesting things is, in terms of this shift of identity and knowing, is that is Buddhism thinking is considered the sixth sense. We know the five senses, right? Thinking is a sense; it's not elevated to identity. It's a very important function so it's not denigrated—all the senses are important—but all the senses appear to the nature of mind, awake awareness.

Thinking is a labelling sense—flower—but then it doesn't say "flower which reminds me of the flower I used to have ... oh my God, my grandmother used to have a garden but at that time I wasn't so happy are our house ... that she made some good apple pie ..." That's associative thinking and identity and memory start to create this orientation who we are and they take over. So we are in our minds, we are living in the chattering orientation, trying to find stability there whereas if we let thinking appear to awake awareness—and awake awareness is using thinking in the background, like a program available but the popups aren't happening all the time. If you need it, you click the mouse and you have the information you need, then let the program go down. You wait til you need it again. Microsoft Word isn't needed all the time, to be running.

What's running is alert intelligence and potential to respond, which is basically peace of mind.

The two main senses that in humans can be over-dominant are thinking and then seeing, is the second one because, in humans, seeing is very much related to survival. We are very much about what's going on out there. Some animals are very ear oriented, or smell—deer can't see very well so if you are down-wind they will know you are there but if you are up-wind then won't. They can't distinguish.

Humans are looking and the eyes and the brain—40% of the brain is related to the eyes. The functioning of the brain is related to the function of the eyes. So we're scanning for danger all the time when we are in this pin-pointed "what's going on ... "We're looking at little micro-expressions—if somebody is asking questions and I go (makes face) (laughter) then they will go, "Oh no, this reminds me of that Sam ... I can't believe ... it's the same as it's always been ... nobody loves me (laughter)..." Not necessarily always conscious, sometimes unconscious, but that little (makes face) (laughter) ... we're looking as we're talking to somebody; we're reading their (expression). "What's happening ... am I safe ... am I in danger ...?"

The safety and the danger—emotionally, physically—is being read by the eyes and the brain. The brain is referring to the past, and the past is being projected into the future. But, as soon as you drop out of that, you will see "oh, this person's trying to pick a sesame seed out of their teeth (laughter) ... or they are thinking about something else—they are thinking "what am I going to do after I finish talking to this person." You realize they are just having their experience; I don't know what it is. When they speak you are sometimes surprised, right?

What we are going to do is called returning the eyes to their natural state. In some ways it's also about ways to support open-eyed meditation, ways to allow you to let your eyes be less pin-pointed and relax into their natural way of being.

First thing is just soften your eyes. Feel like your eyes are soft. Then feel like you can look at the table or an area so that you don't pinpoint me, or the cup ... you kind of look at the whole. You are kind of looking sideways, like all at once. You see everything on the table but you are not looking at this, or this, or this. You feel that? You are un-straining, unbinding here. This is unbinding, so you now you feel a little this direction, right?

Now feel like your eyes are almost floating in their sockets, or there are little cushions or supports so they can drop in. Breathe in and smile ... Now you can take your fingers and create a soft lens ... you are looking at the top ... now look at the sides ... now looking in a circle ... look at the bottom ... You are looking like the soft lens of a camera, is the feeling you get.

As you are looking forward you are just including the top ... including the side ... including the bottom, right? You get a circle feeling to that, to the way of perceiving? Does that make sense?

The other thing about seeing is we tend to feel that seeing is like our hands, as if we are going “Look at that ... look at that ... look at that ...” Look at that. Now look at that. You notice how you kind of go, almost like you are going out to see something? Seeing is like “okay, pick up that ... look at that ...” It seems like you are going out. Is that what it feels like, going out to see?

But, we know pretty experientially, even if we haven’t thought about it, that hearing is receiving. Hearing comes from somewhere (sound of bell ring). Sound waves travel through space; they come to your ear drums; your ear drums vibrate. So, hearing is receiving, right. Just feel what that is like (sound of bell ring).

You can feel there is nothing to do. You don’t have to go out to hear something. You are not like “what’s that ... what’s that ... what’s that ...?” (sound of bell ring) You trust ... either focus on the heard or the hearer, just hearing (sound of bell ring). That in itself ... you can start to feel the whole field, but on one level—physical level—hearing is receiving.

The way the eyes work is the same as the ears. Seeing is receiving. Light reflects off of objects and comes to your eyes. Sound vibrates through; light comes to your eyes. You are not going out to see. Seeing is receiving. Let yourself receive and rest back into awareness that is receiving everything—receiving you, receiving your sensations, your thoughts, your sight, your hearing. Stay home, and, let your doubting mind that you can’t be any safer by thinking you are going out because one important fact is light is travelling at the speed of light. Therefore, you can’t get any faster trying to grab it ... “Let me go look at that ... what’s happening?” You actually become like a tai chi master rather than a military guard. A military guard, “Who’s there ...? Who goes there ...?!” You are able to respond by receiving.

You feel that? What does it feel like to feel like seeing is receiving, and it goes to this kind of awareness? You notice a shift?

That is the setup to this. Now, we are going to open our peripheral vision. What opening peripheral vision is, is not moving your eyes ...

We’re not going to open the window, sorry.

S: I’ve had this debate with many people. You can open the window and have air conditioning ...

L: But what it will do is make the cold air come on stronger for those sitting under the cold air. I’m sorry, but I’m going to ask you to close the window. Thank you. Because people are too cold; it will bring in warm air and then heats up and then cold air comes out everywhere but there.

S: I may have to leave ...

L: Okay. We’re going to try to find the best for everyone. That’s all we can do.

S: Yes, but I’m telling you I’ve had this discussion with a lot of people—people with chemical sensitivity, like myself, are like this. And we find, many people find, a combination of air conditioning and this will work.

L: I think the sensors here, if you want to open that one back there ...?

S: Okay.

L: Does that make sense to everyone because we don't want to get too cold.

So, letting your eyes rest this way, letting your eyes soften. Feeling like this plane is open ... and then there's receiving ... Now, as we open peripheral vision, your eyes are still looking straight ahead. You are already seeing here, but because your brain is pin-pointing in general, you are not able to open to peripheral vision. So, what's moving, what we are going to move, is awareness around—which opens your peripheral vision. And then, we are going to continue to have awareness move to the side where sound is coming and going, and have awareness continue to open around behind you. So there is a 360-degree panoramic feeling of awareness.

If you want to do this, you can do this, if it helps—you can use your fingers, or not—top open til you get to here. Then you can drop it and feel like awareness continues around.

What this does, is this will open up this point of view and allow you to feel like awareness is starting to be the mover. Local awareness on each side, just start ... you can either look with your soft receiving sense, either straight ahead or a little bit up, like you are sitting on a beach looking at the sky ... If you want to not not look at the wall, but almost like if you put your hand up and then drop your hand, you want to look at space—you want to look at the space between you. So look at the hand and then let go of the object so you are not looking at it; you are looking at space in front ...

Then, gently at your own pace—without straining—start to open awareness around to the sides. As you get to a certain point, again, breathe in and smile ... Then as you let awareness continue, to notice the space at the side of your head in which sound is coming and going and let that local awareness continue to move around ... until you are aware of the space behind your body in which sound is coming and going.

There is a feeling of a 360-degree panoramic awareness, as if you have an open view. There is equally space in front, space to the sides, space within, space behind. Feeling that local awareness is aware of the space behind you, around you ... so your view is open. Your view is open panoramically, spaciouly ... You are aware not only of movement and sound, but awareness is interested in content-less, aware space. Notice the kind of relief from self-centeredness and chattering mind.

Now, just curiously, ask yourself this question and see what it's like if you do this shift, "Am I aware of the spacious awareness, and what's that like? Or what's it like when I am aware from spacious awareness, back to feel thoughts, feelings and sensations?" Looking out ... being free ... then as the spacious awareness, what is it like as the spacious awareness, to feel back within and notice thoughts, feelings and sensations, formally known as you ...? That that feeling that is the new ground, is the awareness that is feeling both outside and in, simultaneously.

You can feel that there is neither outside nor in. Notice the space between you and the wall. Notice the space between your eyes. Notice the space between your ears. Notice the space behind your back. As that awareness goes back behind you, it can discover an awareness that is already aware, that is coming forward, and that's all around. It's like surrendering back to that which is already feeling forward.

As you receive light with your eyes, you feel like there is an open-hearted connection panoramically, all around. And, that the ocean of awareness is arising as you—this wave of aliveness, where you are. The ocean, you are aware of the spacious awareness; spacious awareness is aware of itself. Then, what's it aware when you are aware from spacious awareness, when spacious awareness is what's aware? Feeling into thoughts, feelings and sensations.

Notice from this spacious mind that you can gently focus on one object—like the flower or the plant—and you can also feel your breath. The primary feeling is the spacious awareness aware of itself. That is aware of your breath inside, while it's aware of the plant outside, because the awareness is happening from this field of awareness that is both inside and outside. Just notice this quality of equality and balance, freedom from the small point of view.

Feel the aliveness in your body, movement of sound all around—as the second field ... and then the ability to focus as your breath is moving at your nostril or your heart area ... Rising ... falling ... and then also the ability to focus on one task or one object from this unmoving nature mind. Spacious ... clear ... empty but awake.

Feel like it's happening by itself. That's the effortless part, that you are choosing to focus but you're not concentrating effort-fully in order to have focused awareness while open awareness. Open awareness is able to focus from open awareness ... simple ... alert ... attending to life in the relative dimension from the spacious awake empty ground.

The next thing to add is, from here, you can stay in this open field and just change your view a little bit by just slowly looking around so that the outside starts to change but you still feel this inside and outside, and you that you are aware from the spacious. Notice how you can get caught back in the wanting to know “what's that? Oh, that's something new ...” Just keep returning or tuning back into the simultaneous, continuous field of the ground that is able to able to focus inside and out.

Now just beginning to report from this experiment, what are you aware of? What's new? What's real? What's here? What's this like? What's absent? What's present? What would you say?

S: Relaxing.

L: Relaxation. There is an immediate effect on body and mind, getting out of that strategizing little mini-me.

What else do you notice?

S: No preference.

L: No preference, right. No need to get something, do something, to be something. Everything is just as it is.

Yes?

S: Floating.

L: Floating, yes. Kind of a floating feeling of flow and like space; more airy and buoyant.

Yes?

S: There's no problem.

L: There is no problem. Nothing to solve. Nothing to get rid of. Nothing that is needed to be okay, right now.

S: I'm not sure about awareness behind me ...

L: To about here?

S: ... peripheral vision and then awareness behind me seemed more like a conceptualism, an idea.

L: Or imagination.

S: Right.

L: Yes, we'll work on that a little bit later and we'll see what the difference is between imagining being behind your back and actually having awareness feel behind your back. That, actually, will be helpful. Even getting 180 degrees is good; you get the affect, right? Good.

Anyone else want to say? Yes?

S: A sense of seeing, how acute it is going out sometimes. I think it lends itself to feel alone or something rather than coming in; it's all coming in.

L: Yes. Almost like, when you are going out, you feel very separate and alone, right? You feel like "I'm this lonely animal that has to deal with the world that is out there. All these things that I've got to be aware of, and what am I going to do?"

What's the difference when you feel like you're receiving?

S: Just being met.

L: Being met. Beautiful.

Yes, in the back?

S: I actually feel slightly dangerous when I am taken behind. Probably because it engages my mind about why you are doing that.

L: Yes, that's right. That's right.

S: There's anxiety because I'm not used to it.

L: Yes.

This is a good example of what will be happening to many people. Awareness is unhooking from your mind to here. Are you okay to here? Then you are going back to system one; it's going to have doubts. "I don't know why you're doing this ... This is not on my program ... As far as I'm concerned, I am concerned about your back. In fact, I think probably—most of the time—there may be someone sneaking up there. (laughter) So if you are going back there, it's probably a problem ..." That's how it thinks. When you're looking there, it will take you there; it will believe that.

As you get here, what you'll do is you'll go "Uh-oh ..." and then you have to unhook again from system one and see "let's just see. Because we're sitting here at Omega Institute ..." You can even tell it "it's okay, let me go check ... I'm stepping out here ..." Once you get all the way there, you will start to come back to the anxious mind and be able to include it. Then it starts to be like, "yes, but what about the ... all the things that could go wrong ..." You'll be like "alright sweetheart, I hear you," so it won't be (growl sound); it won't be big and it won't be you, and it won't be true.

That's a very good example that I think everyone is going to go through as we do this. You'll be able to see when system one gets back in charge of trying to do these exercises. It will come, it will take over. It won't be easy to see but as soon as it does it will never work; it can't work.

Anyone else want to report? Yes?

S: Blissful.

L: Blissful, yes. The bliss is like a feeling in your body or a dancing ocean, dancing field of ocean?

S: Yes.

L: Yes?

S: The wisdom right now, that system one is flashing a new image on the screen, being worried about. There is a remembering that, only a week ago, there were other things and now there's this. But the awareness is from that, that this is happening. There is kind of a compassion.

L: Yes.

S: It's kind of exciting.

L: Yes. One of the keys to embodiment—stabilization—is actually having system one speaking and arguing its case very strongly while you are fully in system two and you really start to feel compassion. Not only do you see it but you are like "I hear you. I completely understand why you might be upset ... given what you believe, there is a monster under my bed ... there is a monster under my bed ... okay sweetheart, there is a monster under my bed; can you come and look? Sure, I'll come and look ... let's go ... I'm with you ... You seem very anxious and I want to be with you and your anxiety. We'll just see what's true, right ...? Okay ..."

That is important not to just deny, not to just step out completely from system one, but realize it's going to come back. When it comes back it's either going to take you back—which is the usual way. The transition in the middle is it's speaking and you are aware from both. That is the transition. "Oh, look at that ... okay ... that's not a problem."

Thought's not a problem. Emotion's not a problem. And, I'm not escaping them. And, I'm not denying them. I'm not transcending them. I'm including them and I'm actually with them more fully than I ever was when I was trying to defend against them, fix them or be them, run from them, or deny them. Right? Does that make sense?

Yes?

S: I've had a hard time with the effortless focus thing. I thought I was having a hard time with it and I think it was because it was some kind of concept because this time, as you said "being aware of the plant and the breath ..." the and, it's a different thing now.

L: Yes.

S: It's focused but it's not pin-pointed.

L: It's not just either/or, just outside.

S: Right. Much more inclusive ... easier ...

L: Beautiful. I've actually just refined that myself, to realize that's an important addition ...

S: Maybe that's why it's different to me (laughter), because you are speaking different.

L: I've recognized that, for me, I was kind of doing that. I had to go in and go "why don't I suggest that as well—be aware inside and outside ..." It seems weird. It seems like it's multi-tasking or something. "Oh, well you can't be doing two things at once ..." But from the awareness you almost need that.

S: The simultaneous thing should do it ...

L: That's it.

S: ... which seems contradictory to every teaching but it actually appears and feels that way.

L: That's right. That's it. I figure we may as well go with reality (laughter) rather than the teachings.

S: Seems like it is true.

L: Yes. Studies that you can't actually multitask, there is research that recently came out ...

S: As you say it, I'm thinking of that and feeling this thing. So what's going on?

L: Exactly. Exactly (laughter). That's why I'm always like, "okay, great ..."

What it is, is the research is being done from system one. From system one you can only be aware of one thing at once because you are looking from the moving mind.

The word "mindfulness," the translation from Pali, South Indian, Sri Lankian language, means remembering. So you lose it and you have to keep remembering that one thing—come back to your breath, remember your breath, come back ... You can only attend to one thing, then you lose it ... then you come back. You lose it ... come back ... lose it ... come back ...

We'll have to do new research from spacious awareness.

Yes?

S: I want to practice using your language to check it out.

L: Sure, then make it your own language. (laughter)

S: I really like you were having that dialogue with just the one, of reassuring. That made sense to me.

L: Yes, good.

S: What came to me was that re-assurance that is reassuring awareness, is that, what you call, coming from open hearted awareness?

L: That's right. That's right.

S: That's what's doing the reassuring?

L: That's the distinction—the difference between awake awareness or embodied awake awareness and ...

S: Right, which is back here?

L: Awake awareness is back here. Embodied awake awareness is the field that is body, inside and out. Then, the open heartedness comes online with compassion, unconditional love, connection, acceptance, tenderness ...

S: That's where real empathy comes from?

L: That's the real empathy, yes. That's right.

S: Which is wordless.

L: Which is wordless, yes, but distinct. In other words, its “Oh, that’s different than that ... Oh, that’s different than that ... Oh, that’s different than that” No words can accurately describe it but ...

S: But there’s a connection.

L: There’s a connection and you can return. Once you know it, “oh this is nice but I know there is something else ...” This is the interesting, unique thing, around the do-er. The first do-er, once you unhook, now awareness does have ability to choose and move and do. From awakeness, you can respond or tune in, and the one who’s tuning in is not the egoic do- er.

Often one of the big places many people in this kind of non-dual world get caught in this advanced practice, is once you open to the pure awareness, you say “now there’s no do-er left so just let everything be and then things will happen by themselves ...” But my experience is that’s too passive. Most people will end up in a kind of trance or meditation state and then, in order to choose, they will have to go back to the do-er.

We are going to explore this YOU-turn, when you shift from “am I aware of spacious awareness or am I the spacious awareness that’s aware?” As soon as you are the spacious awareness, now spacious awareness can move in and say, “what’s my body like? Oh, there it is ... Now go back to more space ... Oh, now come back to more of ... Now drop in here ... Now look out there ...” You are not choosing from a mental manager. You are choosing from an intelligence of awareness which is the only possibility you could live an awakened life, is if you have choice. Otherwise, you are a puppet.

Otherwise you’ve given over to God’s Will and God is moving you around, making choices, and you have no ability. So there’s some kind of dance that is going on, some kind of surfing the silence or something like that—some kind of give and take, choice. Intelligence is coming.

Does that make sense? (laughter) That’s important to be able to do this.

S: Free will comes from here ...

L: Yes, it doesn’t come from here ... that’s right. Exactly. This is all conditioning, right?

Free will the combination of giving up your will—thy will be done—and choice.

S: Enjoy the trip, man (laughter) or you’re being chased by the past. (more laughter) System one. It’s like enjoying the experience. These other things that are actually happening, you know how to snap in and out, or phase in and out ...

L: Yes, or include, even the stuff that is happening.

The advanced practice, some of the Dzogchen practitioners from Tibetan system do, is once they get stable, they actually take themselves into the village and start stealing things, get beaten and thrown in jail. They are like, “Let’s see if it works this way!” They take a melon and they are running ... “Come back here you dirty, no good ...” Bam! Bam! They put him in jail and they are like “Okay, let’s see how that works ... that’s pretty good, I’m still here ...”

Whether that’s external or internal, dealing with your own trauma, you are going to deal with things. Now you have the capacity to deal with stuff inside, stuff outside that is happening.

System one is thought-based knowing. Thought-based knowing reflects on itself and creates, with normal ego function, ego identification. It creates a feeling of a little mini-me in your head and it's organizing according to its limited rules about what's true, what's real, what's safe and what's knowing. That is system one.

Then, stepping out into awake awareness as the foundation of awareness-based knowing, that is using thought but awareness is primary. Thought isn't needed moment to moment; it's only needed if/when needed.

In some ways, like a flow state, many people who like driving drive in a flow state. If you like driving, driving a car, and you drive well, you are driving in a flow state because you are in this panoramic view and you're making choices. You're not looking at every little thing—these one-ton vehicles moving at 60 miles an hour and many people are texting at the same time. You are able to actually drive well by managing all this information—time/speed—and the way to do it best is to be in a flow. Some people can snap right into that.

System two is awareness based, that includes your functioning intelligence, memory and language, and then is embodied and has a kind of heart-mind which is non-conceptual but intelligent locally and connected.

Yes?

S: So when you are moving out to system two, what do you have to do ...?

L: We have to include the mini-me in this workshop and in your life. You have to realize you are not trying to fight with it. We are not killing it. We're not fighting with it. The real things we are doing, actually, is we are offering it semi-retirement. (laughter) It's trying to do two jobs—it's trying to do ego-function and it's trying to do ego-identity. We are retiring it from identity and we're saying "we really need you to keep functioning ... but you're exhausted and you're trying to do something that you weren't mean to do ... you're overworked ... we've got a nice chaise-lounge for you ... a little hammock ... there's a lake down there ... take some time off because we've got it covered." The key is we have to get it covered first.

The unique thing about this practice is it's not just getting rid of that or stepping out of that. It's stepping into the new intelligence that is supportive, safe, and responsive. When that happens, then the mini-me will eventually actually get on board. It will say, "I do feel safe ..." It will say, "I do get it ... this is kind of better ... (laughter) I thought being in control was good but you know it's exhausting ... if we are good all around, then I can kind of just relax ... if you need me I'm still important right? (laughter) Yes, still important; still need you ..."

S: That's getting independence?

L: Yes, it's getting a little independence. But, also not having to drive the car; it's in the kiddy seat, thinking it was driving the car. (laughter) It gets to relax, enjoy the ride, and do what it does well. So, it's part of a team. It used to be thinking it had to be in charge; now it's like, "you are going to be part of a team ... we've got very loving, supportive new operating system that is going to help everyone."

Yes?

S: Can you say more about this chooser from operating to ...?

L: That's very important because that makes this inquiry. It just means that awareness has the ability to move—so you feel it move—and it's choosing, it has intention—meaning it can look here, it can look there. What's choosing to do that is no longer the thought-based identity.

As soon as you step out, what it is, is this intelligence awake intelligence called awakening, or nature of mind. It's not a who, it's almost like a what ...

S: And it's not programmed?

L: It's not programmed. It's free. In some ways it's like ... vroom ... "here ..." It's always already here as like a field of potential that is awake and alert ...

S: And it doesn't move? It doesn't dance?

L: That's right. That's right. It just remains as pure. But once it mixes with aliveness and form and comes in from the ocean into a wave, now the wave has kind of a cresting and a falling, a dancing and a moving. There is a little more freedom to mix with your individuality. You are still going to have your individuality, relatively choosing, but the motivation and intelligence of how you use your vehicle of your body and your personality is going to be limited by your humanity. But it's also going to be free of a lot of the should, and the controller/manager that is made of thought.

Supposedly Buddha was asked by somebody on the road, "Are you a god? Are you an angel ...?" He said, "No, I'm a human who's awake." I'm awake ... just an awake human being. That's still a human being that's awake.

The awakesness has intelligence. Awakesness has primacy of living this human life; it's the primary dimension of motivation, intelligence and choice to do, or not do. But, I'll say one more thing I said last night, what we are doing is we are going from the do-er, shifting out to being, to the feeling of being—which is the reason we sit here, right? The feeling of being means you don't have to go to thought to be, and you don't have to do anything to be. No doing is required to be except, as a human being, when you start to get hungry at some point you have to eat. Then, being can do.

We are getting to the root, the base, the ground, the true nature or the foundation of who we are and what's aware. Then ...

S: A lot of calculating goes on to get that food ...

L: At that point, the human being is going to ...

S: But I have no money ...

L: Right. It will start to figure it out. It will use the functional system to navigate the world, and that's fine. There is nothing wrong with functionality and thought ...

S: You say thought is the sixth sense?

L: Yes. It's an organizing sense.

S: So it's thinking that's a sixth sense?

L: Yes. It's very helpful, so it could calculate. You can use it, but who's using it? Who is it appearing to? Does that make sense in terms of your question—intentionality?

S: It's safe to say we have five senses. Thinking actually says that—we have five. (laughter)

L: I don't know.

S: It's not making sense.

L: Thinking is an organizing sense, that's why it often gets ... One the things it does as a sense is it organizes.

S: The thing is we are very dependent on our senses ...

L: Yes, that's good.

S: That's where the dependency exists, I think.

L: Yes ... although the interesting thing we are discovering—and one of the questions we are going to explore—is how could you become aware behind your back? What sense is that? What sense is aware of this space that is right here?

S: I think the stereo ... because I hear that bird, there's a directional component ...

L: To hearing.

S: There are probably more than six senses given the calculating of the brain triangulating and locating a target with two stereo sensors ...

L: Yes. That's hearing.

S: We probably have more than 5 senses ...

L: The main thing is, what I'm saying the sixth sense, at least for the limitation of this workshop, is taking thinking out of the primacy of identity. That's the first thing, and then probably adding a seventh sense, which is maybe called awareness-ing. In other words, that awareness can be aware of itself but none of the six senses can be aware of awareness. That is why we've missed it.

We've been trying to feel it, hear it, smell it, taste it ... we've tried to feel it as energy a lot. A lot of people misunderstand, "oh well awareness, at the deepest level of who we are, is energy ..." No, it's prior to energy—it's within energy and it's within all the senses—but none of the senses, nor the ego, nor the will, nor your mind—your thinking mind—can know the awareness that is the ground of our being. Only awareness can know awareness and, because we are so caught in the other system, how do we find the first awareness to know awareness? That's why we've missed it.

S: Right, because you really can't have a memory of awareness ...

L: No, you can't have a memory of awareness, that's why this whole system is trying to answer that question and looking in traditions and picking out this, "Oh well, when you are awareness and you are back, then you have this ability to focus locally. Local awareness is able to focus. Then, if we're caught and identified, let me find local awareness and just assume it's there—even though I can't find it and my mind doesn't know how to do it ... Ready? We're going to do it. I don't know who's doing it ... it's doing it but I'm not it yet ..." Now let it come to hearing ... and open to space and discover itself as that. It just does it because I'm talking to you, the awakens, and the awakens—even though it doesn't know it's awake in your current obscure condition—can have intentionality. It can just do it ... for some crazy reason.

There are instructions I would try to make sense of, "turn your mind around to know your mind ... or turn your awareness around to know awareness ..." Well, where's ... How do you do that ...? They would just say it. Anyhow ...

All that to say, this is a unique little way that seems to work. Once it works, once you find the awareness, then you can see that the local awareness is its moving aspect, its intentional focus in the world now, from this spacious unity consciousness.

That's the theory. You know the Monty Python theory (laughter), "My theory is the brunt source of ... thin on one end, very, very thick in the middle, and very thin on the other (laughter)." That's my theory. Well professor everyone knows that ... "Well, it's my theory though ..." (laughter) So, whatever that is worth ...

Yes?

S: Since you are just mentioning energy, I've asked you about this before but it's particularly strong this morning when we were doing this exercise. Anything to say about the sensations of pulling? I guess I'm curious if anyone else experiences it. There's a sensation of pulling in the head ...

L: Like pulling back?

S: Yes, and sometimes an inner ear, like a pulling. I'm more aware of it today from awareness, yet so aware of it and curious ...

L: The orientation that we are going to be playing with a lot is that we are usually looking up to thought ... thought is looking to thought ... and thought is looking out, forward. Up ... out ...

What we are doing, is we are going back—all the way back—down ... and back. Then that, discovering that, which is then looking out. It's like a disequilibrium or disorientation that we are used to going out this way, looking out ... going up ... out ... going up ... out ...

S: System one wants to know what's doing it.

L: Yes, system one can't know (laughter) because it will be like blah ... blah ... blah ... blah ... blah ... It will be like, "that's very interesting theory ... philosophy, we can write a book about it ..." But then there will be another book about it that says something different (laughter).

It seems to be disequilibrium or shifting of disorientation to get to the re-orientation. But you are really feeling it because you are used to going this way; now we're going this way. We are going down; we are going to drop down.

The next thing we are going to try is dropping down and see what that's like; that's our next exercise coming up.

We have one or two more questions here? Comments?

S: About the relationship between essence and awareness. Is it the same view ...? Thinking can be present too ...

L: That's interesting. We will probably deal with this later today or this afternoon, is distinguishing what is called subtle body presence—which is part of the mind—and then discover pure awake awareness. Then, when awake awareness is embodied there is a different kind of presence that is different. If you just come down—either lift your mind up to mindfulness or drop into your body—you are still in the container; you haven't found this other spaciousness.

Once you find the spacious dimension, the form is emptiness and then emptiness is form; that is really where we are going. We are not stopping at form is formlessness; then the formless awareness is found to be none other than form. They are not two things going on. There is a dancing underlying unity of both so that usually we are snapping back into form-based identity, formless form, formless ... now we are going to mix the two. That's a good question.

Yes?

S: There was this relief that could bring me to my knees sobbing because it was like being released from pretending. Just saying how it was from pretending that there is an I and there was just such a profound ... it was like being born, birthed, into not having to pretend that. There was a sense that even in a subtle way, to pretend there is an I is to be in opposition because even subtly, there is a sense of something not being I, and just being released from that.

L: Yes.

S: And a sense to be in that I, there has to be a war, even if in the subtle way. Just this oceanic sobbing relief being released from that.

Are you in part playing with us about how to grok the I while not being at war?

L: Yes.

S: Can you say more about that?

L: It's a little bit what Paige was saying. Once you are able to step out of the I, then the new awareness is able to have that sobbing presence and realization.

Recognition is stepping out, "I recognize I'm not the I." But the realization is, "Oh my god, the I is just part of me, it's not the location or who I am." Then, that can then include your personality, your ego identity, your ego function that is not your identity. Your particular history, your feelings, your emotions ... whatever ... is your particular conditioning. There is a loving presence toward that that's holding it, including it, welcoming it, aware from within it. Then, you are not negating the human animal part, the human personal uniqueness—of the wave of the ocean that is arising there as a unique wave ... and you rising here as a unique wave ... and you rising there as a unique wave ... from the ocean.

There is an embrace or recognition, like you said, of not something different. So then this is not even different. Even the ignorance and the mini-me's fear is not a threat; there is not two things going on.

S: Not two things going on, right ...

L: It's just confusion, or a little ignorance, but even that is part of the whole play.

S: So there is no mistaking myself as the I? There's also no opposition to it.

L: Yes, that's right. There's no war created by the I. Then, when you get relieved of the war, there is no new war with the I. There is no opposition anywhere, there is just experience—that is pleasant and unpleasant—that in the world, has movements of challenge or things work out ... things don't work out. But there is no personal ...

S: Just one thing ...

L: There is one thing. It's appearing as one but it's also empty and it's also many. The one isn't just whitewashing it into one. It's like one means unity, which means multiplicity of waves of the one ocean. It also means interconnected. It has all that. You don't want to go into just emptiness, just one, or just multiplicity. You want to feel what's called simultaneous mind—simultaneously empty, full, awake and includes ignorance, fear, and emotion. But what is aware of that?

In some ways the simplest way to say this is, not to take your spiritual temperature by what's arising because it's all about who it's arising to. It's about what it's arising to. The fact that you have fear or anger, there is nothing bad about any of it; it's just happening. Most of it is happening; you're not doing it. Most of it, especially old trauma, repression, and stuff like that ... or just conditioning ... "I can't believe that person just did that ..." It's like you didn't just do that, that's happening from your conditioned body.

It's what's called in Buddhism the first arrow—the first emotion, the first reaction, the first belief, "I can't believe that person ... I'll show them ..." The second arrow is if you jump on board that and believe it or let go of the second arrow and become the compassionate awareness that realizes that your old anger, conditioning and sub-personality or part of you is trying to be protective, or feels hurt. Now you are compassionately aware of it and there is no problem that it ever happens or continues to happen the rest of your life. It's not about being perfect or having no feeling—being perfect all the time.

Awakening is always mixing of human aliveness and awakesness. It's really just about the primacy—51% awareness based (laughter). The rest of the 49% is fine ... whatever (laughter). Then you can make choices from there because that's your primacy. You don't want to get 90% awake awareness; then you are way out here. You want some balance. You are going to be mixing in all that.

Does that make sense?

Let's take another little break then we'll do another exercise. Stretching ... walking ... bathroom.

11. The Fourth State of Consciousness and Unhooking Exercise

Loch: We are going to do, as I said, impressionistic maps. You guys can see this okay?

Basic things we understand but just to get clear on where we are going and to normalize everything, right. Just to say, “This is thinking ... this is sleep ... this is daydream ...”

In one Hindu system they talk about four natural states of human consciousness. The first three we know. Thinking and ego identity; we are going to call it everyday mind. Everyday mind is the way most people operate—thinking oriented knowing and identity. Then, sleep state; a very particular state. We know it. Then, dream within sleep and then daydream in everyday life.

When you try to do one pointed meditation, you try to focus on your breath, you will notice you either go to one of these three states during any half hour period. You’ll start concentrating ... you’ll go to sleep if you get too sleepy ... or you’ll go back up to thinking and you’ll start thinking, “what am I doing ... am I doing it right ...” Or, you’ll go off to daydream and then go “Oh, where was I? I better come back to focusing on my breath.” Those are the three natural states.

This is considered the fourth natural state which is called, in Sanskrit, turiya. Then when awake awareness is the primary dimension within all these three states, the awakened consciousness, called turiyatita—which means that now you’ve shifted from everyday mind as the primary, to awake awareness as your primary. Then you don’t get caught.

A lot of meditation states can be between these two—kind of sleepy or restful states. Daydream is where we get taken away when we are trying to operate from the everyday mind. We get taken into past memories, fantasies, and daydreams.

The little mini-me actually creates a little story in what is called the default mode network of the brain, which is this alternating network of the brain—I’ll go into it a little bit more later. Basically, in doing research on this, they gave 2,500 Harvard students a little beeper and they asked, when it beeps, just notice whether you are attending to something or whether you are in daydream, then, how do you feel at that time or when you realize. 85% of the time they were in daydream and 92% of the time when they were in daydream, they reported they were unhappy.

Student: Cause they are at Harvard. (laughter) And they thought that would bring happiness ...

L: Right! That’s right ... they finally realized!

S: They couldn’t argue with themselves and get it right.

L: (continued laughter) That’s right. I guess we’ll have to try it somewhere else.

There is something about this daydream, which is really the combination of identity and daydream, that creates this little mini-me out of daydream, that is kind of related to this. Because, it's this little character in daydream, "Oh my god ... some day when I get this then I'll be okay ... if I go off on a beach ..." then it goes "Oh my god, I'm here." It's like it's collapsed into attempting to get something. Or, remember "When that person said this to me, I should have said this ... next time ..." You know, all that stuff.

All this to say, these naturally happen and that this is system one, this system, that includes these normal dimensions of consciousness. What we are doing is trying to shift into this awareness based sense of knowing and base for our identity. Does that make sense, somewhat?

We are going to play with unhooking. We are going to do a couple little ways of unhooking. We are going to unhook and drop ... and know directly from within our body. Then we will, before lunch, end up unhooking to hearing and open to this space, then do the whole series once.

We are shifting. The idea is that from awakening—reverse engineering it from awakening—you still have the ability to focus intentionally. That is called local awareness within the field. Where, from this spacious awareness that is embodied, you can focus inside and outside. But the feeling of it is different than attention.

The first thing to say is, without looking at your left hand, bring your attention to your left hand. Bring your attention to your left hand ... be attentive to your left hand ... notice what it's like to bring your attention to your left hand.

What do you notice about that?

S: It tingles.

L: It tingles, yes. You'll notice the sensation there. And where are you looking from? Where are you attending from? Where is the location of the one that is attending?

S: In my head.

L: Yes, in your head, right. It's almost like you are looking from a tower, attending to your hand. Or maybe you have like a telephone wire, sending signals up, but it's located here. Whereas when you are in this field of awareness you will feel more spacious and will be able to attend to whatever you are attending to directly from within your body. That's the move from deliberate mindfulness to effortless mindfulness to embodied presence. We are going to explore a little of this presence by feeling like you can unhook awareness.

The reason we're located here is because of thinking, smell, hearing, smell and taste. There's a sense that this is the location but actually, awareness is innocently identified and when awareness can unhook and drop, it can move in your body, know your body directly from within, or move outside.

Just try this. Without even knowing how you do it, just feel like awareness is identified or attached to the moving mind. Simply let awareness unhook—like step back from thinking—and then feel your jaw directly from within your jaw ... feel

your throat directly from within your throat ... feel your shoulder from within your shoulder ... feel your arm, your elbow and the space in your elbow directly from within your elbow ... and then your forearm ... Then feel awareness move down, so you are feeling your left hand directly from within your left hand ... both the space within ... the aliveness, the awareness and the space all around, directly from where subject and object is happening.

What do you notice about this difference in unhooking local awareness and experiencing your left hand from within?

S: It's not a separate from the field.

L: It's not separate from the field, so there's a lot of space, right? If you don't have an image of your hand, is there actually a distinct location of your fingers being particular? Or, are there just areas of tingling?

S: Mine is in the palm.

L: Yes, a lot of tingling in the palm. Directly from? Where are you aware from?

S: It was resistance getting down there; it bunched up in here, kind of, like a nervous energy. Then I just said I'm going to imagine that I'm shooting it down there ...

L: Okay. Then you were actually able to feel ...?

S: I started to feel the palm more.

L: Directly from within the palm?

S: Yes.

L: Anyone else feel that, the difference between feeling your hand directly from within your hand? Yes, you have a sense of that?

S: It's difficult ...

L: It's difficult, yes. Because you pop back up? You pop back up to your head?

S: And the mind is disoriented.

L: It's disoriented, yes. It's no longer the controller or the center of the world. It's going to try to go back to system one. System one has an inertia, it has a habit. Breaking any habit, the old habit wants to re-assert itself, right?

This is one way of doing something intentionally and intentionally breaking that habit of that particular orientation or location of this being the center. Because you can do a lot of meditation and spirituality and still remain located in this imagination, thought based, philosophical ... You can do yoga from your mind and stay in your mind or actually, once you unhook and inhabit your body from within, yoga and movement is completely different.

The experience of embodiment, I've taught a bunch of yoga teachers and they are like, "I've never experienced anything like that ... or I remember once when I had the best experience, I did that but I didn't know how to get back ..." This is a way.

In order to feel embodied, this is how you feel. You feel like awareness is experiencing your body from within, not that you are very strong from your mind and your body feels very strong and healthy. You feel effervescent aliveness, yes? Everyone have a sense of that? That's like a first ... We'll keep playing with this here.

Now let's try another little exercise. It's all new, yes? All new upgrading of your system, right—2.0(laughter). It's all for the good of (laughter) ... so don't get too scared. But, realize the 1.0 is going to say "according to my way of knowing things, I don't know this. It could be not good ..." It's like a car alarm goes off but there is no thief around. The car alarm is going to go off, "something is going on I think ... danger.. could be somebody stealing the car ... no, nobody stealing the car ... just the car alarm going off ..." Just be aware of that; include that and see what happens.

We are going to get the feel of unhooking and moving this local awareness. Just feel like you can go very close ... unhook awareness from thinking ... and just move to seeing ... So, awareness plus thought ... now unhook ... now awareness plus seeing ... Just seeing as receiving, not thinking about seeing ... just seeing.

Now, just to show you what it's like when awareness moves and also when it's focused on one sense more than another, so you feel the difference between awareness when it's primarily with thinking and now awareness with seeing. Now watch what happens. Feel that you can intentionally move awareness from identified with seeing to hearing.

Unhook awareness from seeing and have it come to one ear, so that you have awareness plus hearing ... just feel how this whole other world that was already here, just now, becomes primary when awareness has moved to hearing as the main sense it's identified with or interested in ... feel that huge world that's now ... of movement and silence.

What do you notice? The habit is awareness is identified with thought, then feel that there is an intention-ability to move. Then, seeing plus awareness. Then notice an intentional huge shift of consciousness, right, when awareness moves from thinking to seeing, to hearing. Everyone feel that on some level? Some degree?

What do you notice about it?

S: I noticed a shift from seeing and awareness to hearing where the whole world opened up ...

L: Yes, it's amazing, right? It's amazing. Where was that whole world of hearing a moment ago? It was here but ... It just shows that the habit of intentionally focusing on thinking creates a world, that's a huge world all the time. If thinking is just one of the senses, just because you are hearing doesn't mean you couldn't think if you needed to.

Right now, if you unhook awareness and come to hearing, now you are hearing, but you are also understanding what I'm saying. So it's not like you've lost hearing, or you lost thinking, you've lost seeing; you've just shifted out of the habit of orienting. So then, what happens is that 80% of your thoughts are called automatic thoughts, they are just repetition of

the same thoughts every day and the same orienting—what’s going on ...? Am I getting this ...? Am I sure this is happening ...?

That can all go into the back ground or become experienced as mental sensations. You notice how physical sensations are happening all the time, if you shift away to hearing and seeing to awareness based, then all the automatic thoughts—that chattering—they go into the background because they are not needed for functioning.

It would be like this, bring your awareness—we notice how it moved to seeing, to hearing—now bring your awareness to the bottom of your left foot. That is where you are. You can either unhook and go there, or bring your attention there, but your awareness can unhook, drop all the way through your body and down. Now it’s at the bottom of your left foot, all the nerve endings there. Just attending there as your main interest.

What do you notice when your main habit is now attending to my left foot and the sensations there, physical sensations?

S: That’s the whole world.

L: That’s the whole world. What is that were the main thing that we walked around with all the time? Left foot ... my left foot ... “How are you doing? ... well my left foot is doing pretty good, but in terms of your left foot, how is that going? Oh, I think there is something like a bunion could be growing right now ... there’s a little warmth and the sock feels good ... but in terms of my left foot, I’m doing pretty good right now ... that’s where I’m tending.”

The habit of attending to automatic thoughts is the same as attending to your left foot. It’s just a habit. You don’t need to be doing it. From awareness, it’s monitoring all of the automatic thoughts because it’s alert and awake. Automatic thinking is just mental sensations that you do not have to attend to; then you have peace of mind.

What does your right foot think, because it’s feeling a little left out (laughter).

You feel your whole body. So basically you are going to be awareness based and embody based with equal awareness of all sensations in your body, including mental sensations, physical sensations, thought sensations. But mainly, your body is made of space and awareness. Just like every atom is mostly space. That’s what’s happening. When you feel your body from within, that’s how it feels—it feels like effervescence moving through space without a boundary. But then, when you move it or you touch something, then it feels solid and when you feel it, it also feels like gravity, pressure and aliveness. If you have pressure, you feel that. If you come in contact with something physical, then it feels solid only when it meets a solid thing and then you feel very buoyant. Then, the way your body feels is very much like—since everyone likes dogs—a like a puppy.

You actually start to feel very buoyant. When you are in your head you feel like this, “Ahh ... got to life this body up ... (laughter).” Later on, once we do this exercise you’re going to feel what it’s like to stand up.

From your head, stand up now. Just stand up. But feel your body, like you have to life your body up ... just lift it up ... it’s pretty heavy ... a lot of weight. Feel that?

Now we’re going to sit down and we’ll stand up in a little bit and you’ll let your awareness stand your body up. You’ll be like wow ... You can do it now, just let your awareness stand your body up. How does that feel? Pretty wild, right? It

just feels like, “oh ...” and then you feel like you can walk like that. You feel very buoyant, like a dog walks down a street right. Like a tai chi person, because you are naturally now not moving your body around, trying to defend against Kelly pains. You feel like you are buoyant, yes?

Good. We'll keep working with that. That's the idea of the embodied intelligence and the intelligence that's within your body and moving your body.

Now, we are going to unhook awareness and come down to, if it's inner body presence, at least aware of sensations in your upper body. Or, possibly some of you will come to the heart space, which opens up into this same field of what you may have experienced when we did “what's here when there's no problem to solve?”

The idea is that we are going to unhook from thinking, we are going to drop down. The key is, not refer to thought to be here with awareness and aliveness, and not look down from thought. We are not looking down from our heads, like a tower to our bodies; we are taking the intelligence, like an invisible globe, unhooking it, and the intelligence of the field is locally aware from my throat ... locally aware down into my body.

Now we are actually end up doing like a little balloon in water ... just help the awareness stay here. Say “stay ... stay ...” The key is not orienting to thinking while being awake, embodied and presence. Just see what that's like for moments at a time. As soon as it's this moment ... then there's this moment ... then it's like “wow ...” Let's see what that's like. We'll do a couple different ways to do this, that are helpful.

First one we'll do is the same thing. Feel like your awareness is aware of activity in your head ... thinking ... energy ... then feel like that globe of awareness where intelligence is located can unhook and step back. That knowing awareness can drop and know your jaw and your smile directly from within ... then the awareness and the knowing can drop and know your throat directly, from within your throat ... and then that awareness can continue to drop below your neck ...

So this awareness is now knowing your upper body directly from within your upper body. The awareness is dropping into your heart space, or your upper body ... is not looking up to thought ... not looking down from thought to know ... it feels like there is an awareness of space, aliveness and awareness of awareness, without orienting by thought to know that you are alert. Just alert, unhooked, thought free, intelligence in your heart min ... non-conceptual ... With your eyes open or closed ...

Then feel like you are almost giving a little support. So, you can use your hands and, almost like you are keeping this awareness down from its usual habit of bouncing back up to check “am I doing this right ...?” Like a balloon in water, just your hand on the surface of palpable ground of being or water ... stay ... stay ...

Don't go up to the train of thought. The train of thought may be going by; that's fine. Doesn't mean there is no thought, it just means you are not orienting by thought. You are aware and awake and alive, with all your senses ... and all your physical intelligence ... your language-ability is available if you need it. But just like your hand, if you don't use your hand, you can let your hand rest. If you are not using your thinking to calculate something, let your thinking rest. The thought reflection, the creation of a self-image is not needed to be. What's it like to be--be awake without looking to thought to be, without doing anything to be and without pushing anything away or getting anything ...? Just to be here, now ... timeless ... now.

Finding the awareness as the ground in the aliveness, as it's dancing ... effervescent.

If you pop back up and get on the train of thought, just unhook ... step back ... and return ... No big surprise ... just drop, know directly from within ... Feel that intelligence, alertness that is not orienting.

What do you notice, if you were to speak from here without going back up to thought to check about what you are going to say about what is here? See if this can speak, if you can speak from heart-mind, from thought free wakefulness, from undistracted; equally inside and out alertness? What would you say, from here, about what's here? What's it like ... a word or phrase ...?

S: No words.

L: No words.

S: Gentle bliss and well-being.

L: Gentle bliss and well-being.

S: Heart-ful transparency.

L: Heart-ful transparency.

S: Gigantic ease.

L: Gigantic ease.

S: Safe.

L: Safe.

S: Free.

L: Free.

S: Is-ness.

L: Is-ness. So is-ness is your new business. (laughter)

Anyone else feel the safe or well-being or okay-ness quality? What else do you notice?

S: Grounded.

L: Grounded, yes. Anyone else feel the ground quality?

S: Not yet.

L: Not yet; that's okay. What do you notice?

S: Going back up ...

L: Grounded and then ungrounded ... then grounded ... ungrounded. That is good. Just noticing that and, no big surprise that you are back ... and re-recognize. Just notice where you are and return ... many times, small glimpses many times. No big deal ... no judgment ...

Yes?

S: Playful.

L: Playful.

S: It's like one big exhale.

L: One big exhale.

S: There was a lot of them and some other big one.

L: Yes. One big exhale. Even though there were a lot of them, some ...

S: Cosmic exhale.

L: Cosmic exhale. (laughter)

S: Being breathed.

L: That's right, like being breathed.

Notice how interesting it is to not look down from thought and not look up to thought. And yet, how can this be so intelligently alert? Just alert, right? Isn't it interesting to not be oriented by thought? And be here? And, you could respond without thinking—without thinking about thinking, that's the key.

Thinking is available. Your hand is available. You just doing need to think about thinking and you don't need ... you are in the flow but you are being. Right now is just being ... being awake ...

The globe of awareness, when it drops, if it did drop into the heart space, it opens up to everything else. It's almost like the globe is then made of the field. So it connects to that field or it goes through that door of that field. That's like one move. If that happens, you've gone from everyday mind, to subtle body, to awake awareness, to embodied awareness, to open hearted awareness. I comes online.

But for others, if you just were able to just get out of your mind and just get into the sense of your body, and not know your body from looking down, that is a big experience. To just feel directly from the awareness that is inherent within everything. The subject and the object are here rather than the subject being here and the object being here.

Is that pretty much what most people felt? For moments ...? Glimpses ...? Yes?

S: Boundless and intimate.

L: Boundless and intimate is the open-hearted awareness feeling, when it comes back.

We just did one step. The amazing thing is one step can open, especially when we go to the heart space, can open up all the other steps. But what we are really playing with today is this intentional ability—which is your tool—to intentionally unhook awareness from thought and have it drop.

Without me guiding you, let's have you do it yourself. What you will do is just take a moment then feel—you don't need to even talk to your self—you will just feel or whatever method you feel like ... then not going up ... not going down ... maybe opens up ... may just stays ... whatever you need to do, just start from where you are, come back into your head. Start from awareness identifying with thought then just take two or three minutes now and do this unhooking on your own. I'll make it official (sound of bell).

Just feel that inner smile when you've unhooked ... feel that sense of being. What do you notice from here? How was it to do it intentionally, on your own? What did you notice?

Yes?

S: I intentionally brought awareness into heart space and the awareness of somebody who's a challenge for me. I noticed the difference, that if I felt that person up here, it would still be a challenge. if I held that person in this space and I had an opening.

L: Wow. Beautiful, thank you.

Yes? Anybody else find that they were able to do that? That is just the first time we did it. We will keep doing that. Let's now do another two ways to help do this one unhooking and dropping.

This time we are going to, what I call, follow the breath home or hitch a ride on the breath, then let the breath go out. What we do is, you will breathe out, and as you breathe in, you let awareness drop and feel down til it comes down to the lungs. Then, unhook awareness from the breath, and let awareness stay down and the breath go out. You are just

finding a way to drop and know directly from within, and then breathe out. Breath can go out and the awareness can stay home, in the heart.

Want to try that?

Just on your own, as you take a slow breath out, and as you start to breathe in, unhook ... and gently, slowly, breathing as your breath and your awareness drop into your lungs, below your neck ... then pause and let the awareness stay ... and let the breath naturally go out ... Notice what it's like to remain at home with the breath going in and out.

Get used to being, without orienting by thought ... How was that? People like the hitching a ride?

S: Unhook as you are breathing?

L: Yes. It's almost like your breath is coming in (sound of deep breath in) and coming into your lungs ... the air is outside and now it's coming down, your lungs are filling with air ... and then awareness stays down and the breath can go out.

Now this one, we are using some traditional things like breathing, now we are going to make a sound like "Om." Whatever sound of Om, put your hand right in this heart space—some people may be higher pitch whatever that makes it feel that way—then the next time, as you unhook awareness, have it come down and then Om ... Where it's going is the place where the sound is going. So let the awareness and the sound merge as you do three Oms. Then, as you let go of the third Om, let the awareness stay down, and not go up to thought.

Just do it on your own ... breathing in ... do your own three Oms ... unhooking ... dropping to this place of vibration, (sounds of Oms) ... awareness and sensation ... Om ...

Om, sweet Om, in the heart ... just locating awareness, vibration, sound, sensation, breath, aware here ... not looking up to thought, not looking down from the tower of your head ... feeling the openness ... (pause)

These are some supportive ways that you can use on your own. What would you say about that one?

Do you feel the alertness that is not thought based?

Because we are doing this before lunch, you can also feel a little toward rest or sleepiness, right? Just feel your body.

That is part of this. What often happens is as soon as you come out of your head, like the semi- retirement, it goes "I can rest, really ...? May have I been working overtime!" That is fine. That is good. That's normal.

S: That was going to be my question.

L: You'll see as we do it in the afternoon and tomorrow, you'll be brighter. But there is almost like a first time when you really step intentionally out of your head, it's like "Oh my god ...!" You'll feel a brightening.

The other thing is that we are moving from everyday mind to subtle body, which is a little blissed in. It's still in the body, so it's still toward rest, toward calm abiding or shamata or soothing. It has an effect of calming, soothing, serenity but also rest or a little sleepy of body and mind. Body and mind are a little offline. It's when we open up, we are going to get the clarity, the brightness and then come back and then the whole body will get it. We'll feel both resting and very awake.

Why don't we do the standing up again. Stand up with your awareness ... just feel ... stretch in any way you feel like ... it's almost like you are stretching from within ... it's like your awareness knows how to stretch your body ... so you are not thinking about what you are doing but you are letting the awareness and the awareness move in whatever way ... unkinks ...

Now, before lunch here, even though we've just this unhooking and dropping, we are going to do a full series. We are going to unhook and drop, then we are going to have this globe of awareness open into the space of awareness. We'll just do the best we can; we'll just assume the intelligence of awareness can move through these five levels of mind that we will explore.

Unhook and drop ... then the awareness will open until it first feels content-less space and then discovers spacious awareness, which is aware of itself for just a little bit ... Then that spacious awareness now has intentionality, or as spacious awareness, that's aware of itself, that field can then include and be a continuous embodied presence of formlessness and form. So you will feel like you have come back and simultaneously—everywhere, nowhere and here—and you will feel a heart mind quality—a little joy, a little love—as you look out to everyone, space behind, space within, and feel this continuous field.

We'll do this as a little review. Starting as we did—if you want to hitch a ride on the breath or even if you want to do Om, if that helped—the key is to not look down from thought, and not look up so that the globe of intelligence just feels like awake awareness can unhook from thought ... the feel your smile and your jaw directly from within ... feel like an elevator, this awareness bubble of invisible presence is aware of your throat from within ... and then feel this awareness drop below your neck and know your upper body directly from within ... without looking up to thought, without looking down to sleep ...

Just until you feel like you've definitely unhooked from thought ... there's an alertness, an aliveness, and awareness, directly from within ... Then just allow that awareness to open to one side or both sides ... so the local awareness can open to become aware of space in which sounds are coming and going ... space in the room ... become aware of object-less space ... let go of thought ... now you are letting go of sensation ... you are letting go of feeling, thinking, smelling, tasting ... the awareness is aware of the absence and the space ... until this local awareness becomes aware of spacious awareness ... almost like water into water or air into air, it discovers that actually the space is not only open but you are aware from open space ... awareness is aware of itself as timeless, boundless, empty, awake space ... pure.

Just aware without an object, without a subject, for one moment more. And then just inquiring "Am I aware of spacious awareness? Or what is it like when spacious awareness is where I'm aware from?" So as that spacious awareness, remaining open and boundless ... feel like that field of awareness is intentionally now including, welcoming and recognizing the arising of the aliveness from the ocean of awareness to the wave of your body—from head to toe ...

The continuous field of formlessness and form, the dancing emptiness that is both inside and outside, simultaneously ... then let your awareness scan through your body to see whether there is a manager needed in your body ... whether there

is a self located there ... and when awareness finds nothing that is nothing, just let go again to this spacious, embodied, free, inclusive, open hearted presence ...

Let it maintain itself without your help ... just be on board, surfing the silence ... let a little bit of joy or see where there's a little bliss or a little love or a little tenderness where the formless meets the form ... a little sense of sameness, unity, recognition or support, or receiving from the support of this ... feeling held or open hearted ... safety.

What do you notice from this awareness that is embodied and open hearted?

S: It's like the air is alive.

L: It's like the air is alive.

S: I got a sense of buoyancy.

L: Buoyancy, yes. Beautiful. Buoyant rather than separate or solid, only.

What else? What's here? What's aware? What's shifted? What's real?

S: I have a sense of spacious ... the direction ...

L: Not yet back this way ... If the space is this way then it is also aware of itself this way? In other words, if it can go here, here, here, here, and here, then isn't it here, here, here, here ...? It's inside too, yes? Inside and out? Just play with it.

You are aware of the spacious awareness, then you are the spacious awareness that is aware of thoughts, feelings and sensations that are part of you but no longer the center of you. That is the big shift.

This was just a way to kind of go through the full system. We did one learning of unhooking and dropping; we'll do some more unhooking and opening in different directions. Before we go to lunch let's stand up and do the silent physical version of this.

Here we go ... we're identified with thought ... looking through our eyes, then we unhook, step back ... drop ... don't look up, don't look down ... stay ... and be ... Now open—awareness opens til it discovers that awareness is aware of itself ... now, as that awareness, that awareness comes back and includes ... then there is a feeling of a continuous flow, equally inside and out ... then there is a sense of this heart mind, that's more the location of this awareness, rather than your head ... then there is a feeling of connection inside and out ...

Again, one more time on your own ... unhook ... (silence) Ah! (laughter) Great! Have a wonderful lunch. We'll see you back here at 2:30. Just keep playing with it, even as you walk and as you have a moment, keep doing little glimpses, shifting from head to heart, and from space. Just play. Small glimpses as you are walking; feel like the awareness is walking you to lunch.

12. Pure Awareness, Nature of Mind, Unsacred Mantra, Pristine Empty Awareness

(sound of bell ringing)

Loch: That simple gesture is a way of recognizing open hearted awareness, right. The word “Namaste” means that I recognize that in me that is in you. I recognize that essential awake awareness that is that dimension that is the same in both of us, I acknowledge that. I recognize that. I bow to that. That is the acknowledgement because that is where this leads, not only recognizing this dimension of awake awareness in our self—which relieves suffering—but then seeing that everyone else is the same as you and has that same primary essential dimension and the compassion that arises from that.

So, we’ll just go over this little map of five levels of mind and five types of awareness. They are the ones that we’ve been through. Everyday mind is this thought based knowing, this ego identified way of functioning that everyone/most people live from and function from.

Then, subtle body and subtle mind. Subtle mind is mindfulness. First level of everyday mind is thoughts thinking about thoughts then identifying with thought and feeling. “I can’t believe that person just did that ... I think I’ll never get over it ... blah ... blah ... blah ...” Then all of a sudden you step back, or up, to subtle mind and you have a mindful witness of those contents, of the emotion, of the identity—“I don’t think I’ll ever get over that ...” Step up into subtle mind, which would be the subtle body or mind, and that’s a different dimension of consciousness. Now you see “Oh I see, that’s a feeling ... I’m really upset ... makes sense ...” and you can do psychological work from there or meditative work by just letting thoughts come and go or be aware “I see what’s happened from this level of mind ... it makes sense that this is just like something that happened to me, so it’s kind of a traumatic reaction ... I’m getting triggered by something that happened to me before ... okay ...” Just soothing yourself or recognizing that.

Subtle body is a little bit of what we did by dropping out of your mind and just coming to your other senses. Subtle body practices are hatha yoga—come out of your mind, into your body in a physical way. Chanting, repetitive chanting ... You get a song and vibration going. Then everyone is in their subtle body so happy you’re out of your mind and you’re in your body. But then, like mindfulness and subtle body, you have to come back to function from everyday mind. So, it’s a step up and a step down but you are still in this battery of limitation of this body/mind. Does that make sense.

Mantra, also, is a way of occupying the mind so that you come into subtle body. You just give it a task. We’ll do a little version of that.

This becomes the three big new ones. Most preliminary practices—yoga, chanting, mantra, mindfulness—are between these two. Now we are discovering spacious awareness or pure awareness as a big sky mind, as a dimension of consciousness of the nature of mind, source of mind, which I think some of you have had a taste of. That it’s not limited to the feeling of it; the feeling of it is not limited to this body/mind feels spacious, boundless or open and, its way of being aware is not thought based. Spacious awareness.

Then, include, is the move. Once you are that spacious awareness you include. Once you come into embodied awareness, awareness embodied, or awareness presence, means that form is emptiness; now emptiness is also always form. So there is a sense of simultaneous unity of that. It's often called simultaneous mind. Because, when you feel both spacious and embodied, you feel like you are everywhere, nowhere and here. You feel an emptiness and a fullness. You feel a particularity and a connection to others, simultaneously. And, you are not doing these many things; this is the way that you perceive when you are looking from this natural state of mind. This is what is seen by you, not by what you are trying to do.

Does that make sense? When you tune into this radio jazz is playing. When you tune into this other one the Temptations are playing ... That is the station; that is the way you perceive. When you are in one-pointedness you only see one point. When you are in just pure awareness you just perceive transcendent, non-thought but also non-body pure awareness that has no pain, but it has no ability to function and relate in the world. Then that pure awareness is recognized to be embodied and then there is the simultaneousness.

Then, open heartedness, open hearted awareness or heart mind, is this non-conceptual way of being intelligent and the connection between infinite and the finite, that is able to have this sense of courage, curiosity, interconnection and discriminating wisdom without judgment—without being a judge or either/or. You see this, you experience this, wisdom mind.

Any comments, questions about that?

This is everyday mind ... drop into subtle body and open to pure awareness ... Then there are three moves here—there is local awareness is aware of spacious awareness until it merges, like an air bubble into air, or a water drop into water, or tuning in, plugging in, or handing a baton off until it discovers the pure awareness that is already aware by itself, without your help. Now you are located there; you are residing and abiding. Instead of being aware of spacious awareness, now spacious awareness is aware of itself as content-less, boundless awareness—that's what we are going to try to play with, to try and get the feel of that. Then, as that, that awareness is discovered to be not only formless, but appearing as dancing form—which means the ocean is appearing as this wave. Then there is a landing back in ordinary mind, in ordinary sense of self. Then the heart mind, you don't have to form an ego manager in your head. You can remain home, spacious, embodied, compassionate, then begin to create and relate. You basically live at home in your heart and you use Wi-Fi to the files in your office of your head. They come down, you don't have to go up to your office or live in your office of your head. That's the feeling.

In some ways you've shifted from small sense of self to spacious; in another sense, from head to heart, from heart to spacious and interconnected feeling. Once you are there, you are free of this entire neurotic mind.

People are writing. I'm getting these emails every day—I just put one up on my website. People are saying “my long term depression went away ...” “the anxiety goes away ...” It's that kind of neurotic depression, neurotic anxiety, that is caused by this perpetual gripping. It makes you feel, if you are a sensitive creature, you have to do something, get something, or get rid of something. So you are perpetually trying to solve this problem, right. When that goes, and you find a new base, the project is over. 60% of suffering is seen to go right away.

Any questions about this? We'll go through this ... You can go right from this ... to this. You can go from this ... to this ... to this ... to this. You don't have to go exactly one step at a time, but we are breaking it down to make sure.

Yes?

Student: I wonder what it's seeing when it's not even so much the mind ... the temptation ... but when there is enough trauma sometimes the nervous system gets stuck with these physiological ... I wonder what your own experience is that resolution ...?

L: Yes. You often use everyday mind or thought base, but thought base means thought emotion based, it means thought emotion constellation of physical, mental, emotional. But usually it's the thinking that's trying to resolve it. Even a physiological pain that is physical, is being monitored and dealt with or constellated with an identity and a mind, regardless of the conditioning that's arising.

Usually, right here is where these get resolved because the heart awakening leads to the awakening of the gut, which is where a lot of this is held and the whole nervous system but is usually traumatized by trauma is the re-experiencing of a pattern, a repeating pattern, in body and mind that feels like it's happening now.

S: Yes, and you get that I'm saying it's taken on a life, it's in the nervous system, without even referring to the mind, always having 20 panic attacks a day.

L: What happens is, the panic attack, the initial arrow of emotion, or the traumatic trigger, when it happens—it if happens to open hearted awareness and it isn't identified with/fought/ run away from/ tried to fix it ... if it's allowed to be seen as "this is a trigger from the past about something that happened that is making my body feel like it's happening now ..." then allowed to titrate, allowed to slowly dissipate and not be held in—then it's like a pressure cooker. The energy starts to leave and the re-traumatization doesn't happen.

S: Yes and in my experience, that is a process. Are you saying it should not be a process?

L: I'm saying that part starts from here. 60% of the suffering can go like that. 60% is the mental defense against all this and the re-creation of craving after craving and hating hate, being angry that you're angry. That leaves. Then the other—I write about what you are talking about in my book as the later chapters. We'll touch on it a little bit but we're trying to build the foundation so that you can, because only from here can you really heal that level.

S: I do have the book; I haven't read it yet. Thank you. Can you say something about the connection between the heart mind and the heart guide, as you put it?

L: The heart mind is now the foundation of the place half way in between everything that is connected to the field of intelligence behind you and connects out this way. The gut is where we've repressed everything into; it's where a lot of the shame-based identities are. The ones that everyone has—that I've met in therapy and talking to many people—some version of early on, which is a normal developmental constellation around mistaking "it's bad to touch the hot stove ... no don't touch the hot stove ... bad ... it's bad ... don't be so bad ... you're touching the hot stove ..." The idea is "I've bad ... I'm worthless ... something is wrong with me ... I'm stupid ... not pretty enough ... not good enough ... worthless ... unlovable ..." Those unconscious, or some are conscious, shame based identities is a common human experience, particularly for Westerners. Sometimes Easterners, like the Dalai Lama, didn't understand what self-hatred was.

That level is an identity, it's like a mini-me up here and then a mini-me down of an unconscious, gut level holding of trauma, holding of some sense of wounded-ness, or parts of yourself, are sub-personalities that are hurt and protectors of those parts that often need to have some unburdening, some healing. I've always done both psychological and spiritual work from the beginning, I came up with my own version of this and then found the most similar system that is already in existence. There is one called IFS—Internal Family Systems—they have a very similar process that I was like “Wow!” That system goes to the wound first then come into the self, whereas I go to the self and then go to the wound. I am going to present at their conference on Know They Self because they call the open hearted awareness the Self, with a big S. So, you recognize your self in relation to that part.

Tomorrow night we will do an exercise that is related to that.

You get to here, now you get immediate relief, then you have to go through some kind of detox or thawing out, which is only possible when you're coming from this support that makes what seemed to be unbearable, bearable. Before that, you can't do that with your best psychological self; it can't deal with pre-verbal holdings.

Either way, what we are finding is, the most supportive, loving dimension of consciousness which is available and will be able to be here as is, and then whatever happens in life much better.

Yes?

S: My question is about locations. I've had heard for several years, different teachers said “look behind your head ...” But I couldn't do it until I read your book. So there is something along a directionality or spiritual awakening ...

L: Yes, that's right.

S: ... as opposed to be here, it's being here.

L: Yes.

S: Okay. My question is, I'm not aware of here ...

L: Did you try each of these?

S: Yes, but it doesn't focus here.

L: You still stay up here? Or it just goes all the way down?

S: It goes all the way down.

L: That's okay.

S: But you do cave of the heart, you do focus on the heart of awareness. I'm just wondering, is it useful to focusing literally on the heart?

L: There seems to be ... It's interesting that some people do, once you step out of your head it's almost as if you are aware from every part of your body equally, at the same time. That has the same quality and that's fine. There are a certain group of people that I find that it is helpful to name this—it's almost like a door of a heart.

The emotional heart is here in your throat, at the top, where you feel very emotional. Some people when they drop below the neck, they get caught in the emotional heart and feel very defended, tight or something like that. If you drop, there's the physical heart on the left, and then we'll explore the cave of the heart—which is kind of the dark night sky, restful place on the right side. The heart chakra is below.

What we are talking about is none of those. I only say that only to say that this is almost like an open door, like a round door that goes back behind and almost looks out or feels connected to everyone and everything, from the heart mind. It's like the jewel in the heart of the lotus; it's like a little pinpoint of light that comes from nothing into form.

So there's something, a pointer, that doesn't have to be so. But the feeling is, if you are in your whole body, there is a feeling of a sweetness, a safety, a love, bliss, joy quality. Those are the qualities of heart—courage, curiosity, a non-conceptual—able to respond rather than just being in your body and being comfortably numb.

Is it something like that?

S: Yes, it's more alive.

L: More alive, yes. It's very alive. And there's kind of a sense that you can say ...

S: Delicious.

L: Delicious, yes. Okay, that's good. Just keep playing with that, check it out, especially when we do this tonglin practice, this ultimate tonglin where we go behind your heart, look through your heart and connect to other people, go behind ... You will see whether there isn't something like that, but it could be your whole area—it could be everywhere, including your head, as long as it's equally everywhere else. We'll see what you find. It's more about the quality of intelligence that has a wisdom and love to it, that makes it that.

Does that make sense? Yes?

It's like you are in a parasympathetic relaxation which is why people often use the breath, because your breath will regulate your parasympathetic rather than your conscious attempt to relax. You go into a relaxed state that becomes natural and is then happening by itself and your whole body will get on board and regulate to that state.

If nothing else, it's a good metaphor for this awareness because this awareness, when you connect to it, it's connected to the body and naturally already aware, self-regulating and self-maintaining. That's the feeling. As innocent as your body is, it just gets on board. If mini-me, ego identity, isn't fighting it, once it relaxes, your body will feel "oh, this is much better ... I feel safe ... and I feel capable ... and I feel rested but not sleepy ..." That is what happens as we go through this shift of location.

A lot of those teachers who talked about location, I saw the same thing and have experiences. I just tried to figure out how to help people get all the way back and all the way out. One of the chapters in my book is called Location, Location, Location; it's not about belief, thought, will or effort. It's about where are you located; that's what we are doing. We are moving from location to location to location to location ... then it's everywhere all at once. It's almost like we're untying the knots at each location. We're certainly not creating the states; we're discovering them but also untying.

That's why when we unhook and drop, the knot wants to reform. You want to pop back up. Or, the magnet is used to pulling you back up to the head because you are used to that habit. We are trying to break that habit and create a new habit. It takes a little time but it only takes small glimpses many times ... try this habit ... boom. Try it again ... boom. Try it again ... now stay here ... now it goes, "don't you think you should come back up here? No ... Really? But what if something bad happens?! Well, I feel like I can respond to it from here ... Okay, alright. Fine ..." That system one starts speaking, trying to get you back into the everyday mind and consciousness ...

S: Your old habits.

L: Old habits, yes. That's right.

S: Need to cultivate new ones.

L: That's right, yes; particular kinds of habits that are rather unique in even the world of meditation because this is an inquiry approach rather than a meditation approach, in some ways.

Yes?

S: I have been experiencing conflict ... this proceeds this but it's not consistent, it's an accidental work. I'll feel really connected, my heart is warm, it's alive and there is calm. How would this be different?

L: It's not the emotional heart, it's really a feeling similar to this? Open hearted? You feel tender? You feel like you are not projecting onto other people when you are with somebody?

S: Yes.

L: That's what that is. In other words, I think everyone has glimpsed this in their natural life at some point, they just didn't know what it was or how to get back.

S: Right.

L: This is not new. We're not inventing this. We're not creating it, we're not even developing it, like a skill. We are not developing the state, as if it doesn't exist—it exists. The things we are developing is to return and remain. That is the thing that is being developed, not the state of open heartedness, like you would create love and kindness or

something—you would create it out of intentional “let me be love and kind ... let me feel love and kindness for everyone ...” You are creating it like a positive mind state. It’s not like that.

This is like when you drop in there, there it is, you love everyone. It’s like “I wasn’t even looking for that ... well that’s how this is.” That’s what that dimension is doing. Does that make sense?

Well let’s do some more playing with this ...

Just to give you a sense of the everyday mind to subtle mind to spacious awareness, let’s do this. This is what I call the unsacred mantra (laughter) because there are a lot of sacred mantra practices where you have a sacred word that has a lot of vibration and history. This is the unsacred mantra. What we are doing is, with this practice, we’re giving your mind the simplest possible task to occupy the thinking mind and the everyday mind. Then we are noticing the awareness in between the word, around the word, that’s aware of the word, that’s aware when the word is not happening. So that once the mind has a task, it’s not in charge of identity; it’s not in charge of even the task. Awareness is found. We are moving from here, our subtle body, so the mind starts ... and we get, eventually, to spacious awareness as the subject and the object.

You can sit comfortably with your eyes open or closed. Here is the unsacred mantra ... blah ... space ... blah ... space ... blah. Just keep saying blah ... blah ... blah (laughter). This is what’s going on anyhow (laughter) so we may as well say the truth here, right. Blah ... blah ... blah ... blah ... blah ... You intentionally think “blah ...” and then you let it go. You can make it feel like it’s a leaf, like “blah...” or maybe it’s going by like a ticker tape this way, “blah ... “ then space ... and then you are aware of the space and you are aware of the space that is aware then you are aware of intentionally “blah...” You are just giving your mind, thinking and doer a task, and then no task. Let your awareness be aware of the space between the words, around the words, that’s aware of itself while there are no words.

We’ll just try this for five minutes. Just saying it to yourself. I’ll start out saying that and then you can let your awareness play. As you say blah ... let your awareness be aware of the awareness in between the space ... blah ... and let the awareness notice the awareness that is aware of itself ... When you are ready, at any point, blah ... clarity, peace, content-less, timeless, spacious, all-inclusive awareness ... just continue to do that.

Just feel like that awareness is just self-aware without having to do anything. So when you intentionally say blah ... let it go, you are just resting as this awareness.

Now the awareness is not coming and going, only the word, intentionally said, like a bird flying through. What do you notice from here? What is this like when you are the awareness? And, see if you can see for the last minute, that in some ways the word or the thought or the energy of self-talk that is saying blah ... is actually made of awareness, is not separate than awareness. It’s an appearance; that is not a second thing, that doesn’t disturb anything. Blah ... Just appears like forms, like a wave. It could even go in the other direction.

Feel like there are not two things happening, just appearance, like a cloud or a wave ... Any thought, any emotion doesn’t disturb, isn’t other than, isn’t two things; it’s just aliveness or dancing.

It doesn’t take you away from the mixing of the two, the including of the simultaneous dance. Emptiness is now dancing—that’s all the words, thoughts and emotions. It’s not even as though it’s a bird in the sky; it’s not that it’s all waves of this ocean of awareness that can never take you away.

Then feel this open heartedness toward all appearances: all thoughts and feelings, all people, external/internal experiences; all just play, a dance, an alive expression of this open hearted awareness, this awareness that's not at war with anything, don't need to push anything away, or can create anything.

What do you notice from here?

S: I find there's a difference when you say blah and when you say one of the sacred mantras in Sanskrit.

L: It's not meant to be the same exercise. It's a different exercise completely.

S: You get the same awareness but I find there's a darkening when you say something. I had to stop saying it. I also feel it's disrespectful to the traditions.

L: Maybe I'll just say it's an all-sacred mantra because all words are sacred and there are no words that are more sacred than others. How is that?

S: It doesn't work. Blah sounds negative ...

L: Alright, you are allowed your experience. Anyone else?

S: I had a very different experience because I've done mantra meditation since 1975 and it moves me down into a place where I'm spaced out. This was interesting because it was the same or similar as using a mantra; it wasn't moving me away from the world, like transcendent space. I was remaining here. That was very interesting.

L: Yes. Great. Anybody else?

S: I've tried it but it didn't do much but this time it did. The first part I really didn't need; I was just there. Then with not any making it happen, I just went wow! I went out of my skin becoming space, all by itself.

L: Yes, exactly.

S: Another amazing thing is I can make it back.

L: Yes, that's right. It starts to show itself to itself. It's not clear, are you doing it or something's happening? What started that? But you start to be familiar with the territory so it's, "okay, here we go ..."

Great. Anybody else?

S: I was aware of sounds, almost like it's upstairs. Then I would be aware almost like the formation of a thought but it was like ... follow that.

L: That's right, exactly. It's starting to separate out from the everyday mind, that automatic thinking, which you seem to think "if there's somebody talking, it must be me ... maybe I'm saying something important, so I better listen ..."
Meanwhile, it's not the case that it's just chatter in the attic, like sound in a restaurant in the background. Once you separate it out by seeing that it's either unintentionally happening or you can intentionally make it happen, then you what was the experience of what was other than the chatter?

S: The word that came to mind was embraced.

L: Yes, embraced. Isn't that amazing, isn't that wild? You just dropped right into open hearted awareness. When that is separated out or just said, "look this is the job ... I'm giving you a task ... you don't have to do the identity piece ..." then the identity feels like being embraced. Beautiful.

Yes?

S: You could probably replace that word with love or anything.

L: Oh yes, of course. I'm being a little rebellious.

S: But you could use any word ...

L: Absolutely, yes. Sometimes I use the sentence "I am thinking this thought ..." and you see how absurd it becomes. "I am thinking this thought ... I am making myself say something;" something like that. Because that's really what it is, a neutral job. You are giving it a job of any word or little sentence in order to return ego function to ego function; return thinking to the sixth sense thinking. Once it's returned "this is what you do well ..." just do this in its simplest form and let's see what else is here.

You had that experience with that?

S: Not while it was happening, sort of afterwards.

L: Okay, good.

Anybody else? Yes?

S: I think there's a sense of deep safety and yet when we first started, for different reasons, the blah really wanted to be taken seriously. So there was a point at which it would just go BLAH! (laughter) from the moment that that intensity of blah was really seen to be it wasn't any different than the awareness. It was like a little constellation, then the safety was really profound because there was no escape from the safety.

L: Yes. Beautiful. So the feeling that once the awareness ... the first thought was rebelling almost as if it was part of that fighting for its own existence then the awareness kind of included it. Then, when there seemed to be not two things going on, then it's like perpetual safety.

S: Yes.

L: Because there is no threat and who you are can't be threatened.

S: Yes. Yes. And we are aware of what it doesn't reach or doesn't include. It makes the whole process go quicker.
(laughter)

L: Yes, that's true. But you can use anything. You can use sacred ... you can use an occupying phrase like, "I am thinking this thought, whatever ..." A neutral phrase or something.

You see the result. In reference for the sake of finding the most sacred dimension of who you are, that's the point. The point is that's where we're going, we're not going toward being an existential critic or something. It's what's useful. It's a useful little thorn; to remove a thorn.

S: Yes.

L: Yes?

S: It feels like sound ...

L: Yes.

S: There's an equanimity between outside sound and inside sound.

L: Beautiful. That's right.

S: There's also a way that it arises from the same place that it returned.

L: Yes. Beautiful. That is so important.

That is one of the amazing things to realize, related to what you are saying, is that for most people thinking is inner hearing and inner talk. There are also inner images, like you image a full scene, or have memory. But, it's not reading a scroll in writing. If I say to people, "thinking is like reading ..." they will go "yes, it's like reading." I say, "really? Look again." People think thinking is like reading. They think "it's words and words are written on a page ... that's words and words are what I'm thinking." It's actually self-talk and inner hearing; that's just sound. It's really odd. It's more like a tape recording playing; automatic thoughts are like tapes playing sounds or words.

So you have sound outside coming from me or outside, and the sound inside, so it's like theirs is a symphony of sound and space ... birds chirping. Then the primacy of the awareness and then that feeling that inner talking is arising and returning to this space. Even when it's appearing, it's just a wave made of the ocean; it's not a threat to the awareness. You can remain awake while thinking. It's not just in between; it's actually in, within, and as the thoughts are happening that there's awareness. It's not like, "now let me think ... now let me be aware ... now let me think ... let me be aware ..." That's where it leads, to that embrace.

S: I'm sorry, did you say thinking is like reading?

L: Thinking is not like reading.

S: When you have no-thinking thinking, would the thinking be like reading? Words passing by?

L: Take a look. It's words passing by but the way they pass by is like a tape recorder, like "I am thinking this thought ..."
If you think to yourself, "I am thinking this thought ..." do you see the words? Or do you hear them?

S: Yes ... No ... I will see the words but it's language.

L: Language is spoken though.

S: No, it's also brail. I'm reading an English cover in Spanish ...

L: Yes but when you say to yourself, when you think—think this, I am thinking this thought—how did you experience it?

S: Saying "I am thinking this thought," helps me realize that I am thinking.

L: But is the actual experience, while you are experiencing that—"I am thinking this thought"—now you are not saying it.
Now say it, "I am thinking this thought." Are you looking at words as it goes by or are you hearing "I am thinking this thought."

S: No, I guess I mean it is like reading and being picky, I say that because it gets outside.

L: There's a distance, almost as if you were looking at a book, metaphorically.

S: Yes.

L: Okay. Yes.

S: In that sense, that's why I was confused.

L: Okay, alright.

S: I get what you're saying. No, I don't see words.

L: Yes, I hear what you're saying. It becomes some distance ...

S: In front of me now ...

L: It becomes in front of you, almost like birds in the sky but then it becomes ocean and wave, is the next move. Then you are in it and thoughts are like "Oh, there's not a gap ... it's not about the gap, I am thinking this thought ..." It's like awareness is all in it and thoughts are appearing from it and as it and I don't have to wait for silence to be pristinely

aware. The appearance and the emptiness are the same; they are happening. The emptiness is empty; even in appearance it's still primary and there are not two things.

Anyone get a sense of that? We will work more on that, but that's just a little pointer. We'll come around to that in different ways. But, it's like what you were saying ...

It's really important because it's what allows you to be very active and talk. Right now I'm talking very fast ... I can talk really fast and I don't feel like it's any different than when I go like (silence) ... that, because it just feels the same. It feels there is just a little more dancing aliveness going on. You feel the background silence more but that same primacy remains even while you are talking. That is the key to feeling like you don't get caught back in the everyday mind.

S: You hear all the sounds are still sounds that have conceptual layers leading to the I. Let's say somebody moves in who beats their dog and you hear their dog whimpering loudly all 24/7. That becomes more challenging to see through as ...

L: Yes. It tends to be, the way we're approaching this whole thing here, is if you get the principle of the hardware of consciousness, you usually will get it at the easiest level—which is why we are on retreat. Then, it will become easier at the medium level and eventually it will show up at the hardest level.

S: Just to do it seems like this is amazing because it makes a lot of steps unnecessary ...

L: That's right.

S: While in spacious. All that is seen disappears.

L: Yes but the thing is, I kind of like I lead to you through each. It's almost like I'm pointing to each of these steps ... first be aware of the space between the word ... now realize the space is around the word ... now realize the space is in the word.

S: Oh, okay. I didn't get it.

L: Then you're going there.

Now these, as I said, you can go from one. If you can unhook and drop into this heart, it can just open. You don't need to go in/out, in/out. But even then, not too many steps, right? We've got it down to five here (laughter) not two hundred and five or a hundred and eight.

It starts happening by itself. I think that it the main thing. It starts to know itself and show itself. Some people ask "how did you learn this?" I said "it kind of showed itself to itself." It starts going "look at this ... look at that ... look at this ... look at that ..." It's like "Oh yes right, go ahead ..."

That's the simplest map I could come up with. It's from a mahamudra tradition.

Let's do another ... Do you have another comment?

S: I was going to say the recognition of that state feels like the sense of exile or suppression once the mind is released. Earlier in this, before there was ground, that was scary because the functions or whatever it did to keep it there—even the mindful way of doing that—still felt all inside.

L: As this spacious awareness?

S: What arises is not other, and it just feels like fireworks. But it's not a problem where it used to have to be managed, where there was a threshold it just burns or detoxes ... undoes.

L: That's right.

S: It doesn't have to be messed with. It feels so relieving. Then there is like a rest, and always but also particular to the unburdening effect unfolding.

L: Yes, that's right. Once the primacy of awake awareness is discovered as embodied, it's called ultimate medicine, often—awake awareness embodied. And so, they almost becomes a spontaneous liberation that's happening. You are not doing it; it just does a detox and a thawing out that just feels like this is just natural because it's like "bring it on ... you've got some repressed material here ... I can handle it, let's return it to its natural energy ... it's all energy anyhow ..." There's almost like an intelligence of titrating it so it's not too much at once.

When you learn this intentionality of awareness you can feel like sometimes it starts and you can go, "okay, let's just ... nothing wrong with a little repression once in a while (laughter) ... not right now; we have to deal with a few other things ... and we'll let a little steam off but come back to this later ... it's all good because we've got some things to do ..."

S: So it's energy, right?

L: It's energy, yes.

S: And the words give it meaning?

L: Words? Like what?

S: Typically the problem is giving it meaning, you are giving the energy meaning.

L: Yes, you are giving it meaning and you are taking its meaning or its packet ...

S: How do you know the meaning is even right?

L: That's right.

S: It seems to be that we think it's always right.

L: Yes and we think it's happening now and we think there is somebody that is being threatened by it. Because it's an angry feeling there must be something threatening to who we are.

S: We already talk to ourselves, don't we?

L: Yes. (laughter) That's what thinking is. (laughter)

S: Sometimes I vocalize it too. (laughter)

L: That's right, walking down the street, yes (laughter).

S: We have someone else who does it and then it will look like we're talking to each other (laughter).

L: You've got a partner to walk with, yes.

Let's do ... instead of dropping into the body first, we are going to unhook and come to hearing then open to space this way until we discover spacious awareness. And then we'll play a little bit of this awareness of awareness piece.

Let me say something about that, because we have done the dropping and the unhooking, this way ... when awareness will come to hearing at one small area and then open to physical space or a content-less space that sound is moving through but then it will be aware of objects-less space. As soon as there is no object of thought to loop, then the ego identity is gone. So, as soon as awareness is aware of non-objects, you have peace of mind; you have silent mind. As soon as awareness goes, "let me be interested in space that is content-less, object-less, then there is nothing to chew on so it can't create itself. The ego identity can't create itself; it's gone. You are in freedom from—you've awoken from—by being aware of space and then that spacious awareness is going to discover or tune in to the field that's already aware. So it's as if the awareness, which is already part of this field, is looking for itself as the field. Once water goes into water, air goes into air, then it's like either in one place or both places; it's aware of itself by itself with no self. It's aware of content-less, objectless, timeless, thought free.

At first it can feel most like putting your hands on the surface of water—put your hands like ... are you feeling a little air? You feel a little air on your hands? That's about as much palpable as it feels but it also feels, when it's really aware of itself, there is a moment almost of where there's almost like a time gap. It's timeless—timeless feels like "oh, timeless ..." And then there is like time just went by and you didn't even know it; it's almost like absence. You can't quite confirm ... it's usually like because there is nothing to refer to and nobody referring to it. It's like emptiness is aware of emptiness, like "woops ..."

Then, if you go to your mind, "am I aware of awareness ...?" You'll have no chance. You can't go back to thought for a second opinion on whether you're getting this. You have to stay in what feels like absence.

Literally three seconds to three minutes, is all this takes. It's either working or not. The only way you know that it's actually working is then, as awareness—assuming that it is working—if you come back and feel this continuous field of aliveness, you'll just feel like "oh, this is really cool ..." That's when you'll feel it, when it comes back and mixes. You'll feel

that it's definitely different than when you just dropped into your body. You will feel like, "oh look, there's a boundless, embodied, inner-connected, open hearted ..." It will be like you are plugging into the simultaneous mind. You will know, "okay, whatever that was worked ..." because that was the key to being the new dimension that allows you to now be open hearted rather than have this manager be the one who's trying to do things.

Does that make some sense? At least in theory? Any questions?

S: I just want to check with what you described. I've experienced these nobs here and it's awareness, awareness of sensation ...

L: Yes.

S: But it's not as you're describing. It's not a mixing.

L: You're probably in the subtle body and then you're aware of spacious awareness. But then you are back to subtle body unaware of spacious awareness?

S: It's because I'm looking back up to thought ...

L: Yes, and maybe you haven't handed off the baton to actually be located in the awareness ...

S: So as awareness aware?

L: As awareness. So that question, which I'll ask you, are you aware of spacious awareness? You can recognize spacious awareness. Local awareness seems to be like, "Yes, I'm aware of spacious awareness ... it's free, content-less ..." Or are you sure you're going a little bit this way or have you surrendered and realized "oh no, this spacious awareness without my help is already aware back this way ... I may be going this way, but what I discovered is going back that way. In some ways I'm not coming back; I'm just discovering that which is coming back." When we do it behind us, surrender to the awareness behind you, then you will feel, "oh it's already coming through me ..." You're on board, you're surfing it. But it's really the surrender part; it's a letting go of that little control to realize there is an awareness that is already aware, that is bigger than you and yet it is essentially you. It's the ground of who you are but you are not doing it.

That's what we'll play a lot with. Why don't we take a little break before we do it. We'll take a seven minute break and then we'll have a little more energy. Feel free to walk outside, and I'll turn the air conditioner on a little bit more.

13. Awareness Location Meditation, Open hearted Awareness, Compassion

(sound of bell ringing)

Loch: Okay ...

The first magic move is the unhooking of local awareness. The very particularly new felt sense thing is this local awareness that is moving. That's what's able to unhook and drop and know directly. Now we are going to have it come from thinking to hearing ... hearing to space and spacious awareness ... but then, the discovery of local awareness discovering spacious awareness and making that shift of identity. "What does it feel like when I'm aware of spacious awareness? It's very freeing ... open ... boundless." But then, what's it like when awareness is aware of spacious awareness as its subject and object. And then, it merges or discovers the awareness that's already aware by itself, then that awareness, you don't even have to come back. In some ways, once that is discovered that field of awareness is already everywhere and it's already appearing as this wave of aliveness.

There a bunch of ways that people get that flip, that turn, tuning in, or that discovery. We'll play with a few different ones. You can't try to do it, you just have to kind of feel into it, play with it. You could go right to local awareness unhooks from hearing; it could go right into spacious awareness as the field that is already aware. Usually, when we do the surrendering behind your heart—that's what we'll do is have local awareness go behind your heart—to discover that awareness which is already aware, without your help, back into your body and looking out of your heart. That way we are skipping the in-between step which is aware of space. The aware of space can be helpful in that you clearly unhooked another level from your mind and then you become aware of spacious awareness that's aware of itself. But maybe, for some, just unhook and discover that the openness is already aware, that spaciousness is already awake. You are going right into this field that is already awake, is aware of itself and, because it's already a field, then it's continuous not only outside, boundlessly, but also equally aware within and outside, simultaneously.

Then, that feeling of the meeting of awareness and your alive personal contents of consciousness is where the heart mind comes on rather than coming back and reforming this manager in your mind, which has the ability now to talk, walk, and operate from in an awake way. As soon as you come back to your head you're back in system one so we have to establish system two that way.

Any questions before we start? I'm going to turn off the air conditioner; I'm letting it cool down and then it will be quiet while we do it. So I'll turn up the heat. Any questions about that?

Student: I don't know if it's a question. When I've tried, when I do this work, I have no idea how to even get there.

L: Yes, that's good.

S: Then, the flip side of that is I want to get there and then I come back up here.

L: Yes. That's the thing, it's kind of like riding a bicycle. You have to just play with it, just try this, try that. Anybody else who is able to get it that wants to say how they got it?

S: For me it was different. First it was eyes ...

L: Eyes, this one helped?

S: Yes.

L: That's also true. We'll come back and repeat these other ones too that we've done—dropping—but we're going to try this one. Go ahead.

S: Then it was ears. Then it was behind the back.

L: Then it was behind the back, yes. The first one was easier, was this one? Then the ears were easier? And then behind your back?

S: Yes.

L: That is kind of the order we're doing it in.

When you do the ears, is there anything when you unhook from the ears, how do you discover?

S: It goes back.

L: It does go back? Yes, so I guess you could open up and then go into that 360 field. So the field is not just left/right. The field is in all directions. I say field and people sometimes think of it like a wheat field—just this way, left and right, or it's a square ...

S: It's an additional 180 degrees.

L: Yes, 180 degrees this way ... but there are no degrees because once you go up and down ...

S: ... come from the skyline.

L: (laughter) It's basically like—and I'll point this out—that when you are aware from here there is no location from which you are aware. That becomes the key. So if you are aware of your hand, if you are aware of your stomach, if you are aware of that chair, you are definitely not aware from here, but you're also not aware from behind your head, and you're not aware from a detached witness—like here, looking down at everything, like a big sky mind. Those are transitional. You are actually aware from everywhere. That makes no sense but that's what it feels like.

S: So it's a feeling?

L: It's all a feeling and the feeling, when you feel this way, the results of the positive qualities show up. That is kind the weird thing, how does location lead to field of being and how the field of being leads to relief of the suffering and these positive qualities showing up.

That is the simplest way. Scientifically you can't explain it. And, the brain is shown to be balanced; the default mode network balances out, which I'll talk more about tomorrow. That's the idea.

You have a question? No. Okay.

Let's try this ... I'm going to turn this down. That should do it.

S: It's system one.

L: It's system one. (laughter) Put it at 80 degrees and it has to turn off.

S: Sometimes there's a timer ... a fan switch independently?

L: There's auto and fan on. So it's on auto. There you go; just have to be patient. (laughter) Try to be patient. (laughter) Here we go; we'll go into that which is already patient.

Again, I'm talking to you, the awake one, I'm asking you—not you, but you—“You talking to me ...? I'm talking to you ...? (laughter) You ...” the awakeness that can unhook, not the other do-er. Without even knowing how to do it, just simply notice your body and mind simply as they are, no big deal. Notice the tendency to feel that local awareness is identified with thinking. Just unhook local awareness, like a globe of awareness from thought, and have it move to one ear ... From thinking as the sixth sense, unhook awareness, have it step back, and have awareness focus not from the mind, but leave the mind and be aware directly from your hearing ... from your ear.

Neither the hear-er, not interested in what you are hearing ... just hearing ... sensation, vibration, in one little area of the ear drum ... space and awareness ... awareness has become very small and interested, first in this one area of contact of hearing.

Just as awareness was able to unhook from thinking and join with another sense of hearing in a small area, now let this local awareness open to become interested in the space in this room ... Space that is thought free ... space in which is sound is moving, but interested more in the space in which it's moving ... interested in the content-less, open, object-less, colorless, imageless, feeling of awareness ... merging, mingling, with open space until the awareness is actually mingling with spacious awareness ... Opening the local awareness until it discovers the spacious awareness that is aware, that has always been aware, by itself.

Like air into air, water into water, or like a flip turn going out to the wall and turning around until awareness is now aware of itself ... feel as if this awareness from the sky doesn't have to orient by thought or by sense at all, and is just aware of the content-less, timeless, boundless, empty, alert, simple, awareness.

Just surrender into that awareness which is 360 degrees field that's aware of itself from everywhere so you are curious whether you are aware of spacious awareness or whether you are the spacious awareness that is aware of itself behind, within, in front, to the left, to the right ... continuous field of awareness all around ... that is space and aliveness when it also includes not only that which is outside, but also the ocean of awareness is now aware of including the aliveness in your particular sensory body ... everything is just sensation, not interested in particularizing any thoughts or emotions ... just allowing thoughts and emotions to be aliveness.

Awareness and aliveness mingling outside... everything you see is alive energy, sound is alive energy, thoughts are alive energy, sight is alive energy in this field of awareness ... as you allow yourself to let that be and feel like you can let awareness take a quick look at the speed of awareness, from top to bottom, through your body, just to see whether there needs to be an ego manager or a point of view in your system in order to be aware and awake ... Then, as awareness scans and is not able to find any point of view needed, just let go of any interest in forming any controlling manager ... let the intelligence and support of awareness land in this open hearted awareness as the contact between spaciousness and aliveness.

You can ask "are you aware of spacious awareness or is spacious awareness aware of thoughts, feelings, sensations, continuously ..." Feel like you are dropped down from head to heart ... non-conceptual wisdom, potential to know ... feel whether there is a safety, okay-ness, wellbeing, or ground ... stillness ... any kind of curiosity, joy, bliss, love, tenderness ... and a sense of interconnection with everyone and everything.

Now, just check to see, as you are aware from this field of emptiness and fullness, whether there is any location from which you are aware, or whether the entire field of experience is aware without a particular point of view, point of location ... whether there is just unity while there is particularity ... while there is an emptiness ... while there is an open hearted connection.

Feel like that simultaneous heart mind is on line and see what open hearted knows is true ... so the open hearted awareness doesn't have a lot of information in it to be intelligent and wise but it knows what's true and what's real. What does open hearted awareness know is true? What's here? What does it know about itself and about what is revealing itself as you look to it, and it shows you its view and perception ... What would you say?

S: All is well.

L: All is well, yes. That's the first thing it knows, that all is well.

S: An aliveness and curiosity about everything.

L: Yes. Aliveness and curiosity about everything ... everything.

S: Connected to everything.

L: Connected to everything. You feel that? That's that simultaneous, yes.

You feel that equally inside and outside, connection? Again, from here you can be aware of your breath and aware of the planet as a way to be aware of the ultimate level of reality as pure spacious awareness and your location and your connection to the world; all three—infinite space, breath and focus. And in between is just a lot of movement of sound

and thought and energy—in the middle field. The primary field is awareness; focus field is breath and inside and outside; and then in between is just dancing aliveness ... appearing, disappearing, changing ... dancing.

What do you notice? What does the open hearted awareness know?

S: Rest.

L: Rest.

S: Safety.

L: Safety.

S: There's no mistake.

L: There's no mistake.

S: I am all of this.

L: I am all of this.

S: "Heyyyy ..." (laughter)

L: Wheee (laughter) I am that, and that is this.

S: There is a loving wholeness; it is that.

L: Yes, there is a loving wholeness. It is that; that is it. It is I. I am it. It's not an it. There is not I; that's what it is.

(laughter) Loving wholeness, that's it, a non-it. Is-ness; that is loving wholeness.

That is the open hearted awareness' perception, which includes all the others—thoughts can happen, subtle body is feeling, pure awareness is here, embodied awareness and then loving wheee ... woo! An okay-ness ... that sense of safety ... okayness ... well-being ...

Then, the intelligence that is clear that I could respond, I could talk, I could live from here. I'm not in a state. I'm not in a meditation state. I feel very relaxed and comfortable but I could talk to somebody. I could type an email. I could do some kind of work. I could relate to people—probably better. But that feeling of safety and functionality won't scare; is why system one mini-me will get on board. If it doesn't have to do safety and it doesn't have to say "I'm the one who's functioning and I'm the one who's keeping you safe ... No, we have safety, we have functioning covered from here ..."

Then it will be like, "alright ..."

S: there's a tremendous openness to anything.

L: Yes, tremendous openness to anything.

S: No restrictions.

L: No restrictions.

S: No possibility of fragmentation.

L: No possibility of fragmentation because any fragment, any particular-ness doesn't threaten oneness, emptiness or unity. Any particularity in fact, if you look at everyone, what happens is the way we project onto everyone is clean so you start to see everyone just as they are. Everyone is very 3 dimensional and everyone looks good. "Ah, these awake beings just appearing in these different forms." Everyone is like "Wow!" because you are not looking, scanning for danger, wondering what's happening. It's not looking out, not looking in ... not looking out, not looking in ... you are just clean, simple, pure ...

S: I notice since I've come up here it's like tender heartedness.

L: Yes, that's it, tender heartedness. Sweetness ...

S: Relaxed and alert but potential.

L: Relaxed and alert with a potential but doesn't need to do anything. So, just being, that has a potential to think, potential to do, but doesn't need anything to be. Just being who you are.

Do you notice the freedom from any shame, or deeper fear, where "there's something wrong with me ...? Is that true? Essentially, who I am is not good enough? All those sayings don't really make much sense, right? They might have a little bodily "whoop" but they don't stick or they don't form.

S: It's like seeing the holy.

L: You see holy or whole? Holy, yes. Everything is holy. A quote from Einstein is something like, "you learn that you can look at the world like nothing is a miracle or everything is a miracle ..." It's like that perception, right. Everything is holy, everything is a miracle—even blah (laughter).

The two questions for you are: asking you, the awakens, could you live like this? What is the answer? If you could, would you? That's asking both parts of you to get on board. Would you be willing to work with system one to get the functional daily living from here? Would you, if you could? Would you? If you could, would you? That's where the intention, desire, motivation comes from, comes from this heart's desire, comes from you. It has to come from you, not from somebody else or from some religion, teacher or "should" from anywhere; it has to come from that answer—from your heart's desire.

If you could, you feel like you could, do you want to? Do you want to? Would you be willing to make it a priority, a dedication? All those words that are used: motivation, willingness, commitment. Make a commitment to move it up on

the priority list, to do small glimpses many times, or whatever that is, so that that becomes “okay ...” As long as I’m here, why not? I have other things to do ahead of this? Like what are those? (laughter)

S: I think that makes him reassured and more as a collaborator than obstructing.

L: Beautiful, yes. It’s more like a collaborator, right?

S: Cause it needs to feel safe.

L: Yes, the functioning part, right? The ego function?

S: Yes.

L: Feel safe, like “we need your help here ...” We want to live in the world, we don’t want to live in a cave or monastery where everything is regulated. We want to live in this dynamic. “So, we need you to help out because you are the one who’s learned all this ... are you on board?” It’s like “I don’t know ... how about if we are safe and you can semi-retire ... a lot of the good things are already here—They are? I don’t have to get them? (laughter)”

S: You can solve the problems ...

L: Solve your problems, it’s alright. (laughter) We’re not even taking those away from you. (laughter)

S: I feel like a resolution to seeking.

L: Resolution of seeking, yes. This is what the seeker has been looking for. It’s already here. It’s not out there, it’s not in the future. It’s not outside. It’s not in a person, place or thing. It’s not in some day, maybe in the future when X, Y and Z. It’s not either of those places. It’s here, now, and can be covered over and can be returned to. It can be covered over, and even when it’s covered over, some part of you can now know—not even with memory but with a knowing—I’m really identified but somehow the awakensness is still here. I really know it. It’s just weather ...

What we are doing then, in that—from that really identified place—that’s what this whole approach is about. Let’s find the simplest, most effective way to step out. The metaphor is we feel like we’re living in a storm cloud—our head and our emotions, like this—and we’re trying to fix the storm cloud. We are trying to clean it up with a broom. We’re trying to move positive thoughts and replace negative thoughts. We’re trying to make it less stormy and we’re dodging the lightning all the time. All we’re doing here is we’re saying “okay, that’s the storm cloud. I can’t fix it. If I work within it, it’s not going to help. Let me step back and be the sky. That’s it. Drop down and realize I’m the sky. Let me step to the sky, realize I’m the sky, spacious awareness.

Then, let me realize, “Ah, this is my dimension. I’m the sky and now I can come back into this particular cloud and no weather ever hurt the sky.” Who you are can’t be hurt and sky is always within the cloud and always outside of the cloud. There is your new ground. That’s all this is. Just stop trying to fix the cloud from within the cloud system.

Again, Einstein's quote is "you can't solve a problem on the level it was created." What we're saying is let's get to another level. If you want to solve it, step out. Find the resource; resource yourself with the source of mind and then come back with a lot of space, a lot of support and a lot of love. That's the whole system. Very quick. Simpler. Quicker. More effective. Better.

Yes?

S: Can you say some more what I can do when emotional content starts bubbling up ...

L: Yes, is that true now, from here?

S: Yes.

L: Is it more the emotional heart or more the sadness or grief that hasn't been dealt with?

S: Something is passing.

L: Something needs to move through?

S: Right.

L: And, the third quality is sometimes there's a sweet sadness that's almost like the tenderness that actually feels almost like a little pain.

S: Yes, that's what it is.

L: That's actually compassion. That is the human condition. That's actually the pain that's not supposed to go away. That's the human condition. That's the human form. It has that contact, a little pain, a little discomfort, a little sadness, a little seeing of the world like, "oh my god is it beautiful ... oh my god, is it messed up ... (laughter)

S: The both/and.

L: Yes, it's the both/and. Is that more what it is or all three of those things? Like the all three?

S: It's definitely emotional, but the crux of it is here ...

L: Yes, the down here stuff here is the stuff we're talking about. From here you can bear the unbearable. Now the thawing out of that requires allowing the crying and the grief to just happen. It just means "okay, here we go ..."

S: It's a phrase that just keeps coming.

L: Yes, letting now. But now you see you're letting go to that power greater than yourself, which is your self—to that resource that you can let go into and you're supported.

S: Recharge ...

L: Yes, you will recharge because you won't fall apart. You won't lose your mind because you've already lost our mind; that was step one (laughter). We just got rid of that fear—just step out of the mind that you're afraid of losing. Check that box—don't lose your mind; become somebody someday. "I'm going to become nobody and lose my mind." Get rid of those projects and those taboos.

S: And never cry.

L: Never cry, yes, right. That's right.

Then come back and feel the relief of grief, the relief of being tender hearted and see what happens. Usually it's like a reverse iceberg—usually the bigger part is on top—and you think "If I let all this come up it's going to be bad ..." But it just goes and then it's like "Ahhhh..." Then it's kind of amazing. "It's beautiful ... it's so beautiful (laughter) ... I love it ... I just can't believe ... look at everyone, they look like puppy dogs (laughter) ..." It starts to become this sweet bearable grieving. Like you were saying, what did you say before? You called it ... weeping or something? Weeping for joy?

S: Sobbing.

L: Sobbing for joy, yes.

S: Because it's not sad. It is grateful.

L: Right, it's just that grief of the conditioning and the feeling of separation. A lot of it is, "I'm so isolated ..." You grieve it in order to feel more tender hearted. Now you have the courage and the capacity to be sensitive and compassionate and feeling.

From here, it's too big, the emotions are too big a system for the ego. They are much stronger than the best ...

S: Why doesn't it let go then?

L: Which?

S: The ego.

L: Because it doesn't have an alternative. It didn't find the alternative yet. It thinks it will be overtaken by anxiety or depression.

S: It thinks it can solve it somehow ...

L: It thinks, 'listen, I better maintain the best I can with some repression, denial, ego defenses ...'

S: I need to fix it; I need to fix it.

L: Yes, need to fix it or control it ...

S: You just didn't like it.

L: (laughter) That's right. Yes, you are talking like that. You know that guy, right? (laughter)

S: Yes, I do.

L: Yes?

S: I'm really glad you mentioned your sadness and your tenderness. This is hitting me in a way that it hasn't really hit me before, Loch. I feel also extremely, extremely grateful that you've spent the amount of time you spent to synthesize this. I'm having all this compassion for every time I ever, ever, sat on a cushion because lately, with this, I've gotten this and I hear system one saying "How can they have hidden this from me? How could they have hidden this from me?" I don't know if it's the critical mass in this room, things that people are saying are resonating very deeply with me. I feel very, very grateful.

L: Thanks. Thank you.

Are we going until 5:00? Is that the ...? I'm just trying to gauge whether we have time to do this little exercise. I'm thinking of doing a little ... Okay, yes we have enough time.

14. Peer Inquiry. Four questions exercise. Instructions and Q&A.

Loch: ... of doing what's called self-inquiry, where you do inquiry by yourself. There a teacher lead inquiry which we do a lot, some of this here. And then we're going to do a quick little peer inquiry.

You are going to partner up with somebody and ask these four questions of each other and take turns. It will be these four questions, you will ask question one first, two, three, four. I have a sheet of paper with them on it so you can look at it. One, two, three, four and then one, two, three, four ... then one, two, three, four ... and then one, two, three, four, and then switch. Then one, two, three, four ... one, two, three, four ... one, two, three, four ... one, two, three, four, switch. Then talk a little bit. Then we'll meet again then we'll take a break.

Let me get the questions and hand them out here. Why don't you introduce yourself to somebody near you and meet each other.

So, you read the instructions again. You see the four questions which, if you just read them or saw them on the street, would make no sense. But when you will see as you do then, especially going through them a second/third time, they will start to experience ...

The key here is it's not about what you say; it's not about your answer. Try to get over your test anxiety (laughter) immediately. You could say, "Goo-goo, ga-ga ..." as the answer. The key is when you are asked "where is the hearer," that you hear the question and do the inquiry. You look for the hearer. You look through the hearer. And then, you find the answer from awareness. Then awareness speaks. So, awareness just speaks is the key—that you are speaking from the awareness. You are speaking from the open hearted awareness about what is true, what's real. It can be one word, or a few sentences, but it's that you're talking from there—not what you are saying. What you are saying will probably change ever time and it doesn't matter. It's more that you've discovered, are abiding and are speaking from there, some words—the words themselves don't matter.

Yes? Any questions other than that? One/two/three/four ... one/two/three/four ... one/two/three/four ... Decide who is going first.

Let me just read these questions to you so, for you who are listening on this audio recording, this is called Peer Inquiry and here are the instructions: To begin, decide who is going to ask first and, if you are doing it with a partner, who is going to answer first. Then, ask or listen to these four questions. I'll ask you, and then you can look and then respond from your own awareness.

Who is hearing?

Second question, where is the hearer?

Third question, tell me about the awareness that is already aware.

And, the fourth one, what does open hearted awareness know?

(end)

14b. Peer Inquiry Handout

To begin, decide which partner will be asking, or reading, the inquiry questions and which partner will be responding.

The Reader: The partner reading the inquiry questions will pose each question in the sequence provided, starting with question 1. After reading each question, wait for your partner to respond before moving to the next question. Ensure each question in the series of questions has been read out loud and responded to. Repeat the above steps three more times, then switch roles.

The Responder: First, understand the question being asked. Next, unhook awareness from thinking and allow awareness to look or feel back directly. Finally, without returning to thinking, respond to each question from the new spacious knowing by letting words arise.

Inquiry Questions:

1. *Who is hearing?*
2. *Where is the hearer?*
3. *Tell me about an emotional pattern you're aware of in your body. Does it have a shape, size, and location?*
4. *Tell me about the awareness that is aware? Does it have a shape, size, and location?*
5. *How does open-hearted awareness feel toward this pattern within your body? How is it being open-hearted awareness?*

15. Sharing Peer Experience

Loch: The spontaneous discussion after the exercises is all part of the exercise because once you are doing it and you connect to someone and you start talking from this, it's all like, "Hey...! Like we're best friends ... everything is good (laughter)." All that is good.

Any reports?

Student: I have a couple. One of them is I did feel that open hearted awareness. I noticed what happens is, more often, this is where I'll get choked up, when I feel that.

L: Yes. Yes, you feel that tenderness.

S: At this time, one of the things I was saying to Leslie, was one of the things I notice is this guard came in and said, "Wait a minute ... don't get too open here ..."

L: Right, with someone else, right.

S: What's different for me this time is that it was just part of the awareness, it was just one of the things I'm aware of. It didn't pull me away. I didn't pay much attention to it. It was just there.

L: Beautiful. Just to say for the record, your report is that the guard came in and said "hey, don't be so open, and that just became part of the experience." That's right.

It's not about stopping anything from happening. Old conditioning will happen and that's fine; it's not about getting rid of. Things will naturally transform without using the fixer and controller to control them, negate them, deny them or get rid of them. Welcome everything. Love everything back to health. There are not bad parts. Even the protector parts that say, "Hey, don't be so open ..." is ultimately, innocently, trying to help you from its own point of view.

That becomes such a key thing, that even strong, angry, critical voices, "Hey, don't do that;" they think they are helping. You just have to be like, "Okay, I hear you ... But, you're an old opinion. Thanks for sharing ... But, I see from this wise awareness that that is one possibility. I think I actually will continue to open my heart."

Yes?

S: I felt that I was shifting—the mini-me and the non-mini-me. So who is the hearer? First name ... last name? Gender ... everything. But immediately what come is there is no hearer, so that shift was interesting.

L: Yes. That is what that is about, those first questions is about moving from one to the other. Then, coming back a second time, coming back a third time and seeing how it all changes.

Anyone want to say what it was like to do with another person or to be the listener?

S: As answer-er, the first two times I went out; I tried to be logical. I tried to impress (laughter) ...

L: How did it work?

S: The third time something changed. I stopped thinking and tried to answer spontaneously. Sometimes my answers weren't even related to the question—it was like that Zen koan, "what's the sound of one hand clapping?" (laughter)

L: That's it, that's right. In terms of where is the hearer, how many people said New Jersey? (laughter)

S: (?) Nothing gets out of New Jersey ... (laughter)

L: I grew up there so I'm alive; what are you talking about? (laughter)

S: It's like what exit? (laughter)

L: What exit! (laughter)

Yes?

S: At first it was really easy for me to answer the first three questions but the fourth one (clap hands) he said "What does open hearted awareness know;" and we went at it three times; still open hearted awareness doesn't know anything yet.

L: Okay.

S: I also had to answer my own objection, saying "well you should know the answer to this ... you should be more open to this ..." But, I'm not there.

L: That's good.

S: The spacious awareness was easy. The open hearted awareness? Not there right now.

L: Not yet online.

S: Not yet.

L: Beautiful. That's very honest.

S: I have to get over the critical mind that says, "you should be there. You should be there ..."

L: Beautiful. That's there honest, very helpful.

S: How about the word “know?” That’s what kept getting me. “What does open hearted awareness know?” It would bring me back into my head.

L: Yes, because knowing is so associated with thinking. That’s what I’m trying to get to. There is another intelligence. It is a strange word, knowing—you could say feel, but it is ultimately intelligence or non-conceptual knowing. It is kind of like feeling-knowing. I often call it the not knowing that knows. It’s a not knowing that is knowing non-conceptually.

That word is a little tricky because it is so associated. It’s like Tibetan’s use mind for both you mind—get out of your mind and come into your mind. It’s like, “What are you saying? Which one is which?” It’s like knowing and knowing. You can change the words if it doesn’t help. What would you call it? Wisdom? Or something else?

S: Knowing beyond understanding.

L: Knowing beyond understanding, yes something like that.

That is the key, again, you are shifting between levels.

We’ll take a break. What I thought is, I tend to like to be available if I’m on retreat for people who would like ... So I’ll be here tonight. Usually the way they do it here is they have these two day time sessions then they have entertainment at the big hall. You are welcome to go to that. But I’m going to be here until 7:30—optional extra session. We’ll just review what we’ve done. Nobody who doesn’t come tonight will miss anything.

S: Will you be here tomorrow night?

L: I will probably be here tomorrow night. We’ll see how tonight goes—see who shows up and whether it’s useful. If people show up and they are interested, yes I will come tomorrow night for an hour or an hour and a half, hour and fifteen minutes. We’ll see what is good. But for those who want to review or ask questions about what’s going on, check in, let’s do some unhooking ... you are welcome to come. I’m happy to be here and be available.

S: What time ...

L: Oh, 7:30 to 9:00 at the latest, but 7:30 to 8:30.

S: We’ll do exercises?

L: Yes, we’ll do exercises and review what we’ve done up to this point. We won’t go any further; we’ll just be there.

Yes?

S: I wanted to go, if I could really quick, to an exercise ...

L: Yes.

S: Because this was very different for me, experientially and methodologically than the previous exercise. Home Retreat

With Loch Kelly

L: Okay, the one going from the hearing to the ...

S: Yes. It shifted me very quickly without me trying. Sometimes it works ... this was the minute I began listening to her, before I even asked her the very first question ...

L: Oh, okay.

S: ... could you ...

L: In the partner exercise, you mean?

S: Yes. What's going on? What's that about?

L: (laughter) What's up with that? Hey ... wait a minute here ...

S: You snuck that in! (continued laughter)

L: Yes, that's right. It was a sneaky one. It was a setup (laughter) it was all a setup.

S: I'm all for it, thank you. Number one wants to know ...

L: Yes, number one wants to know (continued laughter)

... S: Number two is fine.

L: We'll have a session for number one at midnight tonight. (laughter)

S: Nobody's here!! (continued laughter) Where'd everybody go?!

L: Hey, wait a minute?! Then you walk into an empty room—That's it! (continued laughter) Where's the hearer?! Where's the teacher, where there's no irritants? It's the other teacher!

S: You're killing me! (continued laughter)

L: That's the idea, yes. There is the answer.

S: Stop it!

L: Alright! Alright, already! (laughter) I never started.

Does that answer it? (laughter) GONG! It's just a different approach for the same thing. Certainly it's set up, means you were set up, you were ready. There is something about relational quality that makes you show up in a way that, some people takes them a while, because the mini-me is saying "danger! Danger! Relationship stuff!" And the other people are the support. You are just there. There is something in the ...

S: Thank you for saying that.

L: Okay.

S: Can I say something just a little bit about that?

L: Yes, sure.

S: When I would talk with my meditation teacher we'd go through this kind of process. Sometimes it's easier than others; something it shifts easier. But I would say to her when I'm with my patients, if I remember and I'm really present for listening ...

L: That's one of the best times to practice. It's one of the easiest practices.

S: But then the body would say to me back, "okay but it's not just when you are with your patients."

L: Right, that's right. And yet, whatever door is easiest first, is great, because then you start bringing it into other situations too. But if it's easy, great, then you're in. At least you know what it is, you're stabilizing it and you're doing it at the more advanced level, which is relationship. In some ways it's, if you can do that, now can you do it while walking outside or doing work on a computer—which might be more difficult.

S: When you do it in a relationship it's not scripted.

L: That's right.

S: That is tough! That's hard.

L: Yes.

S: When it's my sweetheart, then it's to the limit. Now what's going to show up? (laughter)

L: Yes, relationship is the advanced level. But, you learn some tools, you learn some doors, you learn some things which you can now apply when you're with your sweetheart, and you just stay right there. Even if you're getting triggered, you just stay the same way. You find the resource, you stay, you wait. You don't react. You stay. You ask a question instead; you break the old habits. You start to work with those dimensions.

That's the suggestions. Please let me know how it goes. (laughter)

S: Right. You can ask her for me.

S: Don't go into the past.

L: Don't go into the past, that's right.

Alright, we will break for now and I'll see you either tonight or tomorrow morning. Thank you all for being awake.

16. Q&A About Spacious Awareness

(sound of bell)

Loch: Welcome. You're all welcome to come sit closer or sit wherever you are comfortable.

Welcome to the extra credit session (laughter), the A+ students.

Student: Or remediation.

L: Yes, the A+ and the remedials too, and everyone in between. (laughter)

S: Thank you for working extra. This is not part of the schedule.

L: You are welcome. I'm always happy to help people get this. My motivation is, the way I feel, is the water is great, come on in the pool! What else am I going to say? I'm enjoying it. I can't believe it's not more accessible, more available. I think it will kind of spread through you all and everyone, as you really get it and make it more normal and everyday. Help people get past the little stuck points in the beginning and make it more available so that you can do it on your own, when you are by yourself. That's what this is about, giving you the tools.

It is kind of for a motivated adult group because you have to find, from somewhere, motivation and interest. It's not that much time that's asked but it is a regular small moments, many times, during a day.

One person came up to me very enthusiastically after a day long. He goes, "You said small moments ... how many times would you say, minimum?" I said fifteen and he heard fifty. (laughter) So he went home and practiced for 50 times a day. Then he came to the next retreat and was like, "This is so great! It's like totally stable!" I said, "Why? What did you do?" He was like, "I'd do it 50 times a day. I set my timer (laughter) on my iPhone ..."

S: Cool man! I'm going to do it.

L: Yeah ...

S: By mistake ...

L: Yeah. That was great. He did it. That's about right.

S: You get to 10,000 pretty quick.

L: Yes, he did.

S: That's great.

L: Yeah, and he has a busy guy doing a job in an office, working with people on the phone, typing and has a little ... But once you get it, then it becomes quicker. I do it on the subway. It doesn't require a lot of preparation. So, this is the important thing, to make sure you have the ABC's, that you get the feeling of doing it yourself.

S: What about the other practices that one would do or one does on a daily basis? You keep them up, right?

L: Yes, sure. If they serve you, do anything you like. If you do yoga ... if you exercise ... if you have a sitting practice ...

S: I sit five minutes in the morning and five minutes at night.

L: Sure. Anything you like. Whatever supports you on any level. This doesn't take up a lot of extra time. This about a particular kind of practice. You have other dimensions of your practice which help get you there. So even with this, if it helps you to do yoga first, do some breathing ... if you have a one-pointed awareness practice ... then you want to do this? That's fine too. That is more traditional—do shamata then deliberate mindfulness, then do this. If that helps soothe your body and mind. But if you can just do this immediately, then just feel the effects of the calming and focused aspect which the other practices are trying to get you into in order to do this.

Hopefully this can, if you can marinate—instead of meditating I call it marinating—You shift into this awareness and the awareness marinates your body. You just marinate, stay alert and relaxed ... soothe the animal. Soothe your body and mind but stay clear. Stay in spacious and simultaneous mind. Don't get caught in subtle body, subtle mind because I think a bit of the group today, right before lunch when we did drop below the neck, I think a lot of people went into subtle mind, which is kind of a little sleepy, before we opened up to the other dimension.

You just want to be aware that that's calming, soothing, but not really alive. Not really alert or able to highly function in a flow state.

S: So the subtle body/mind stage, that is considered the typical mindfulness practice?

L: Yes.

S: The reason it's considered that is because you're directing your thoughts toward your feelings? What are you directing?

L: You are directing a mindful witness. First you are actually using everyday mind to try to focus on one point—your breath, candle or an object; usually your breath. You are trying to get your everyday mind to concentrate so that it eventually settles down, calms down. Then you have a calm mind and you settle into subtle body because your mind has gone down. Now you are here, you are very calm.

One of my Tibetan teachers said, "Everyone here in America is doing stupid meditation." (laughter) That's what he called it. Everyone was like, "I'm meditating ..." and he said, "What is that?" Because just that state, if you just call that mindfulness, it's only the first preparation of relaxing. Then vipassana, the first stage of vipassana—the four foundations of mindfulness—is mindfulness of sensations, mindfulness of thoughts, mindfulness of feelings—pleasant and unpleasant—and mindfulness of contents of consciousness.⁹³ You are going into subtle mind which basically means, in order to see thoughts, you have to go into a mindful witness, which is like stepping at the top of the cloud, splitting off into self-awareness or mindful witness—which could be back here, could be here. You are able to see that you are not

your thoughts. You realize through deliberate mindfulness who you are not.

Then through this, you realize who you are, the foundation of who you are, which is awareness embodied. You can realize who you are not and then realize who you are. This way you realize who you are and then, when you come back, you realize who you are not.

S: Oh, wow. So one is the negation?

L: Negation?

S: You said realizing who you are not.

L: Yes, you are not the mini-me. You are not the everyday mind. You are not the ego identification. You are not that small mental self-referencing center.

S: ... it's not who you are, and that kind of shift?

L: Yes. That's what they are reporting, that's not who you are. But you can see that from a mindful witness. You can see that the thoughts that are going by like, "Oh my god, what have I done? I have to get this right when I go to work tomorrow ... If I don't, I'm going to be fired, on the street ... and I'll be dead."

S: I won't make any money but I won't be who I am.

L: I won't be who I am. So all of that, you start to see from a mindful witness, is non-judgmental observing of contents that just says, "okay, those are thoughts, just because I'm feeling that and thinking that, doesn't mean it's true," or it's you. It just means you can now make choices about that.

S: It never worked for me, really.

L: Yes.

S: At all.

L: It's hard. It's not easy to do.

S: The thing is, they tell you that it's not who you are ...

L: Oh, I see what you're saying—by seeing the ...

S: Of course it's not who I am. But you know what, it's bugging me a lot.

L: Right, so then we have to find out how to get into the new system so that even if it is happening, it's not bugging you so much.

S: Right.

S: Seeing what you're not, doesn't that immediately take you to what you are?

L: No. First you are located in a mindful witness, so you are a meditator seeing who you are not. But ...

S: Not necessarily? Can't you see that everything is in you and you're not looking at anywhere? So, therefore, everything is in me and things that are out there, then everything or nothing ... is one side of the coin ...

L: Not necessarily. In fact, for most of the people usually it goes in stages. Like the stage in Zen is often called don't know mind or you discover not knowing. If you stay there, you are in not knowing, in this gap from knowing to not knowing. Then there is a neutrality but you can't operate from not knowing. You have to find a new knowing to get information to talk to somebody, so you usually have to back to the old knowing. So, not knowing is a gap. It's a gap of not being the one you thought you were, but you still don't have an operating system that is awareness based, that you can talk and walk from. You are just in this in-between.

S: I've always heard the Zen thing ... they snap out a lot, snappy statements with no explanation. A lot of conviction ... I wanna go straight ... only go straight ... only go straight ...

S: Okay, but it can happen.

L: It can happen, sure.

S: Because, to me, it's like simple and nothing. It's the same thing in everything.

L: Sometimes you can see it but where you are seeing it from is still like a witness position.

Most of the people who come to me are people who've had some initial awakening. But the thing I see with every one of them, is they've seen they are nobody and even a lot of them are saying "I'm nobody ... I'm not a person ... I'm nobody ... there's nothing here ..."

S: But they are here saying it.

L: They are here saying it. They are in their intellectual mind and they don't see, they don't feel their heart. They don't feel embodied. They don't feel that they can ...

S: I understand.

L: That's what it is, it's making a distinction. You could see it, and you could actually have full awakening that happens unintentionally, that has all the aspects. But what I'm seeing, is I'm making sure, "check this ... now check that ... now

check this ... now check that ... Now go right here ... but if you are here, are you located anywhere? No? Are you able to talk? Do you have love and kindness? Do you have this open hearted awareness? Yes? Okay, then that's fine." You have a simultaneous sense that you are really not stuck in a halfway house; you are not in a halfway state of not this state—not the agitated mind—but you could be spaced out, you could be blissed in, you could be in intellectualization.

One of my teachers, Tolku Urgyen said, "The only danger of the direct path is intellectualization." It's not like you are going to go crazy or some dangerous energy thing. It's that you are likely to have a glimpse and then come back to your mind and say "I've seen that I'm nobody and I realize," like you were saying, "I'm not who I think I am, as I say I am," as I say it again, and again, and again. You get a mental, philosophical conviction that this is true but it's been co-opted by the mini-me and you are now convicted and a fundamentalist about being nobody.

S: It's stuck on a slogan.

L: Yes, it get stuck on a slogan or it gets co-opted. The ego-identification and co-opt anything, so it's like a spiritual ego.

S: What I like about what you did, by the way, is that you made the distinction between the ego is different than experience. It's comforting to see that you are basically saying, "of course you don't like shit ... do you want to step in shit all day?" That's logical; it's very clear. The problem is this identifier.

L: Yes, it's just the identification. There's a chapter that—a lot of people who start my book don't quite get to it and it's quite an important one—called the simple case of mistaken identity. It goes through ego, self, no self and not ego. If you have the book, skip ahead if you get bogged down.

S: It's very, very good ...

L: It just distinguishes, very clearly ...

S: Did you come up with this on your own? How did you do it?

L: Yes, through looking at what's going on, what I'm stepping in, what I'm hearing, confusion and clarifying. Then, bringing it together with the Western talk about ego, me and identity, self and no-self; all these ideas. I just felt ...

S: Because people get wrapped up in the no self, it would be nauseating.

L: Exactly. But it's really just a state of no-self and then the no-self that is here, that is aware and has a human birth going on.

Yes?

S: And then shift from somebody to spacious awareness is the huge YOU-turn only? Or can you say more about the shift?

L: Yes, I can spend a lot of time. Certainly I want to make sure that people, if anyone's having a hard time with that initial unhooking and stepping out, we can do that, but I think the most important thing is this turn from here to here.

Student: Yes.

L: Because usually people don't get even to here. And, if they get to here, they spend a lot of time here and make it into a meditation state. Then they come back to here and go here and here ... A lot of people are never even aware that they are aware from pure awareness; they are always referencing thought. "Am I aware that I'm aware? That I'm aware that I'm aware ...?" Or sometimes they will go into a long retreat and go into choice-less awareness, which you are kind of aware from it but it's not aware of itself. It's kind of a big sky witness so it's kind of a big sky subtle mind version.

This turn, this recognition, and then this awareness embodied ... The tool that we are using is that local awareness is what's able to intentionally and immediately know spacious awareness because it's the only thing that can know. The only thing that can know it is itself so if you sit and let everything settle, or have a big opening, then you just go right from everyday mind to spacious awareness, but then you don't know that you have local awareness. So, you think "I just better stay here ..." or just operating is happening but you are not able to navigate and stay within the field and use other dimensions of your humanness and connect and relate, while not losing the primacy of awareness.

That reverse engineering of this local awareness is what is unhooking and dropping, coming to the ears opening, opening this way, in order to shift into, discover, or uncover, the no-self based awareness that is not a self—that is not a separate sense of self ...

S: It's like periphery, kind of?

L: The feeling is peripheral, so it's phenomenological, right? In other words, it's experiential. It's not philosophical. That's what this is. That's why I talk about it in terms of 360 degrees rather than some philosophical ...

Spacious awareness is a word called rigpa, that's pristine awareness, pure awareness. But spacious is the feeling of it. It's spacious ... it's boundless ... it's open ...

S: Oh, that's what rigpa is?

L: Yes.

S: Fast chance. (laughter) Because words bug the shit out of me, right. You hear these words and you're like, I don't understand ...

S: Rigpa.

S: Yes, what's rigpa?

L: (laughter) And nobody knows what it means!

S: Nobody. I don't.

L: But they all go there if they want to know. (continued laughter)

S: Couldn't spacious awareness have its own local awareness?

L: Yes, it does.

S: It seems almost like we're taking the one that was assigned to our brain for a little while, it can find spaciousness. Then, if finding spaciousness is awareness, and it co-ops our awareness that is up there looking at it and then it shoots it back to us ... is it necessary for this awareness to go out ...?

L: This awareness is already here but we're caught.

S: This awareness meaning what?

L: This is the whole deal, the global awareness, the non-local awareness, the pristine awareness, the boundless awareness, spacious awareness ... rigpa. (laughter)

S: Is this being recorded?

L: Yes. (more laughter) We should get you guys recorded though.

S: Is it correct to say that we took this spacious awareness and then just put it into this little box?

L: Yes, this is good to tease out what, as I say it, what you guys understood because you are trying to make sense of it. Ultimately you don't have to make sense of it but you have to know how to do it. But it is almost like, the best way to feel it is to reverse engineer it. If the assumption is, from open hearted awareness, from spacious awareness, what is aware is an awareness that is already aware, everywhere, by itself. That is the awareness. It's empty and knowing, or empty and has clarity, and it also is appearing as formation. So it's like the quantum field is made of nothing and it appears as particles and waves. The particles and waves form into patterns called planets, trees, people ... but they are made of nothing. They are made of the quantum field which is actually prior to energy. This is the metaphor—probably made it weirder, but that's alright.

The idea is that somehow consciousness is purely aware and forming into patterns. Something like that. You can't prove it but that's kind of what it feels like.

S: For me, the form ...

L: Forming into patterns. So it almost becomes like invisible becomes wind and wind starts moving. So there's movement out of nothing and all of a sudden it turns into a little tornado. Then it has particles ... and forms into a planet ... and then atoms are going around and they form into patterns of molecules ... and molecules go around and form into cells ... and cells form into multiple cells ... and whatever, all that stuff. I didn't do so well in science, but you know. But something like that right?

S: The funny thing is, for all that to happen, you need space.

L: Yes, that's right. As I say, interestingly in my book, finding a quote from—who's the guy who wrote the theory of time—Steven Hawking says "The universe is made of matter, energy and space." Where is awareness or consciousness? That is all I'm saying. Good. Matter is the most; energy is the next; space ... and then there's either some kind of consciousness of awareness that is of the space, that is creating some kind of sentience, consciousness, intelligence, on some level—whatever that is. We don't need to postulate. We don't need to theologize or anything like that. It feels like that.

It feels like space is aware, inside and out. Now, it includes us and our senses interpret it here in certain patterns—dogs have different smells and other animals can see different colors and spectrums of light; we can only perceive what our eyes and ears, based on our human consciousness can perceive, in terms of what's going on and it organizes it into certain things.

From this field of awareness, the awareness is not only local but it can focus, not only non-local, but it can focus locally here. That's almost like what mindfulness is—local awareness is now mindful of seeing you ... now it's mindful of seeing you ... now it's mindful of the plant ... now it's mindful of my breath. But the way it is, is it takes itself and it's like a wave moving, like if it was on an invisible plane the bubble would be moving. Now it's aware here ... it's aware everywhere but it's also particularly aware there ... now it's particularly aware there ... now it's particularly aware there ... and now it's particularly aware there ... while it's aware everywhere. Local awareness is the focussing aspect of spacious awareness and it's happening simultaneously.

S: I was talking about freedom. Mindfulness and awareness, you said it's like you are walking in the forest and mindfulness ... you see a flower. Mindfulness was like "I'm not going to pick that flower ..." and the awareness is like the ...

L: The interconnection with all the flower ...

S: Yes.

L: The difference between attention and local awareness, is that from attention, I am a separate creature that's isolated and looking. I am aware of that object out there. I am using my small mind to be aware. And, from local awareness you feel like, we are already connected on this field, now I'm moving my focus to here. Now I'm connected to that, particularly. So there is the local awareness's bubble, but it's connected through this field of awareness to me, and it's also connected to you.

Now that local awareness is connected already to everything. When it moves to being aware of my knee from within, it's still connected. The field is connected to the flower, but now local awareness is what is in the focal foreground of the field as your human consciousness ...

S: What causes us to re-recognize?

L: Re-recognize the field of awareness?

S: Yes, when we need to re-recognize ...

L: Yes, that's good

All this is to say that, what I've found, is that because you are already this awake Buddha nature, you're already this true nature, you're already this awake field, if I talk to you or you say to your own awareness, "unhook local awareness from thought and have it move to hearing and have it move to re-recognize the field of awareness so that we can get out of this cloud and this obscuring pattern of consciousness which I seem to be identified and obscured in ..." Feel like the intelligence of awake awareness can move it. Now, open it here, and then plug it in. Discover that. Now let go. Surrender until that becomes clear, that that is what's aware and has always been aware. Then as that, which is already aware, notice that you already included your human nature and everyone else without any location of where you are looking from now. You are now located in the field of awareness that's aware of itself—everywhere. What knows that is the contact between the infinite and the finite, which is now more of a heart mind than a mental head mind.

Yes?

S: So the re-recognizer is the magic part?

L: Yes, that's the magic trick. That's the first trick of the trade and that is, in some ways, the thing that is unique about this approach. The best I can say, it's local awareness that's made of the spacious awareness but is identified inherently within the pattern or thinking that's looping around itself and making us feel like it's limited only to this consciousness.

S: It's more a whole body thing ... it's like a grander version of the recognition that you've drifted off on your thought.

L: Right. Then you come back, the recognition.

S: A thin version of the re-recognizer?

L: That's right, yes. That's one form of re-recognizing. That's one form of re-recognizing, "Oh, I'm lost in daydream ... let me come back ... This is like "Oh, I'm lost in identification ... let me come back this way ..."

S: That's true.

S: So the question, "where am I," is one way of doing the YOU-turn?

L: That's right.

S: And another way of doing the YOU-turn is surrender?

L: Yes.

S: And experientially, in a way surrender happens as a physical relaxation and an understanding that the one who's looking, can't find it?

S: So that's correct?

L: Yes, that's a good way.

S: I'm looking from all angles ...

L: Yes, good. Play with the angles and find what works, in terms of that.

S: Any others?

L: Yes, there are a bunch of them. I actually have this list I'll bring tomorrow, that I wrote a bunch of these metaphors down recently, that I didn't put in the book.

Tomorrow we'll work with behind the back, more, but today we've been working with opening around and then opening more to the sides. So, coming from the ear, if awareness can come to the ear, now awareness could just dissolve into that field of awareness that is already aware. That is the shortest ... just dissolves right away ... doesn't even go to space. Just dissolve into the awareness that's already aware, everywhere. That awareness, which is aware boundlessly, is also aware inherently. That is the shift from one point to non-local and local ...

S: That's what you call simultaneous mind?

L: That's simultaneous mind, yes. Then you are everywhere, nowhere, and here. The primacy of the spacious awareness has now included this.

The word co-emergent wisdom, which means not only is it pure awareness but it is arising co-emergently as appearances, as energy (sound of glass), that consciousness is not just pure, but it's also alive. It's also patterning, changing.

You get that melting? Everyone get that? Anyone like the melting one?

S: Yes.

L: It skips the step of being aware of space and then being aware that space is aware.

One other extreme is you can unhook awareness from thought, have it go to the wall and then have it turn around and be aware back. So unhook ... go as far as it can that way ... now have it just come back and be continuous. That's like a flip turn, a swimmer's flip turn.

S: It's like a wave bouncing.

L: Yes, like a wave bounding off the wall because it thinks it's going up but now it's coming back. Then that's it, let it go. Now it's coming back ... it's everywhere ... now it goes right through the walls as it goes back the other way ...

S: We all get pulls in our ear drums.

L: (laughter) Surgical techniques ...

S: Doing that skips awareness being aware of itself?

L: Yes, this one does but it's almost like, "I'm too confused with awareness by itself ..." Then it's like "Just go back and

come back ...” then it’s is it aware of itself? “Yes, it is ...”

The thing about awareness aware of itself—purely for 3 seconds to three minutes—is that it really does get this grounding. You are really plugged in and you really got the ground. You are not mixed up with subtle mind and body. You are just really are like cleaned house. You are totally cleaned house and now, when you come back, you are unmovable, “Oh yes, everything’s here all at once ... I really, really got that I’m tuned right into the station that’s the ground ...”

S: The first one on your audio was the one that made me test it, four days ...

L: You had what for four days?

S: It zinged me internally. But it lasted for four entire days, but I was a little dopy.

L: Okay, that can be a first level dope—dopamine dope.

S: I’m pretty good at dope (laughter) ...

S: When you say you were aware of this, you said that it could get mixed ... what do you mean that you are aware of this? If the spacious awareness ...?

L: Yes, spacious awareness. It’s pure, meaning that it’s not mixed yet with simultaneous mind. It’s really just spacious; they call it pristine naked awareness ...

S: Toria ...

L: Toria.

S: That’s when there are no thoughts?

L: that’s when there are no thoughts and there are no sensations. It literally is the awareness is aware of this space here—there is nothing there, it’s empty and it has knowing, but it’s now aware of emptiness as its subject and object. All it has it knowing but what it knows is its own knowing and its own emptiness; that’s it. It’s just that.

It’s the primary dimension of intelligence that is not this intelligence. So, you are getting that ... See, this is your mind. This is your mind now ... now come back with that as your human body ... and you’re pretty still, pretty safe and comfortable, like all is well.

That's the reason to do that. We'll do a little of that to check that out.

S: ... sensations ...

L: What's that?

S: You said no sensations.

L: No sensations; none.

S: And senses sensing? Seeing? Hearing?

L: Right here, where it's aware of itself in its pure space—spatial area, like a local version of its field—there is nothing here; there are no senses here. There is just awarenensing. Awareness is aware of itself as formless. Then it becomes infinite or boundless. Because it's infinite and boundless, it's also continuously, and also inherent, within you. Then you start to feel the next level of simultaneous mind.

But, what's changed is you've shifted levels of mind from conceptual mind to completely non-conceptual source of mind. Then, the source of mind is now the operating system of your particular individual human vehicle.

S: Spacious awareness is the outcome of emptiness practice for traditions ...

L: Yes.

S: Is that right?

L: that's right. That's what emptiness is, the arising of the aliveness as the display.

S: They all help each other though ...

L: Yes.

S: I've emptiness-studied forever; don't really get it. Now, if you do three, then all of a sudden you are saying "okay, now go on with your day, bring this out into the world ..." Then all of a sudden, it literally stuck. It was amazing. It took all those three combined.

L: Yes, it took each of those.

S: So you take spacious by itself ...

L: No, if you meditate on that and you do that as if you need to do it for a long time or whatever, the point is, unless it's mixed, it's over. Once it's over, it's over, and you're back operating from this ego center. No matter how long you've stayed out here and how well you got that, if it isn't mixed as the new source of mind or the new source of operating which includes your body-- as aware from within your body—then it doesn't help.

S: What helped in the book—I just want say this because I had to read it over probably 50 times—I kept reading the same section over and over again ... It was toward the beginning of the book where you said basically this is a place you know, it's how you know and it's really how you know and what you are.

L: Yes, that's right.

S: That phrase was very puzzling for the longest time because you are like, what? Then, listening to the guided, plus that little dyad, I think that's what caused it to gel because it's how you know.

L: Yes, that's right.

S: And it's what you actually are.

L: Yes, it's the ground of who you are.

One other way to say the new knowing—the non-conceptual knowing, the not-knowing that knows—is what has to know that you know. When you shift into the awareness based knowing, that has to confirm that you are there, that you are here. You can't go back to the mind for a second opinion. That's where it gets mixed up. As soon as you half check, "How am I doing? Did I get it right?" then you are gone. As soon as you go up for an opinion, you are caught or you're mixed—you're a little mixed. The new knowing confirms it knows by going "Am I in open hearted awareness?" It may arise and then it's like "Mmm..." The knowing is non-thought based, but it's definitely. Like true ... trust ... absolute ... it's just there.

S: I hate the words non-dual and dual but it's okay, call it whatever you want.

L: Yes.

S: But it was a good lexicon, lexical, way to say it.

L: Good.

Yes?

S: I want to check in with you. Yesterday when I left here, I felt a sense of awareness from—I'm going to use your language—local awareness shifted from here to here. And I felt I was perceiving, seeing, hearing and moving ...

L: From here?

S: From here. So when I left, I got lost for a half hour in the parking lot trying to find my car, and I'm still moving. I was very aware. So that was local awareness shifting its position. I went through those—if I'm hearing you right then—I kind of shifted into those. I think I was moving through open hearted awareness, if I'm using your language right.

L: Yes. It sounds like it. You could have been in subtle body but ...

S: Right, it could have been that too. That's fair.

L: The test is whether some love ... you could have been in early open hearted awareness that is not quite rewired, so that's why you're wandering around a little bit. But you could have been in open hearted awareness, or you could have been ...

S: If that's what you mean, though, that shift of local awareness ...

L: That's the shift of local awareness. You were definitely out of that, definitely out of that.

S: Right. Then, when we re-integrate, local awareness is here but now here from open hearted awareness?

L: That's right. Now it's this intelligence and you feel either it's like thoughts are re-routed instead of going across the screen of the mind, they come down here or the Wi-Fi brings them down the back and you don't even see them, you just know which ones you need to attend to or not. Like your mind is clear, you have peace of mind ... I'm just walking around my apartment and not really thinking ... doing stuff ... I go for the door, and all of a sudden it goes "Oh, don't forget to bring that thing that you were going to bring down to your office." So (snaps fingers), it's like all of a sudden it pops up because the intelligence of awake awareness knows which thoughts need to come onto the screen because it's monitoring all of your thoughts and ignoring 90% of your automatic thinking like, "what am I going to do? Which train am I going to take ... What time is it ... I've checked already, what time it is ... it's time to check again ..." That is not happening on the screen. I have peace of mind. I'm alert ... walking around ... and then then boom, the intelligence goes "don't forget to bring that thing before you go because you were going to bring that down to the office ... oh yes, right ..." You go back, pick it up, put it in the bag, and off I go. Then, peace of mind.

S: It's chill?

L: Yes, it's very chill. It's very intelligent. It's learning to trust that. It has a quiet sense but you are not dumb; you are actually available to think. Sometimes I will just think about something, "Oh yes, remember that time with my friend, that was great..." You intentionally can do reverie, or free thinking, or "Let me think about how I would do that ... If I was going to do that, build something ... oh yes, you can do it that way ... or that way ... that would be really cool ... maybe I'll do it that way ..." Done. There is nothing wrong with creative mind and reverie when you know you are doing it. Then the default is peace of mind, feeling blissfully embodied and joyous.

Shall we do a little ...? Of the four things we did—the open eyes, the drop and open and include, the ear, and then we did the partner exercises—how many liked the opening the eyes best—going 360 degree? Or good enough?

S: Blah ... blah ... blah ...

L: Oh, blah ... blah ... blah ...

One eyes ... two eyes ... three eyes. You like more than one, probably? How about the dropping and opening? A few for that—dropping down into the heart and then opening ...

S: Is this where you do the emotions?

L: We did unhooking and following the breath ...

S: This motion thing ...

L: Oh yes, we did that too. That's right!

S: It imbeds the teaching ...

L: It does, it really does.

S: It's a great tool.

L: I just started adding that the last couple of retreats.

S: It's like awareness tai chi.

L: It is almost like that.

S: I swear to God it is.

L: Yes. It's maybe where the mudra stuff came from ... I'll do those mudras.

The thing is, instead of chi—which you can feel, this energy chi—we're actually moving local awareness, which is not energy. So you are feeling it pre-chi (laughter). Pre-chi Tai Chi. (laughter)

S: Excellent, that's great.

L: Pre-chi ... post-chi pre-chi ... (continued laughter) Pre-chi ...

How many people liked going to the ear and coming to space? We have some of that.

All this to say that you see how some work ... how many like the blah ... blah ... blah ...? You see that some work, some don't work. That's great because they are all about which doors are we using to get to the same place. Different learning styles and different types of people learn differently. Some doors are blocked and some doors open easily for people. Don't worry if one doesn't work and the other does.

Let's do the ear. We are going to go out and do this dissolving into this awareness that is aware of itself and then let that awareness come back to feel. Or, dissolve into the awareness and then realize that that awareness is already aware within, without your help. Then feel like there is no location for where you are aware from and start to talk from the heart mind, if you are going to speak about what's happening. Don't go up to thought to think about what you are going to say.

Again, I'm talking to the awake awareness which is both non-local and local, but the local one can move. The non-local, if I talk to the non-local, I can say "how you doing non-local" and it's going "all is well." And, "Can you do anything?" "I'm already doing everything." (laughter) It's not too helpful. But then the other mind says, "Yeah, right. I've heard that before."

We're talking to the local awareness of the spacious awareness and asking that, which is located in the mind because the mind is the habit where local awareness tends to be, in terms of identity. So, unhook ... step back with that local awareness ... have it come to one ear, at one small area ... I'm going to turn this ...

S: Why choose one ear?

L: Because I guess it's more local. You could do both. Do you want to do both? I usually do both and then some people say, "I'm trying to be very focused ..."

S: It's almost like they couldn't help but do both.

L: Okay, good. That's fine, that's fine. Absolutely, so both ears.

You can also feel awareness on both sides, or you can feel it on one side. But again, you want to feel it in one area. I kind of go out both, this way and this way, but either way. When you unhook from the eyes and you come to one ear then you really feel this one huge hearing.

We can begin again with awareness identified with thought ... Unhook awareness and have it come to hearing. Just hearing, neither focused on the hearer nor the heard ... just this vibration, sensation in this one small area of your body. Let awareness be interested in the vibration, the space, and the awareness in that area.

Just as awareness can unhook from thought, see what it's like if local awareness unhooks from thinking and dissolves into the spacious awareness that is already aware ... so as local awareness goes out, it discovers and merges with this spacious awake, empty field of awareness that has already been aware, always ... That boundless pure awareness is also aware of itself.

Let that awareness in one area that is thought-free and sense-free become aware of the empty and clarity only. No subject, no object. Just emptiness aware of emptiness, clarity aware of clarity ... surrender.

Then, remaining as that empty, spacious awareness, notice that the spacious awareness is everywhere—a continuous field of outside and within ... both spacious and pervasive ... including and welcoming all thoughts, feelings and sensations while remaining open and boundless ... Just be curious whether you are aware of the spacious awareness or whether the spacious awareness is aware of thoughts, feelings and sensations ... both inside and within ... continuous ... simultaneous ... Not going up to thought to know or orient ...

Letting awareness scan through your body from top to bottom to see whether there needs to be a location of a manager or self in order to be here and aware. Upon not finding any point of view or any self or separateness, let go and surrender again into this emptiness that is dancing ... See whether, as you are aware of whatever's in your field of awareness, whether there is any location from which you are aware. Is there any place that you are aware of sensation within ... sensation and movement ... sound outside, sound inside ... breath outside, breath inside ... light outside, light inside.

From this field that has no location of a self point of view, notice simultaneously, the pervasiveness of space behind you, within you, and in front of you ... to the left of you, the right of you ... above you, below you.

As the main self-maintaining spontaneous awareness that is happening without your help, noticing the dancing alive energy and sound, outside and in, that is happening without your help ... Then, while remaining as that infinite field, be aware of both your breath, intentionally, at one place in your body—your chest rising and falling—and become aware of the plant on the table at the same time.

As, and from, this field of awareness which is outside and inside, be aware of the movement of your breath ... inside and a particular local awareness connected to a particular object, like this plant ... seeing is receiving ... there is a connection from your heart to the plant ... local awareness is aware of your breath happening by itself and awareness happening by itself.

Then, without leaving your home and your heart, in this space, feel this intelligence of your heart ... From your heart mind, let arise into your awareness your telephone number to yourself ... Don't go up to the mind to look for it. Let your telephone number appear out of your heart mind ... and then let it go. Don't associate after it. Don't follow any other thoughts. Just remain in peace of mind, open hearted awareness.

Now, from your heart, bring the image of an animal that you love—that is in your life or that you know or have known—bring that memory from your heart mind down, through Wi-Fi, into your heart mind. Feel that connection, love and kindness, open hearted ... Then intentionally let that pleasant feeling go, like a bird, a butterfly, and remain without images, without memory ... Just here in this room ... infinite and finite ... everywhere, nowhere and here ... with potential to think ... and feel this sense of wonderment.

Now, just speaking from your heart mind through your mouth using language, what is this like? Just to say what this open hearted awareness knows about itself? What do you notice? What are the qualities?

S: A room full of light.

L: Room full of light.

S: Oneness.

L: Oneness, yes. And you feel the connection to the plant? You feel what local awareness is? What it feels like?

17. Sharing Experience After Awareness Exercise

Loch: Kind of connection?

Student: Yes.

L: Everyone feel that? That local awareness related to your breath and the local awareness related to the field that is connected to the flower, that it's just distinguishing it out of the field?

S: Yes, my phone number was like a piece of fruit.

L: In that it?

S: Just like the plant.

L: Just like the plant?

S: Like fruit that came off of that thing.

L: Just like appearance or natural phenomena, right?

S: Yes.

L: Rather than a mental strain or something?

S: right.

S: Fruitfulness came to be a whole thing.

L: Fruitfulness?

S: Fruitfulness.

L: That's great. Fruitfulness over there too? Nodding ... we've got three fruitfulness. (laughter)

S: Open and then able to focus.

L: Open and then able to focus, effortlessly, right? Because of the connection from the unmoving mind, from the spacious mind, rather than trying to focus from the moving mind; comes from below.

S: When you mentioned focusing on the animal, I had a sense that the heart formed impressions, like an impression in the water as opposed to somebody ...

L: With hold onto and say, "Let me keep that, I don't want to let that go ... I miss that animal ... I'll deal with the exercise later ... (laughter) Right now I'm having a good time ..." That's beautiful, yes. Like impression on water, like writing on water ... drawing a picture on water.

S: Clear ... it's a little trippy, but I thought it was glass shell.

L: Which was the clarity?

S: Yes, it was in the glass shell.

L: Glass shell ...?

S: Like a body ... like your body but glass ... really transparent.

L: Sometimes they say a flute, a bamboo flute or something or like a hologram ...

Anybody else?

S: I'm still in the loving wholeness.

L: Loving wholeness, yes. Stay with that. You don't have to add any other phrases. That loving wholeness is the open hearted awareness ground—loving and wholeness. That is the feeling, right. Anyone else feel like that? Feel that kind of wholeness, all-at-onceness? Interconnectedness?

S: Continuous.

L: Continuous. Self-maintaining or continuous ... Like you are not doing it, right?

S: No.

L: Something is aware, continually aware, without our help. Then that's what's maintaining; that's what's happening continuously. Then we can dance with that by changing our focus to somewhere, but we are not leaving the continuousness of it. It's still continuous even when we focus, or bring a thought, or a memory ... or change what we are looking at or who we are talking to.

Anyone else?

S: You said that awareness is not energy?

L: Yes, because it's prior to energy. It's like air-- space is not energy and then energy is within space. It's literally empty, meaning invisible—prior to energy—and then energy is the first manifestation of form. Awareness is formless, which is that feeling, what you are really trying to get with this feeling of awareness as empty clarity aware of itself. You are

really trying to clean out, even from energy, from thought, from sensation, and even energy. You are going right to the primary ground of empty clarity that is no-thing; it's not a thing. It's not nothing because it's awake but there is no little grasping of energy of you toward something that should be something. You are going out of that altogether in order to come back to the ground. Then you are able to include everything and everything can return to its own natural ...

S: Call it ground ... Ground?

L: Ground, yes.

S: It's very light weight ground.

L: Yes. It's invisible ground made of awareness. Anyone feel that, some quality of ground or stillness or safety? Thickness, like there is something ... meaning the safety of the ground, like you know you are on solid ground but it's not made of material. It's made of empty awareness but it feels safe, it feels secure.

S: You can't fall through it.

L: You can fall through it.

S: You can just lose it.

L: That's right. Some people are afraid of emptiness, they are like, "I feel like I'll walk to the cliff and then I'll fall off ..." I'll say, "Well, actually when you walk to the cliff, unhook and you become awareness, you actually can't fall because you are the air and there is nothing to fall. You can't get hurt ..." But if you are a thing, you are going to be afraid of falling.

Once you are the awareness, you are safe. The ground is awake and whole, interconnected unity, which isn't divided into anywhere—it can't go anywhere, it's not missing anything.

Then you feel the sense of well being, which means that who you are is okay, there is nothing wrong with you. There is a sense of wellbeing, non-fear, non-shame, non-worry. Innocence ... Unconditional love and acceptance is that feeling of wellbeing. That's just there; you are not trying to do that. You just discover that. That is the loving wholeness; that is being held, almost like you are being held. Or, you are actually compassionate out but you are also being held in.

Anyone feel anything like that, that sense of everything is okay? All is well, and will be well? All is well. And, stuff will happen. Some of it will go well, some won't go so well. Pleasant and unpleasant experiences will continue to happen ... to who? To what? To this which is okay, which is well.

Are they heading north or south? (laughter) The mind is still working ...

Any final questions? I feel that's a good place to stop for tonight. We'll pick up again ... let you get a little rest and keep going with that. Did you get a sense of that, that you can't always get a sense of the awareness aware of itself but when you come back, if you did get it—and you at least got out of referencing thought and referencing sensation—even if it feels like an absence and you are not quite sure even from the feeling whether anything's happening, you've unhooked into emptiness. Then, when you come back you are free of the other domination of the other system, which feels like it needs to help out.

Good night. Sleep well.

18. Q&A Waking Up, Growing Up

(sound of bell)

Loch: I'll start on this side this time.

Welcome. Nice to be here with you. I hope you are all marinating.

Sometimes there's a period of great relaxation shifting into these different dimensions and sometimes detox begins, or some sort of stuff that's been held in, starts to come up. If that is happening if you, that is normal. There is some clearing through. When you do get the support of open hearted awareness, some of the things that have been a little repressed, held in, or frozen, can start to come up for love, basically. They realize, "Oh, now can I come up and be included? ... Yes, now you can, but can you wait until after the retreat? ... No, isn't this what we're here for?" If that is happening, just normalize that. Don't feel "I'm not totally spacious and loving." If it's mixed with detox, clearing, growing pains.

Sometimes I call things that are pain "growing pains" so it's not pain—meaning it's not a signal of threat or danger. The pain is you come out of the freezing weather—for those that live in the Northeast—you come inside and your hands are really hurting because you are thawing out. You could put your hands back in the snow and get rid of the pain, but you have to go through the thawing out. That is actually positive growing pains, toward healing, productive ...

Yes?

Student: A couple things you said yesterday and just what you said now, I hear the resonance with the internal systems.

L: Yes, that's right. Very much. That is one of the systems I recommended maybe before you came here. I discovered that Dick Swartz and I had discovered very similar things but he's spent a lot more time on the particulars of the psychology that I had a little more intuitively found. But he put it into a system, the way I've put the meditation thing into a system. So those two together, and I'm going to be presenting at the conference in November in Providence because I think the two of them together ... I have the piece that he hasn't spent as much time on; he has the piece, clearly, that ...

So that work with waking up and growing up have to continue. The maturity—I was just speaking with someone—you don't want to do a spiritual by-pass by waking up from the ego, waking up from the ego defenses where you do want to wake up from the ego identity. You do want to wake up from the ego defenses so that the new defense is the open hearted awareness, but you also want to come to the wisdom of the heart mind which sees everyone as the same and sees/feels the integrity and the responsibility And, how could you treat anyone differently than you would want to be treated, because that's the way you see everything.

Whereas, if you just wake up from the first level and you wake up from the judge and the super ego, you can be taken over by ethical relativism and feel like, "Oh, it's all Lila. I can just do whatever I want ... and I'm awake ..." Then people start *not* growing up. They have woken up and they don't grow up. The growing up is just continuing to live and grow in a way that you are now lead by the awake heart.

Yes?

S: Going forward with that, this morning I just sat very briefly in my room and the inner child was there, her insecurities. It was totally clear; I'm doing this to make a safe space where you can be ... Like you say, they can be pissed off at you or whatever they do, but you will still have a safe place to come back to.

L: Yes. You really felt that, right? Felt the relationship between the hurt parts of our selves, the inner child or whatever you want to call that. The packages are impressions that happened through life and they constellate in mental, physical and emotional areas. The mini-me is sitting in the seat of the self as a manager, but there are other constellations of consciousness that come up and sit in that seat—the one who thinks “it's not fair, it's not fair” ... another one thinks “why me? Always me ...” or the angry one ...

If you are that part, and that part is speaking for you, then you are possessed. But if you can be aware of that part then there is nothing wrong with having that inner feeling and aspect show up. Then you have love. The key is that you are aware of it from here. You are aware of it appearing in these other two areas—in your body/mind.

It's not about thought-stopping or transcending only. You want to transcend and include. Then you want to find the new operating system that has the loving presence.

Yes?

S: Does Omega have any plaques on the road from New York?

L: Plaques?

S: Plants.

L: Plants?

S: Agents ... on the New York roads? I had a minor miracle this morning. Where I'm staying, I have to cross a toll bridge coming in. I was fiddling around for my change and the agent said, “no problem, the person before you paid.” That's the first time that's happened in over 50 years of driving.

L: Wow! That's good. Pay it forward, right. You are in the zone here ... (laughter)

S: Last night at about 2:30 my head was spinning. I looked up at the smoke alarm light—it was spinning. I stood up; I couldn't keep my balance. I started thinking, “Am I going to have a stroke? What's happening?” Then I thought of the idea of balancing, and I thought, “well, maybe something is happening.” I went to sleep. When I woke up I was fine.

L: Yes.

S: But I was just wondering, is there a way to integrate some of the brain so you don't get dizzy?

L: Yes. There is definitely a way that your brain is changing. It's changing your brain.

The general theme is there is definitely a re-orientation, which includes a disorientation to get to the new orientation. That disequilibrium of the old equilibrium—which is suffering equilibrium—then has to let go. You can become a little too spaced out. In the in-between, things start to kind of become very porous ... or you lose your balance ... or the sense of objects ... some sort of disorientation. But that's just transitional. That's not where you will end up. That's not the way of most people, but often some people have a lot of energy starts shooting up—almost like kundalini energetic release— for a while. But if you just keep going and trust, like you did ... just don't panic about the panic. Just keep breathing and loving the process again.

It's like thawing out. You have been oriented to only be leaning to the right. Now that you are in the middle, it feels like you are unbalanced. You're like, "This is how you live life ... you stay over here (laughter) ... this looks normal to me ..." Sometimes you swing over here and you're like "Woow ..." then you come back to the middle and it feels a little disoriented.

We are also going to talk a little about these different parts of the brain that are clearly the way of stabilizing this, that your brain gets on board. It's measurable; the effects are measurable. So, we can talk a little bit about that as we go along.

To check the everyday mind, while we have as much of the everyday mind here as possible, let's sit for three minutes. Either just sit, or you can watch your breath or something. But, what we are interested in is, what's usually going on here? When we are not doing anything, what is your conditioning? What is your mind doing when you are not doing anything? We are trying to get clear what that everyday mind is doing, even when we are not aware of what it's doing. When you sit, and you're quiet, it starts to do stuff. Let's just find out what it does.

We'll just sit.

19. Exercise - Awareness of Everyday Mind

Loch: [Eyes] open or closed and you if you need a task you can watch your breath; if you don't, just sit. Just be aware of what's happening and what states of consciousness. Don't even try to do anything, just be.

For this last minute, just notice that you are aware of your everyday mind ... or your brain activity ... or your emotional ... or your wandering attention, or sleepiness. Just be aware of what's happening.

Okay, so what are the things you noticed? Just very honest, simply ...?

Student: I went from my shallowness to my fullness ...

L: So you almost sunk out of the everyday mind and into ... Beautiful. At first, were you ...

S: I was kind of there but not really present.

L: And wandering ...?

S: Wandering, yes.

L: And then you were able to naturally sink in just by being.

S: The shallowness though, it meant so much more ...

L: The shallowness ...?

S: It was shallow before, on the surface ...

L: And then you sunk in?

S: Right.

L: Then, how was the ...

S: It was content and warm. It was wonderful ... awesome ...

L: Wonderful, awesome. That's probably subtle body. It's really dropping out of your mind, into your subtle body, which is very bliss oriented and feels very luscious.

S: Right

L: Yes?

S: I could feel some kind of energized presence.

L: Some kind of energized presence that you might not have noticed before, but that's here now?

S: Yes. Quite palpable.

L: Quite palpable, yes. Wonderful.

Yes?

S: From simultaneous mind, the bird makes a noise and it just goes away. Everyday mind, just letting that run, reminds me of my house when I was a ... I started out that way ... It feels like it brings the feelings of the past ...

L: Yes, as if ...?

S: Then, I don't really like that ... and started doing a whole thing that brought me up ...

L: And then it does associative thinking. As you say, like trauma or like anything, it brings the feelings of the past and it actually signals your body to feel the way you felt—as if that's how you feel now. It re-creates the normality that's always been. Your feeling tones just keep doing the same thing they've always done until you realize how to discover another dimension that is not being dominated by that.

There is something called in biology/anthropology, the negativity bias, that our brains are actually—on a survival level—programmed to look toward the negative for protection. So, look toward, "This doesn't feel good ... okay ... this feels good ... this doesn't feel good ... okay this doesn't feel good ... what's that about ... I better be careful cause I want to avoid dying." The brain is doing that; you don't have to be doing that.

That's what we are looking at. What is your brain doing? It can be doing that and you can be making choices and be free of that. That's what we're realizing. Your brain may still have a survival program that leans toward negativity, and your emotional tone may lean toward just repeat those same few emotions that you've felt all your life, and just keep that mood going. Meanwhile, from your open hearted awareness, it's permeated by everything else, so that becomes less dominant/predominant. You are not closed down.

What else did you notice?

S: What I noticed was my everyday mind watching myself think. I was aware of that. But the thinking was all about "How am I going to explain what I'm going to do, what I'm going to say now ..."

L: Right. Right now. (laughter)

S: What am I going to say to my wife when I get home ... so it's all about the future.

L: Right.

S: The theme was the future.

L: Yes. And you, as the character, it's important to communicate it or have the mind understand it so it can say something about it.

S: At the same time I'm watching that.

L: Yes, at the same time you're watching that. Good. We're doing that mindfulness move of not judging and really, in some ways, radically not trying to change your everyday mind as the first thing to do. Not trying to replace negative thinking with positive thinking—at this level. You do that in some ways, by making choices, but here, we are just saying "No, let's just not clean up the cloud at this point. Let's go to the sky and come back ... and even then, not clean up the cloud. Let's see what the self-cleaning mechanism does—the self-liberation does—first." Then see what we have got left and see what can be loved, what can be naturally accepted. Just drop its pattern and we'll go "Oh, never mind." It will drop and now the cloud is 60% cleaner anyhow. You'll see what else is left.

That is a radical ...

S: I re-discovered that my mother's voice lives inside my head.

L: Okay. (laughter)

S: And it's the militant caretaker. I have a very visceral, physiological way of dealing with her.

L: Yes.

S: Like I make knots or something so I can, and get the food and stuff and not really have to pay attention.

L: Beautiful.

S: It's very visceral.

L: Yes, and very repetitive, right? Very predominant.

S: Oh ... check a thousand times ... do you have to go to the bathroom? Are you hungry? Do you want to go outside? ...

L: (laughter) It's just on all the time. How did it feel when you were able to observe that?

S: Well I'm used to observing that, so it felt like a pattern. But, what's new now, is that I try to give into the spaciousness is my body dealt with that some way, physiologically. And so, to make a safe space for that is kind of a challenge.

L: Right. So, having to go to this simultaneous mind, and this, in order to deal with it because you can't even deal with it from mindfulness—which you are probably good at. And even from big sky witness is not going to really get rid of that. It has to be pervasive. It has to come in and there has to be a little understand and love. The new primordial mother has to come in from the face before your mother was born, as Zen would say or something like that.

You're the one that you've been looking for. Your mother is not your mother; she's not the mother she was historically, and she's not here now. But her voice is here; the recording is here, and the response is here. That has a habit. The new dimension of love and acceptance, even of that—not even trying to fix that right away. Just letting that be loved, “Yes, that's happening ... isn't that amazing ... “ But now you're not aware of it from here, you're aware of it from within. That's the feeling.

The simultaneous mind is, literally, you are witnessing the contents from within the contents. That is the difference we were doing “be aware of your hand from attention ... and feel your hand directly from within your hand ...” You are dropping in, feeling your heart, feeling that lushness that can feel.

Anyone else? Thanks for that.

S: My everyday was daydreaming and sleepiness.

L: Yes. Those are the main things: thinking, daydreaming and sleepiness. If you are only operating that system, that is your life. Your life is sleepiness, daydream and then thinking—work mode is the other; task mode. That's why some people become workaholics. Because, when you are in task mode, you are not daydreaming. If you can chop wood, carry water, even that—tend to your breath ...

Anyone else want to share? That basically is it.

There is chatter. There is this continuous associative mind. There are automatic thoughts that are going by, that are like, “what's that going by? It's a bird ... What am I going to say later on ...” Then there is daydream, where you go off and create a little character in your head and go off somewhere and go, “Oh, that's right ... what am I doing? I have to come back ...” Then there is sleepiness and emotional flavor related to something that creates a little anxiety that maybe you didn't even know what it was. I don't know if anyone felt a little like fear, anxiety, discomfort or some kind of feeling that was like, “What am I doing ... I'm sitting ... am I doing it right ...?” Something, a flavor, a mood, that if you stay in this container, that's how you live—that's your life, that's your map, that's your world, that's the limitation of your life.

I'm using this to save paper, a way to read something. Here's a quote that we can start with today, from Albert Einstein.

“A human being is a part of the whole called by us universe, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feeling as something separated from the rest, a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness;” the separation and the feeling that we're limited to this. “This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.”

Here's the how to do that: "The true value of a human being is determined primarily by the measure and the sense in which he has attained to liberation from the self. We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive." Albert Einstein

This is the one way of thinking, is these two, and then this is the new manner of thinking, this open heart awareness or this heart mind. This is the freedom from this self to this new sense of open hearted awareness.

Yes?

S: Theoretical, what kind of correspondence do you establish between this model and the chakra model? What strikes me is the chakra model, the heart is the fourth, so it's a middle range level. But in your system the heart is central.

L: I can say this now and then we'll actually deal with this later when we do the tonglin practice. The heart I'm talking about is not the heart chakra. It's not the physical heart. It's not the cave of the heart. It's not the emotional heart.

The chakra system is an energy system and this is an intelligence, awareness based, system. This is the heart mind. I think I said this before, it's almost like the emotional heart is here. The physical heart is here. The cave of the heart, which we are going to do this beautiful practice called the cave of the heart, is on the right side. Where the left side has physical heart there is a space. The heart chakra is somewhere here, but let's say here. Then, there is this door here that's like an invisible door—some people feel it like energy or ephemeral where there is nothing—and there is a little light; it opens up back to the source of infinity. Then, it comes into form and then the intelligence is dropped into this area, which is not a physical area but it's almost like where formless comes to be in-formed ... in-formation ... in-formed from no form. So it's a feeling. That's where you feel connected to everyone and everything.

When you say Namaste, that's the part that sees that, which is the same in everyone. This location that has no location, that is everywhere but it's here. When it touches the form it seems to be the center. Below it is the gut and the root chakra and the energy center that goes up and down, which is still part of the human energy pattern.

What we are really looking at is this, that's prior to energy. This essential ground, that is ...

S: Prior to the chi?

L: Prior to the chi—pre-chi.

S: In that field, it felt like the field of itself was home. And, when you speak of intelligence of the field, I don't know ... there's like a shy-ness of but it feels like God to me.

L: Yes, that's quite fine.

S: Is that ...?

L: Sure, you can call it God ... spirit ... universe ... Whatever feels right is your language. They are all good enough. Call it that; it's fine. That works. You don't have to call it God, you could—if you call it God, it's God for you. That's great. That's the way I feel. There are so many different language and cultures and personal ... what works. So that's great.

That's what mystics who use God language call it. That's what they mean—unity; unity with God. Mystical union.

Yes?

S: Can you repeat description of Namaste because I've never heard that before.

L: Okay ...

S: I've heard others, but not that one.

L: Namaste means I recognize that which is in you, that is the same in me. And the dimension that I understand that to be means this awakens ... this Buddha nature ... this Christ consciousness ... this Shiva consciousness ... this essential divine nature at its subtlest form ... or this open hearted awareness.

When you feel this field and you feel, "Oh, it's in everyone," that that you feel—"Oh we're the same. On this and this we're the same ..." On other levels were are very different. We are unique. We're particular. We have very distinct forms. But, here's the common area that I greet. I greet this in you that is the same. Let's start here rather than start from judgment in our head like, "Who are you? What do you have.?. what do you want ...?"

You start with that and then everything else, the particular conversation comes afterwards. "What are you doing this this? Would you like that? Do you want to do this or that?" "I don't know, maybe I will, maybe I won't." But, you are starting with that. Does that make sense?

That is where we are going, to feel that way. Even when you see somebody on the street you just turn around and see them. You are open, you are not projecting. You are not scanning for danger mode. You feel very available. The other way to say it is you are boundless but you are emotionally boundaried. You are boundless in nature but you are courageous and boundaried, in that you could respond. If you are very open and somebody says, "Well, you know I'm just here because ... this needs to be done ... you were supposed to ..." You are like "Ah, they are very upset ..." You start to say "poor fellow ..." You are not taking the hot potato because it's going right through you. It's like they are trying to give you the hot potato; the hot potato's gone right through you—you are kind of feeling it, like "Wow ..." But, you are not holding in and going into defensive, "what are they telling me? I wasn't supposed to do ..." You are not reactive.

You get to boundless and then your emotional boundaries are like, "No, that's them and this is me. They are the one that's upset about something; I'm not even sure what they are saying ... Tell me what you mean by that? What are you saying happened ...? I'm not sure I understand what you are so upset about." They will explain and you say, "maybe there is a misunderstanding about what's going on."

You feel like you don't have to hold everything in.

S: You said boundless and ...

L: Boundless and emotionally boundaried. You really realize that you're here and they're there. They are allowed to have their own experience and their experience is their experience. Your experience is your experience. Their feelings are their feelings, even if they use your name in front of it, their feelings are still their feelings. You just need to be your own person who listens, talks and responds. You can always say, "you know what, maybe we'll talk about this later. I'm going to go ..." Or, you set a boundary; that way you say I'm not really ready to talk about this right now. Why don't we ... It leads to that.

It leads to that so you do have courage and you can be vulnerable with support. Sensitive with courage. And groundedness ... trust that you can handle things and you're not responsible to take them on. Even if you do get a little triggered, that you have this loving presence that comes right in and goes, "It's alright. That's fine ..."

Let's do the open eyed one, one more time, because it's always good in the beginning of the day—even if it's not your favorite—to help us as we go through the day and make a transition back to life. To do this new kind of shifting without a kind of meditative time apart because even when you close your eyes you don't go like this. (laughter) You are just closing your eyes—you're not closing your ears, you're not closing your nose.

20. Exercise - Open Eyes Awareness

So why close your eyes? There is no need. In fact, in the other way, we need to keep our eyes open to be able to be in the flow, to be able to live from awake consciousness and walk around and enjoy the beauty. And, distinguish what's solid but also continue to feel empty and continue to feel what's spacious while seeing what's solid. Your body will feel what's solid and your eyes what's solid—that's part of simultaneous mind.

Even when you feel spacious, you see solid, you see separate. When you feel unity from love, you feel completely unified with everything. Your eyes are supposed to see distinctions and distance but, the thing is, is it either/or? If you close your eyes you are also, maybe, in imagination. You also have a whole visual screen going on.

This is like dealing with 3-dimensional reality as it is but not projecting. Then the projecting mind drops; a feeling of spacious—in terms of identity. And, feeling this aliveness inside and out; now the aliveness is everywhere and there is not a local viewer from here. So you start to perceive everyone as alive. But, you can still drive a car and not hit another car because you see physical separate reality; you feel spacious reality. You feel unity consciousness. You perceive simultaneously all of these rather than either/or—either I'm solid and separate or I'm in a meditative state of pure awareness or calm. "I'm feeling very calm ... okay can you please type this email ... I'm very calm ... (laughter) Where was the n again? (laughter) Somewhere ... one of these fingers is supposed to remember ... hello?!"

What we are doing is we are shifting into spacious awareness which will calm your body and mind while being fully alert and in a flow state. Which means, those who are in a flow state are able to perform in a calm, non-self centered, highly effect, luscious, joyous, dancing way of doing everyday tasks. You just feel, "Yes, okay ... no problem ..." Slow or medium or fast doesn't matter; just do your thing. Talk ... listen ... because your foundation remains this vast empty awake mind. That is the new manner of thinking, the vast, non-conceptual, awake presence.

Remember, just like hearing (sound of bell), sound comes to your ears, physically, and hearing is receiving. Also, light reflects off of objects and comes to your eyes. What does it feel like is seeing is receiving?

Let hearing come to your ears ... then, without thinking about thinking, your mind will—in a flow state—knows what it is and it knows as much as it needs to know. (sound of bell) Or, it just perceives it, and then it goes to awake awareness or to open hearted awareness as the intelligence, which is in the field.

Hearing is receiving ... seeing ... light reflects off of objects ... rest back. Even as you, at first, would feel like "I am aware of seeing this flower," be aware of the object. Now let awareness be aware of seeing. Now let awareness be aware, right behind your eyes, of the awareness of seeing ... now the space between your ears ... now let awareness rest back as that, which is aware of seeing ... that, which is aware of perceiving.

Perceiving without a perceiver ... receiving light to that which is aware, everywhere, by itself ... It doesn't need to create an "'I am aware of seeing ..." Jus the continuous field. Then, let your eyes be soft and rest but remain alert.

Feel the support of this awareness so that even your mind, if your mind becomes calm, and your body becomes calm, or your mind is not calm ... just notice your mind as it is ... Then be aware of the awareness, that is not in pain ... that is not agitated ... that is not sleepy ... Be aware of that, like a crisp clear day ... that crisp clear sky mind that is awake, even while your mind rests.

Let your body rest comfortably and feel as it is ... maybe it's a little comfortable/uncomfortable ... a little tired ... a little agitated ... Feel the awareness that's not uncomfortable ... that is not in pain ... it's not tired ... but, it's inherent within your body, however your body is ... without changing your body or mind, be with the calming effect of just seeing and just being.

Soften your eyes but remaining alert ... if you want to do this, feel like this soft lens of seeing this kind of circle this way ... so you are seeing the edges ... you are not pin-pointing ... you're not stopping to pin-point ... you are also seeing everything all at once on the table, or this whole area here ... just seeing it all at once ... you are not seeing just the flower/ just the cup/ just me/ just that ... You see everything kind of horizontally all at once.

Then, you can either use your fingers or not, looking either a little straight ahead or a little like you're sitting on a beach looking up at the sky ... then, gently ... your eyes are not going to change when you open your peripheral vision ... we are going to move awareness around 360 degrees.

Gently start to be aware—take your time and don't strain; you can even stop a little if you feel a strain ... awareness is moving around your finger ... awareness is moving with your finger as you open your peripheral vision ... then you can either let your hands go down or if you like to do this behind your head, you can do this behind your head ... The idea is you are moving awareness to the side where sound is coming and going ... then awareness continues to move around to the feeling that awareness is behind your heart, behind your back.

You have a 360-degree panoramic awareness ... you feel equally space in front ... space within ... space behind... to the left/ to the right ... above/below ... and feel like you are open. You are open minded ... you can breathe in and smile ... feel the cool air ... You feel your body as part of this field of pervasive awareness ... and particularly feel that area behind you, that is included, equally.

Then, just as you've opened your view panoramically, see if you can be viewing from panoramic awareness, back to thoughts, feelings and sensations ... formally the center of who you were ... formally known as you ... Again, just as you feel this open view, just be curious, "Am I aware of the spacious awareness all around or am I aware from the spacious awareness," which is feeling back and including spaciously and pervasively ... equally and continuously ... in front/and in back ... within.

Behind is the awareness, aware from behind, coming forward from outside, in ... so that I feel like a big sky inside of a cloud. I feel like an ocean of awareness arising as a wave with equal water in this particular moving wave. Check to see whether there needs to be any point of view or self located in your body or whether this awareness can be/is actually happening from everywhere ... Notice if there is any location from which you are looking.

If you have a sense of being aware of your hand, where are you aware of your hand from? If you aware of the awareness behind your back, where are you aware of that from? If you are aware of everyone around you, is there a location, a point of view? Is it here? Is it here? Is it here? Is it here? Is it just from here this way ...? What is it like when there is seeing when there is no see-er? Hearing, with no hear-er? Where is the hear-er? (sound of bell)

Neither hear-er nor heard, just hearing ... Feel this sense of inclusion of your particular wave of your humanity ... of your heart mind ... this open hearted awareness that it knowing intelligently, like riding on water ... having the ability to perceive and feel both from infinity and finiteness.

What does it feel like to include everyone and everything? What does this open hearted awareness know to be true? What is real? What is this ...? What is this like, that's here? Knowing from here, non-conceptually, and speaking from here without thinking about what you are going to say ... What do you notice? What are you aware of?

What do you notice? What is true? What's real?

Yes?

Student: Delight arose and a giggle ...

L: Yes. Delight arose and a giggle. It's what they say, in Brooklyn they say "You are delight." That delight.

Something freeing, something joyful. Anyone else? Yes?

S: It really feels like we're all of us are waves in this same ocean.

L: Yes.

S: When I look around I see other waves.

L: Try/play with, feel the spaciousness and the aliveness, the dancing-ness ... and the receiving of hearing ... and the receiving of seeing ... Now just close your eyes and just feel it a little bit more. Feel the boundlessness. Feel the lusciousness. Feel the love.

When you are ready, almost start to squint as you open your eyes. Feel the vibration of hearing outside and inside. Feel the inside of your body inside, spacious outside and space inside ... a sense of connection and joy ... love ... Adding seeing, slowly, like you're seeing ... but staying back and down ... Seeing is not the primary sense, you are adding it as an equal, but last sense that's serving the infinity and love ... and dynamic unity and wholeness ... Play with closing and squinting.

When you are squinting, see the dancing light too, almost like everything is made of dancing light ... just like everything on the sound level is (sound of bell) vibration outside and inside ... On the light level everything is at once level, kind of dancing ... your sensations are dancing and they are all dancing in space, which is connected.

Thoughts are mental sensations ... you don't need to particularize or know what they are saying ... they are just an intelligent awake stillness that includes all your senses as they are supposed to be ... Letting your seeing return to its, not the dominant sense but, one of your six senses ... all serving awake awareness ... all serving open hearted awareness.

Seeing without a see-er, hearing without a hear-er ... Just being ... just seeing ... just hearing ... just sensing ... just feeling pleasant and unpleasant ... appearing to this, which is beyond pleasant and unpleasant and yet it completely intimate.

Thoughts and sensations are all made of awareness, it's not two things happening ... the awareness can be here whether there is a lot of activity or a little activity ... the waves are happening, they are all part of the ocean ... everyone's a wave.

One of the dimensions is solidity, it's not primary but it's not negated, it's not denied ... Let it be equal, equal rights for solidity (laughter) ... but not predominant.

What do you notice? Pretty wild, right?

S: One of the dimensions is like everything.

L: Yes, that's right. That's one of the main dimensions—everything.

S: I'm just saying any one of them ...

L: Every one of them is?

S: Solidity spaghetti, for the Italians, for Chinese people ... it just happens everywhere ...

L: Spaghetti ...?

S: I'm just saying. I'm Italian ... like before they discovered noodles (laughter) ...

L: I almost understand you but you're still scaring me. (laughter) It's great. I like it! (continued laughter). That's good!

It's everything. Anything goes! On some level it's all silly or absurd. It's all here. Yes?

S: I was just noticing how thinking is actually on a level with all the others and no more dominant; they are just the same.

L: Yes, it's just dancing. And if you don't have to know what every thought is saying, if you just realize that the intelligence of this new way of thinking that Einstein is talking about—this non-conceptual awareness—you start to not have to monitor automatic thoughts.

S: Thinking is not dominant anymore.

L: It's not dominant, yes. Then seeing is not dominant either, right?

S: No.

L: Meaning physical—which is still important—

S: Seeing also those thoughts that you may have thought in the past or during meditation, “I’m thinking about myself ... this and that ...” Seeing that those thoughts are not wrong ...?

L: Yes, that’s right.

S: That, to me, is a revelation. It’s okay, you can still do it. You’re still doing fine ...

L: That’s right. Even though thoughts are there—and even if they are there now—even if they are screaming ...

S: Yes, like bad thoughts!

L: “Bad thoughts! You shouldn’t be there ... what’s wrong with you ...?”

S: That’s fine.

L: It’s like “Okay, that’s fine ...” It’s like the end of the war; surrender and go to the winning side. No more struggle. Yes?

S: I became aware of a sound curtain connected with the ultimate reality. You were giving a visual exercise I could sort of see that, but ... it’s hard to describe but it’s a very, very general, subtle kind of vibrational sound that seems to have a connection on.

L: Yes, that’s beautiful. Anyone else feel like that? It’s almost like the seashell sound ... because everything else is so quiet. But there is always movement. There is always some dimension of ... first energy ... first hearing ...

S: Is that the Om of the world?

L: It’s like the Om. That’s right, it’s like that.

S: About awareness and water going down the throat, being aware of the water.

L: Yes, say something about that. What else about that?

S: It’s like the light coming in, the sound coming in ... there is the awareness coming in.

L: Yes, on all the levels, right. How does that feel to return thinking to equal rights and seeing the equal dimension of other senses? Then, the primary one is open hearted awareness that is perceiving. That is predominant because that’s what’s aware of everything, all the senses that are also not being fought with but allowed to be returned to their natural perceiving because they are giving information to who? Or to what? Now they are giving information, not to a looping pattern of identity but, to this being that is seeing from being, and this open hearted ...

Even as you take your break, maybe silently just walk a little bit from here, from your hear, into that little grove there. Then, just take your bathroom break and talk if you want. Let’s take a 7 or 8 minute break but just feel what it’s like to

stand up and then do a little walking meditation silently out into the nice little grove out there. Look at the tree, stand in front of a tree and look out ... without thinking about, or associating to, what it is. Just be.

21. Grace, Simultaneous Mind, and Functioning from Awareness

(sound of bell)

Loch: Yes?

Student: I keep getting stuck in this same paradox. The worst thing to do, for me, to get into the spiritual state is to try to get into a spiritual state, to give myself instructions—Now you have to be in spacious awareness ... open hearted awareness ...

L: Yes.

S: There's a kind of automatic resistance ...

L: Yes, yes...

S: So it's paradoxical ...

L: It can be paradoxical ... It's all about the one who's trying to get in. The tendency, and the dualistic understanding, is either you are trying to get in or you have to stop trying and there's nothing to do, as it that's the alternative. Or even, trying is like you create a ritual, or you dance, but that's trying.

This unique thing is, the local awareness is unhooking from the try-er.

S: But who does that?

L: The awake awareness and the awake you. The one who's awake is unhooking. Paradoxically—that's the real paradox—that I'm speaking to the one who's not the do-er and the try-er and saying the do-er and the try-er can't do this, which is why you are correct in that. That's why it's difficult. If you are trying from the ego identity to do any of this you can't do it. Therefore it seems, like in a lot of the spiritual world, just sit; just do nothing. That may or may not work because doing nothing is a kind of doing; it requires not doing or having some relationship to the part that's doing something.

S: Right.

L: "Should I let my thoughts go ... or should I not do that ...? I'm starting to control my thoughts ... But that's not me, I'm just sitting ... Am I sitting ...? No, I should stop doing the not-doing ..."

All of it is actually in the same realm. It's all in this same realm. It's all in this realm. Most spiritual work is all just this. That is what you are describing.

What I'm saying is, this unique thing is this local awareness, which is this invisible bubble of the already awake you. The premise is—you've heard it a lot of times—"You're already awake ... You are that true nature ... Everyone already has Buddha nature and true nature, Christ consciousness ... and the spirit is within you ..." It's like, "Okay, a lot of good that's doing me because now do I have to believe it or not believe it? I'm waiting ... where's grace? Grace isn't in there."

The other thought is, "You have to wait for grace. You can't do it, therefore you have to wait for grace ..." My premise is grace is already here. Grace is already saying, "I'm here ... awake awareness is already here ..." The obscuration keeping us from grace.

People who get into tremendous difficulties and then the doer just falls apart. Then that, which is already here, shows up. They think, "Grace just came from somewhere and appeared." My experience is no, it didn't. It was already always here and the do-er just couldn't handle the magnitude of your suffering and it just gave up and you, fortunately, fell into grace.

All I'm saying is, since the premise is you are already awake, then I'm talking to the awake one and I'm saying, "You just come forward. You, come forward. You recognize your self and then include everything else ..." The awareness goes, "Why didn't anyone talk to me before ...? I'm here; I'm ready." The awareness does a form of inquiry which is often called unupaya, upaya means skillful means; most every religious tradition has skillful means, which means doing ... chanting ... Whatever it is, it's doing. Then, the unupaya is just a little effort, a little initial effort to surrender. A little unhooking to discover.

The first couple levels are done by your everyday mind—"what are we doing? We're unhooking ... I understand that, yes we're unhooking. I don't know who's doing it but I'm understanding unhooking ... what do you do? Step out of this cloud? I'm going to step out of this cloud ...? No, you're not going to step out of this cloud because you can't do it. Oh, I am ...? Yes, I am the cloud. I'm in the cloud ... Alright so who's going to do it? I don't know ... somebody call the local awareness in here somewhere (laughter) ... Okay ... I'm not quite sure what this guy is talking about, but I'm open to it ... if it happens that would be nice. Okay, ready ... unhook ... come to hearing ... Oh, that wasn't so bad ... Now I'm focused here ... now open to space ... and notice spacious awareness ... How did I do that? Oh, I didn't do that. (laughter) I'm still back there ... okay, then who am I? There's the question ..." (laughter)

Yes?

S: I discovered after there was dialogue up here. UP here was crazy stuff, the usual junk. It was like, "Okay, teacher says to take a step ... okay. How do I do that?" It just continued. It was me.

L: Yes. Yes, that's the best you can say, somebody's taking a step—I don't know who's taking a step.

S: It was telling me to ...

L: It was telling you to take a step, yes that's right.

S: But I'm centered. It was a centeredness rather than before, I felt I was just in a locked step from the manager up here.

L: Right, just trying to do things from here. Okay, beautiful, thanks.

S: I'll try to describe the experience and fit it into the map here ...

L: Yes.

S: There are times when there are degrees of spacious mind—that's what I'm questioning ...

L: Okay, sure.

S: ... or is it?

L: No, there are degrees.

S: That's what I notice. Sometimes it's I'm just dropping into it and other times it's like I'm on the edge.

L: Yes, right. You can be kind of mixing back and forth. You want to really feel there is a definite feeling of being unhooked. You can be kind of half way in both and be a little bit still, almost like you are stretching your mind into space or something.

The feeling of unhooked really feels unhooked then. That degree is like "Oh yes ..." You feel like you've changed the channel. But in between there is a channel that's a little jazz ... a little classical.

Yes?

S: I want to completely understand.

L: Yes, that's right.

S: Are you saying the dropping is irrelevant?

L: No. I'm saying it's the relevance; it's already here. The assumption is that it's already the fabric of reality ...

S: So it doesn't change?

L: Because it doesn't come and go.

S: It's always here now?

L: It's part of the fabric of reality. It's the awake awareness nature. It's the kingdom of heaven is within or amongst you; it's already here.

S: Whether I choose to fall into grace or not.

L: That's the tricky business. People do unintentionally fall into grace. If you really look at it, it is often when the current obscuring personal identity collapses and you happen to, fortunately, rather than falling into your subconscious and unconscious mind, you fall into that.

If you look at the stories of people, like Eckhart Tolle or something, there he is, suicidal and is living in a one room apartment ... falls into ... then he just asks himself this question, "I can't live with myself any longer," he says to himself. Then he says, "Well who's the I that can't live with I?" He looks. What happens is it pops. That I pops, like we are doing, and then it pops for good. What is revealed is what is already here.

It's the nature of what's here already. That's why we can deconstruct and look at what's here when there's no problem to solve. Grace ...

S: In order to get through my day, what determines how often I ask that question?

L: What determines how often?

S: Yes. If 50 times a day would really make a difference ...

L: Yes. Some of you, I think that's the one thing—for those of you who weren't here last night—that's the one new piece of information I said.

The method here, rather than long meditations, is small glimpses many times. One guy from Philadelphia came to a day long in New York. He was all enthusiastic and had studied with my friend, Scott, who'd gone through the book and had taught the book in his classes. He said, "How many times should I do glimpses every day?" I thought as many as you can. He said, "Well how many?" I said, "Fifteen ... about fifteen, which is like one an hour ..." He heard fifty. (laughter). So he did fifty glimpses a day, which is like every 20 minutes. He programmed his phone... he came to the next retreat, which was a month and a half later and was like, "It's really working! (laughing) I am just like the best time of my life. All of my depression has lifted and I'm so happy ..." I was like, "How many times did you do it? Fifty times a day? I don't do that. I never did it that many times.

So, something like that. What determines it, you can determine it by setting you phone. Once you choose, you don't have to rely—in fact it's better you don't rely on your memory—it's better that you put a sticky note ... or you have it come up on your computer ... or put it in your calendar to remember to remember. Otherwise you have to remember to remember; if you do that, you may be so caught up in your life that you only remember once a day. Then you remember every third day. You are like, "I wanted to remember but I didn't remember ..." depending on where you are. Or, you may remember when you need to remember.

Probably, the best thing is to schedule a little reminder. Then, you can always skip them. Even if you have them come up every hour and you are like, "I'll do it the next hour ..." As long as you do it once in a while so it starts to become more of a habit. When I go and sit on the subway I do it. I just know that's one of the times; it's just easy. "Okay, here I am ... Yep ... here we go ... (laughter) done." Then I sit and look around. If I sit on the subway and just look around, it's fine. If I go in the state and then close my eyes and I sit there, a third of the people will close their eyes and go into some sort of meditation state. It's just wild. When the subway is medium—not rush hour—but medium level, if I just look around and go "watch this ... ready ..." Then people look at me and they're going "Oh ..." (laughter) and they start tuning into the ... they look ... sometimes they will go ... (more laughter) like, "that was pretty good ..." (laughter) It's because people want it.

Anyhow, did I answer about grace?

It's a particular view of grace. People can have different theologies or whatever, but that's mine.

S: It seems that the level of interest is critical.

L: What is? Say it again?

S: The level of interest. How does one increase one's interest?

L: That's right.

S:S Some says it's karma ...

L: That's right. I would just say yes; just assume you just have good karma, I would say. (laughter) Then just go to the Nike ad—Just do it. “I have good karma ... Just do it ... ready ... go ...” Do it ... do it ... do it ... Then, once you do it, what you are doing is you are getting out into this new system. Then what you find is the heart's desire.

What I tend to think is, all I can do is encourage people, not be too much of a “should ...” harsh thing. Just recommend, encourage ... say “the water's great, come on it ...” Give people a taste of it ... say that it's a habit that's important for you to do regularly. Then, let their karma... But to say that, when you discover from your heart's desire, when you are in open hearted awareness, that's when I ask the question, “Is this ... you think you could live like this? And, if you think you can live like this, would you choose to live like this?” From that motivation, that is the motivator that says “What's your priority in life? How would you do this? If this is so important, how would you make this your priority? What things would you need to put in place in your life?” You figure it out because you know yourself you are different learner. Everyone's different with procrastination, discipline and all this stuff that we already know about in terms of doing things—going to the gym, brushing our teeth and all those other things. We have our own relationship with that. We have to figure it out though, how do you make it a priority?

If it's important, falling in love with it from your heart's desire, then that is a priority. When you are totally in love, when you are first in love, it's like a priority—you think about her all the time, you're interested, you're making phone calls ... “Hello ...” You're in love. That's the best, rather than having somebody tell you, “You better do it ... or if you want to join our tradition, you have to sit so many times a day ...”

S: Mindfulness you can do—the basic mindfulness—you can do all the time, almost ...

L: Yes.

S: If you are walking ... counting your steps ... Then to expand it a bit ...

L: Yes, this can be the same. This is the same. If you can do mindfulness, you can do this.

S: If you walk, feel the ground ...

L: Feel the ground and feel your spacious awareness ...

S: And start expanding it to the other dimensions?

L: That's right. Build on any other practices; add it. If you already have something, add it to it or alternate or replace it. Whatever ... add it too is fine because it doesn't take that long. Once you do it, the faster and the more easily you will get into it.

Anyone else who's been doing it want to give any suggestions?

S: I do chi-gong and I try to do one hour a day of chi-gong. I try to make that a time for also both—that and that.

L: Okay, great. So add it to your practice, to other practices. Okay.

It's an important theme. Certainly using your phone, using the audio I have is made, designed for that. Put that on your computer, put that on your phone. Then you have it if you want to sit somewhere or walk somewhere, just play it in your ear. I'll guide you through it until you learn it yourself. Then you learn it yourself and be able to do it on your own. That's a good tool.

The audio is ... I think the audio is better than the book. I think the audio is the essence of the whole book and it's very accessible. Then you can learn which ones are your favorites, and skip over to them.

That's support. That's all about support and priority and what is your life about? What do you want with your life? What's important? What works? Then, making decisions and taking actions. The actions will absolutely have results. If this works for you—if this is a good match—and you do it, I've only heard ridiculous reports. It's crazy. This is the direct approach. If the direct approach matches, you are very fortunate; that's the grace. That is the karma, to be here ...

S: That's the grace, right?

L: Yes.

S: Amazing.

L: Yes, that's amazing.

Yes?

S: Aren't all being awake already?

L: It could be. I will say though, then you have to wonder why so few consciously know it. I tend to think that it's already here, it's already accepting everything as it is, whether you recognize it or not.

S: There was a Sufi poem that supports that.

L: Okay.

S: It says, essentially, that God was alone and he wanted to be known so he created creation to know him.

L: Yes, that's great. That's great. I'll go with that. That's good.

Knowing and being, the knowing will support the being known. Yes.

Anybody else? Yes?

S: Could you say more about the experience was Wednesday when, being by the tree ...

L: Yes?

S: And seeing without the see-er then the tree, there was no such thing as the tree. It was just ...? What came was it was just empty. Everything is empty at the very same moment, that leaf had everything, it was everything. Can you ...? Everything was like that. Everything was empty and yet the smallest—a twig turning—contained everything.

L: Yes. I don't know more that I can say than what you just said, which is that when you are there, from this open hearted awareness and you see the tree, you see emptiness as one of the dimensions of simultaneous mind. And, when you are looking at the emptiness dimension, there is not tree. Then, at the same time, in the leaf there is a microcosm of the whole macrocosm. Everything is there in everything. Everything is a little hologram of the whole universe; it's a doorway. Everything is connected to everything.

Then, you will also see that the tree is also a tree. Ordinary. Do you see that too?

S: Yes.

L: Yes. That is the simultaneous mind. That is actually perceiving reality at multiple dimensions simultaneously. That's the nature of mind. That's the human potential. That's how it's possible to be and see. It's not just some Olympic athlete of meditation or some mystical graced fortunate few. I believe it's trainable, learnable and teachable by those who are interested and willing. And, it's pretty quick!

You've probably experienced this. Have you experienced this before, like this?

S: Rarely.

L: Rarely, yes. So then rarely ... occasionally ... and now intentionally. We set this up with this particular set of pointers; here it is. It can be repeatable. That's the scientific part, it's repeatable. Once you know how to get there you repeat it;

once you repeat it, it becomes the new habit. Once it becomes the new habit it becomes the new normal and it reinforces itself. Your brain gets online, in terms of perception.

Then, the world is a miracle and you feel very loving. You feel Namaste. You feel like you see everyone. You have these qualities of compassion and courage and you have new motivation for what your life is about. But there are no “should” anymore, so you don’t have to do anything. You feel like a child on the first day of summer vacation; you feel like “well I’m not going to sit here all day ... I could (laughter) ... but there’s a lot that’s pretty cool out there ...” You are not afraid of life but you don’t feel like you have to do something, or be somebody, or get something, or look like somebody in some social scene. You just feel like “let’s live” and you have this intelligence and courage.

Yes?

S: Could you say more about how it is that the thing itself isn’t a tree; it’s empty and at the same time everything in the space of time is included in that ... and at the same time that’s all there is?

L: Yes ... (laughter) Should I just say it again? I will just say the same thing that you said. (laughter) That’s beautiful.

S: Could you say it a different way? (laughter)

L: Yes. Okay ... The thing is, I think the most important thing to say to you is that one of the most important roles of a teacher is to introduce you to your inner teacher. Do you have the trust and confidence that what you are seeing, and the way you are describing it, is beautiful, clear and just pure and real. Do you feel that?

S: Absolutely. And, I want to be it more or to know it more deeply ... and I want you, in your teacher role, that. (laughter)

L: Sure, I’m happy to do that. I just want to make sure that you also In some ways there is not more.

S: No, it’s unmistakable.

L: Yes, its unmistakable. So really, it’s about me saying what I said, which is I set up these set of pointers in this series. And, I actually like that one a lot, the one we just did; that was a good one. That is intended to be little shifts to take you into this full simultaneous mind—particularly simultaneous mind perception of reality with your eyes open. The most important thing, I can say it again, but what I say about it, the most beautiful poetry about it that says the things that you are saying is not as helpful as how. How do I do that for myself again, next week?

That is the deal. That’s what I’m interested in. I can say it again and we could get a lao tzu out here to say the same thing and read a beautiful poem. It’s all very charming but I also find a little seductive too, because it’s another description. The thing is, you keep reading or hearing, but I can say in the role of a teacher, I can help you to see how to do it, how to get back there so you can own it, be it, and return to it ... and then play with it while you’re there. Then check it out ... “Is this right ...? Is this ...?”

What you said was exactly ... So do you have a sense of curiosity about how to return and how to shift your consciousness so that you are perceiving in this way?

S: Are you asking?

L: Yes.

S: Yes, I wouldn't say it's curiosity ... it's like ... it may not be what you want to hear ... but it's like do or die.

L: No, that's good. That's a good priority. (laughter)

S: I think I'll take the first one. (laughter)

L: I'm happy to help you learn how to return—learn to return; train to remain. When you lose it, no big surprise; just re-recognize, fine tune and clarify the natural state. And, to rewire your brain to make it the new normal. It's done with the how, the pointers ... Does that make sense?

S: For those of us who are commuting and had to work last night, I hope and pray that you will be here again tonight.

L: I think I'm not going to be here tonight. (laughter) Because I think we're going to be in such a state that we'll need to relax and just be and hang out ... go around ... go to the café or walk around ... go to the lake ... then we'll have a nice morning. Because we'll have some intense practices from now through to tonight. I already have three more main practices to do, related to this. We're going to do them and then just live that out tonight more ... marinate so it sits and then we'll review tomorrow morning and get you launched back to your life.

S: Was last night recorded?

L: Yes. Last night was recorded. It was mostly like a fun, goofy, question and answer ... we were just reviewing. Thank you for your heart.

Yes?

S: That exercise, it seemed to really work for me. I want to remember it and I want to know the name or number so I can go back and do that one again.

L: Yes, this is one, it's in my book—the basic one—but I added a few more. I added a little Tögal practice to it. Do you know Tögal? Trekchö and Tögal? In Dzogchen, Trekchö is cutting through; you just cut through. You just immediately ... or crossing over from old mind to new mind.

Tögal practice is the second practice, which means once you've recognized the nature of mind as empty and awake, then the Tögal shows you the dancing emptiness of this alive world that's sparkling, unity.

It's that added unity and aliveness, and dancing ability of magical miracle dimension. It's not just clean as it is, it's really

luscious and juice ... lovely ... and magical ... adds that which is basically the microcosm and the macrocosm—the sense of everything being alive and changing ... yet supported by this ground of awareness that’s unshakable and this love that’s the nature of fabric of reality.

S: Do a little practice.

L: Yes, just adding a couple different things together, a couple different practices together. Maybe I’ll do the same one tomorrow in the morning, to start out.

Yes?

S: For me, it was ... the experience, which I wasn’t ready for—which is cool—I slipped. It was like a slip. The ego just slipped away ...

L: Ego slipped away, yes.

S: I don’t know ... Then the sound and vision part was helpful because something was aware of sound and sight but it wasn’t here; it wasn’t ego.

L: Yes, that’s right. It wasn’t here. Something was aware of sound and sight but it wasn’t here, right?

S: Yep. It was almost it felt like some metaphor, but it felt like a bubble popped and there was—like you said—just seeing, just hearing.

L: Yes.

S: Right?

L: Yes.

S: And then I’m sort of remembering reconnected that was both ...

L: Okay ...

S: And then all of a sudden I felt like my nervous anxious ego starting to comment. There was like a looking up and a reassuring—I loved your “Okay Sweetheart ...”

L: Yes ...

S: And then there was this compassion, you don’t have to be that way ...

L: Yes, yes.

S: Okay, I get it ... Just a real sweetness. I remember when you said like it was nothing special about it.

L: Yes.

S: The whole process felt on one hand nothing special ...

L: That's natural, yep.

S: Okay, no altered state but it was very precious and sweet at the same time.

L: That's right. That's a beautiful description of open hearted awareness. That is really the compassionate dimension of your personality can be with the other scared parts, or other parts of you, in a way that they are all here and we're just shifting into that and untying these knots of perception, thinking dominating, seeing dominating, going to the reptilian brain and scanning for danger. We're returning it and saying relax and feel safe. Once you feel safe the eyes can relax. Now, just hear sounds inside and out ... see light inside and out ... Then any of the old habit of system one commenting—different parts of sub-personalities can come up—but who they are arising to has changed. Now it's this loving open hearted awareness that's welcoming to anyone. "You want to come up and argue or be angry or be sad? That's alright, you go ahead. Come on up because I'm not in a fight with you and you are not going to hurt me ... I consider you part of me. So if you've been hiding in the shadows, bring the shadow parts up and let's love you back to health."

S: What's cool about it, for me, you made very clear to me is that arising of an ego centered state is like an arising of any other of the six senses.

L: That's right, mental sensations.

S: But I don't have to identify with it; it's just an arising.

L: That's right.

S: But that's not me. I don't have to choose to identify with that unless that's where I reside.

L: Yes, that's part of you, but not you.

S: Right, no more than I exclusively reside in hearing and ears.

L: That's right. That's right ... or your left foot ...

S: That's very cool.

L: Yes. It's really important to not negate it, but to return it to its natural place within your consciousness rather than stopping it from thinking, or controlling it, or trying to make it good—good personality. You're saying there must be a reason for it; it's happening but it's just arising ... to whom¹⁴¹

S: Right.

L: That's the key. That's the only change we are making. We are not changing the contents of consciousness, we are discovering the context. There is a new context or a new dimension of consciousness that all is arising to. When that becomes primary everything else ... then we're just untying the knots of the old habits to bring the eyes back, bring thinking back, then letting the intelligence of the open hearted awareness kind of heal it. It starts to self-liberate and detox because it has more support and love. It will start to open.

The not forming of the continual sense, "I've got to do something about my life ... I gotta get my life together ... some day I'll be okay, if I could only stop thinking this thought that I'm thinking right now ...

S: That's the content?

L: That's the content. Once you realize that is the content, you can't just realize that's the content, you have to find that which is able to operate without going to the content to create an identity, a functioning identity. You have to get to the intelligence of the open hearted awareness, which then can use the functional language and thoughts as tools rather than the other sense of self that is the usual habit. Not only is it content, not only is it me, but this is where I have to organize functioning for living in the world whereas you have to get not only out of that to see it—"Oh, look at that. That's just content ...". Now, how are you going to start walking and talking? You just can't just come back here; you have to discover this whole other dimension from spacious awareness down so that not only can you see it and love it, but start to speak, walk, relate and create in your life so that you are living from your heart mind rather than your head. And, you still have your ordinary sense of personality and personhood.

One more comment, yes?

S: Shifting actually feels incredibly compassionate.

L: Right.

S: If I had to say something, it's like "I'll come back for you ..."

L: Yes. That when you shift into open hearted awareness ...?

S: When it comes back then it's not a problem.

L: Right. That's it.

S: It feels love, which is what it was seeking.

L: Right.

S: What really helped me was to shift right away ...

L: Yes, that's right.

S: Instead of going too long trying to resolve it.

L: That's right.

S: But I tell it I will come back.

L: Right. And also, what you are saying I think, is the key is that the difference between deliberate mindfulness and open hearted awareness is you can step out of your thoughts and be aware of your thoughts. But the way you regard from that witness consciousness, you are either neutral or you are kind of a little judgemental, like "Look at you over there, you small little thoughts ... I'm like this big sky ... I'm okay, I can accept you as you are, yes, yes, yes ... (laughter) And I'm accepting, I'm definitely accepting it (laughter)" There is a little neutrality or a little mental attitude of a mindful witness. It's non-judgemental but it's like "I see you ..." but there's not juice. When you are in open hearted awareness, when it comes back it's like, "Ah ... you're sweet ... you're trying to help me aren't you ... you are trying to be part of the team here ... You're trying to drive the car from the kiddie seat ... Okay, I'm with you ... you're part of me ... we're good so let's work it out here ... we can all be happy ..." (laughter)

S: You're not lying ...

L: You're not what?

S: It's like you're saying "You're not lying, you little mini-me ... but I'm yours (laughter) ..."

S: I think I'm the only one who speaks about coming back and looking. You know, come back and be aware who's looking at the mini-me. I've heard that from you ..."

L: Of the non-dual people right? You listen to, got to a lot of the advaita people ... satsang people?

S: Yes, yes. It's very helpful.

L: Adyashanti does. He works with the whole waking down thing but his pointer is actually to trust, like the Zen style, that if you just recognize spacious awareness it will naturally, some time, come back. But he doesn't do the flip, doesn't do the turn ...

S: Yes, exactly. It's very helpful because I think that is one of the stumbling blocks for some people. For me, it's that I criticize myself—bad girl. But when you embrace it, you go out and come back, it's okay some things are there.

L: Yes, yes.

S: Even with all the things left ... I go out, watching them ... then return.

L: Yes, beautiful. That is the turn.

This turn of awareness aware of itself and coming back is key. First is seeing through, like we did with the eyes, seeing through the point of view. We can do a little version of that ... As part of that we did the usual way of being aware ... The “I am” is here—I am is in here. “I am aware;” awareness is now in the middle. “I am” using awareness—which is actually attention—“I am aware of the flower ...” I am is here, as the subject; awareness is the intermediary ... and then the object is here. “I am ... aware of ... flower. I am ... seeing ... object. I ... see ... object ...” I am aware of seeing object.

If we reverse that and we send awareness out. So, be aware of the seen—the object. Now, be aware of seeing or the awareness of seeing. Now, be aware of just perceiving; without thinking, just perceiving within your head. Now, fall back behind to that which is aware of perceiving and seeing and is the awareness that is connected and has been aware, as the whole field. The “I am” is no longer in here; the “I am” is the awareness that is in between, it’s within the flower, it’s within you, it’s behind you ... Aware of the seen, the seeing, and then look back and discover that which is aware and is always aware from within you, through you, all around you.

Notice that there is no point of view from which you are aware of yourself or the flower. You are not looking from here now, and you are not looking from here. What do you notice about seeing without a seer, so that you can feel your breath and you can see the flower? But, you can also be aware of the spacious dimension ... people to the side of you ... and all around ... What does that feel like?

S: Whole.

L: Whole, yes.

S: Everlasting.

L: Everlasting.

S: Rich.

L: Rich.

S: Safe.

L: Safe. Isn’t that interesting, going out of your mind, you feel safe. Going out of that attempt to be “No, I am really aware of that flower ... I can do that ... I’m good at that ... “

Go ahead, forget that whole project ... (laughter) Now it’s easier. You feel the effortless focus ability from the spacious mind, the ability to effortlessly focus on an object? And your breath?

The first field is the awareness, which is behind you and within you. That is the first field of reality; that is everywhere, inside and outside. There is neither inside nor outside, right. It’s aware of itself.

The second field is movement that is happening—sound, energy, thoughts, feelings, sensations inside and outside. It's within the field so that is changing. The awareness is all at once, it's not changing; it's just aware.

There is stuff changing, then the local awareness is able to contact relative reality here and here. That is the third field—local awareness or focus—while everything is moving inside and out, and while awareness is inside and out. Then you feel this and you see this. This is the world; this is your particular local wave called you. This is the local wave called the world—whatever you are focused on—and then in between everything is dancing. That's called anicca; then there's anatta—no self; and then there is no dukkha, no suffering because there is nothing to get. You feel there is nothing to get and nothing to get rid of; that's the safety. Nothing needs to be pushed away in order to be okay; nothing needs to be gotten in order to be okay on the level of who you are or what brings satisfaction, okayness or well-being. That is relief of suffering.

Write a prescription for that, right. Put it on a prescription pad, take one of these two times a day ... no fifty times a day (laughter).

What else do you notice? Pretty cool right, this balancing ...

We'll just say this balancing of inside and out—simultaneously inside and out—this is in the FMRI. I was a subject in one of these studies of “this is balancing your default mode network of your brain.” The default mode network goes out ... your brain is going through these two rhythms; every five to fifteen seconds it goes out to look at the world and then it goes in to look at what's going on. It goes out to look at the world and when it comes in, it often goes to daydream. Then, it goes out ... then it goes in ... then it goes out ... then it goes in ... That's why, when you are trying to focus on something it will go in. You try to focus on something outside, it will go in. What this does is, this actually balances.

What shamata—one pointed meditation—does, is it represses. It takes one side of that, what's called the task mode—which is external task, so looking at a flower or your breath is external—and it represses the internal. So, you feel calm because you are not alternating. The vipassana—watching of contents—represses external world and just looks at internal; it turns one mode on, so you feel good.

This balanced inside and out, you are able to be aware of inside and outside simultaneously. It balances so that you don't become distracted, but you are able to function from a flow state. This practice of feeling this equally inside and out of these four fields—of pure awareness, moving awareness, focus, and then simultaneously all of them—if you do this, you will actually feel a click. It will feel like three minutes ... six minutes ... maybe 12 minutes at most ... that it takes, you will feel all of a sudden your brain will just balance; then you don't have to do anything. You will look around and feel this continuous, very easy, non-distracted feeling.

Anyone feel that? Feel that sense, the balancing of the inside and out?

Let's do a version of it. Why don't we stand and walk around a little bit ... we don't have to go outside ...

22. Exercise - Ultimate Tonglen, Interconnected Field, and Working with Pain

Loch: The first one is what I call an ultimate tonglen practice. Tonglen, in Tibetan Buddhism, is called giving and taking practice. It's kind of like the opposite of some New Age practices—not that one is better than the other—but the natural tendency is you would send out all of your negative energy and you would take in good energy. But Tonglen, you actually send out love to everyone and compassionately take in their suffering.

The problem with that is, if you actually take it into your body and you stop at one of these two levels, literally ... I went 20 years ago to St. John the Divine where Pema Chodron was teaching this. She came back 5 years later and people were like, "I had to stop doing it, I just became too overwhelmed by the tendency." It's somewhat an advanced practice but what I've found the solution to this, which is that, when you take it in—you open your hearts door—it goes right through you, back to the source which can handle all the pain and suffering of the world. Then, as/from that source, when you are tapped into that presence—that loving awake awareness—that comes in, embodies you. You become this loving spacious awareness. You become this simultaneous mind. Then, you send out that simultaneous mind to everyone and everything. Then you notice the awakens, and the ignorance, and the suffering in others, so you feel compassionate. Then you go behind their back to find their source; then their source comes into them. When you come back, you realize your awakes but you also realize your ignorance and your suffering; then you give that all back to the source.

The source means the spacious awareness, simultaneous mind, open hearted awareness.

This is called my front and this is called my back—I don't know why I show people my back (laughter). That's where we're going, because you can't see your back.

The main thing that, for many people can be helpful—for others it can be challenging-- because whether you can feel ... in feeling this spacious awareness, all of our senses tend to be facing this way—our eyes, our nose, our mouth. We tend to be very visually oriented so we're all about this. Even our emotions are usually felt in the front of our body.

What we are doing, is we're breaking the habit of going/staying in our front—going up and out. Just like we went up and out, we are going back. We just did a little exercise, right? Awareness of the object ... awareness of seeing ... awareness of that, which is behind your back ...

There is something about that, awareness looking back, because there is nothing to be seen there. You can hear behind and you possibly could imagine behind—this afternoon we'll play a little bit with the difference between imagination and feeling—but let's just assume we can do it today.

The idea is we are going to unhook awareness and, you can either come to your ear first or your heart first—if you like one of those as a transition from mind to another sense. Or, you can just go straight back, to surrender back the local awareness until it discovers the spacious awareness that's already aware. Then, that awareness is aware of itself.

That awareness is like feeling to inhabit your whole body, from head to toe. You move from spacious awareness to embodied awareness and then, right out of your heart's door, you're going out with compassionate open hearted awareness to send love and kindness to all beings—or to particular beings if you like, send it to them. Notice the awakeness in them, the ignorance and suffering in them, and then go right through them to their support, behind their back, and have that come back this way so there is some kind of connection.

How does that sound? Any questions about that? It's a version of what we've been doing. This is a little different combination platter. Any questions? Seem good?

Student: Will you guide it?

L: Yes, I'll guide it. Then I'll let you do it. I'll say a little something ...

You can choose which door. Do you have a sense of whether you want to unhook and drop down to the heart door and go straight back out? Or, you can unhook and coming to hearing, and then go to the space behind if that is easier. Or, you can just unhook and go straight back. If you know whether the dropping down to your jaw ... to your throat ... or coming to hearing ... which one is easier. Does everyone have a sense of which one they are likely to do?

I'll do the one that drops into the heart door and go back this way but if it's the ear, you can do that on your own. Just unhooking awareness from thought ... noticing that it's identified at first ... there is a natural tendency of its habit to be focused in this area and for this to be predominant—awareness and thought... Awareness and thought are one of the six senses that it's identified with ... Just notice that awareness can intentionally unhook from the thinker, from the doer ... and the awareness, like an invisible globe of knowing, can know your jaw from within ... it can drop and know your throat directly from within your throat ... Then, this intelligence and this invisible awareness, can drop below your neck and come into your heart space ... So that you are not looking up to thought ... you are not looking down from thought ... You are not stretching your mind down; that you've actually unhooked and are not referencing your mind ... but are knowing directly ... so the subject and object, the direct knowing, is knowing your upper body, the aliveness, the space and the awareness directly from within.

Then just making sure that you are not checking up ... if you get bounced back up, you can just return again ... or if you want to unhook and come to your ear, just focusing on this one small area of your ear ... Then, just as you were able to unhook from your mind, this local awareness which has unhooked from doing and the doer, from thinking and a thinker, it's able to be aware in a small area ... or able to be aware of itself as this spacious awareness ... Unhooks from your body ... and this time steps straight back ... Feels back through the back of your body, the back of your heart ... through this heart space, through this heart door ... going back to feel the space and the spacious awareness directly behind your body ... behind your back ... behind your heart.

Local awareness can discover and merge, dissolve, into that spacious awareness which is already here ... has always already been aware without your help.

If you are going in any direction of intention, you are going back ... your awareness is going backwards behind that awareness which can know spacious awareness, which is made of spacious awareness, can then know itself as contentless, timeless, boundless, empty ... and yet alert, knowing, clarity ... Just for a few seconds, let it know itself ... let the local awareness know and surrender to the spacious awareness.

Once you've unhooked from senses and thinking let the local awareness merge with the ocean of awareness ... and then that ocean of awareness, by itself—without your help, while you still are surrendering back—this ocean of awareness comes forward and fills your body, merges and mingles with your aliveness from head to toes ... so you feel this dancing emptiness, pervasive and spacious, effervescent, alive dancing ... physical sensations ... mental sensations ... and just notice that there is no local manager within this body ... it's just a wave of the ocean.

Notice that this awareness can go out, forward, from your heart space ... out to everyone and everything ... or particular people in this room ... in the world ... Sending out this compassionate open hearted awareness to everyone in the world ... As it meets others, feeling that you are aware of their awakesness, their confusion or ignorance and their suffering ... Feel that the compassionate open hearted awareness connects to them in a loving, inclusive, unified way without fixing anyone or anything ... just supportive.

Then, through their hearts door, discover that they have this support of the field of the awake awareness, of this spirit, or universe, or dimension of loving support ... Connect behind you, within you, within them, behind them ... until you discover that awareness ... Then that awareness comes back through them ... And then, bringing that connection and their pain back through you ... noticing your own pain, ignorance and awakesness ... and then surrendering back to this ... everything goes back to this unconditional support, this field of loving presence that is everywhere and in all things as the ground prior to energy.

Then feeling that awareness comes forward, filling you ... coming out your heart door ... going out to everyone and everything ... seeing their pain ... feeling compassion through their hearts door, to everyone, behind them ... to that support which then comes forward ... There is a sense of this kind of flow or this surfing out and back ... and there is a sense of this happening all at once, as if there is no movement.

I will say a little quote and then let you enjoy this process. The quote from Nisargadatta goes like this:

When I look inside and see that I am nothing, that is wisdom

When I look outside and see that I am everything, that is love.

And between these two, my life turns.

– Sri Nisargadatta Maharaj

Unhooking ... surrendering local awareness back ... intentionally going back, behind your heart to discover that spacious awareness that is already aware by itself, without your help ... it's pervasive into your body ... feeling the bliss and the love ... the heart mind goes out compassionately to others ... discovering all the people in the world who have pain and awakesness and ignorance ... and then back to the support behind us all ... back and forth and all at once ... (extended silence)

Just continuing to feel that equality of awareness that's simultaneously behind you, within you, and in front of you ... Tuning into that field, that dimension that is both inside and out, or neither inside nor out ... there is just this dimension that's inherent within everything ... and both equally outside and in ... Then feel the aliveness that is also changing everywhere—sounds outside, behind you, sounds coming within you and in front of you ... So there is this dancing energy that is also behind you, within you, and in front of you ... both inside and out.

Then, when you are ready to open your eyes slowly, just take a few minutes to be aware of outside—what you are seeing—and inside—what you are feeling—without interpreting either one ... Feeling like you are balancing your brain

by being aware of the awareness that's inside and out ... the movement that's inside and out ... your breath and sensations ... mental sensations inside and the plant or what you see outside ... Feel like there is a continuous, simultaneous, easy awareness of the awareness inside and out ... the movement inside and out ... breath ... Just take a couple minutes to continue to let your brain get on board, if it's alternating looking out/looking in ... waiting it out patiently by being aware ... from the awareness ... of the awareness ... of the movement ... of the outside and in ... objects ... until you feel a continuous, spontaneous balance.

Feel like the heart mind is the contact point of the inside and out, rather than your eyes ... Eyes are receiving ... ears are receiving ... and it's going to the awareness and down to the heart mind, back to the awareness ... There is a feeling dimension that is happening here, and a receiving dimension that's happening with your eyes and ears ... Resting back to that which is both inside and out, from here ... without interpreting or analyzing.

From your heart mind, just letting your phone number appear to you ... without going up to your head ... Then, from your heart mind, just say something like "All thoughts and feelings are welcome."

Notice the inside and outside ... notice the movement of feelings, thoughts, sensations, mind, as just all the same ... occurring to you, the open hearted awareness ... notice pleasant and unpleasant ... tired and awake body and mind ... just accepting that from this always awake, alert, open hearted, unconditionally loving presence.

Then, speaking from here, what would you say about this heart connection to others? This ultimate tonglen, or this heart connection? What does it feel like when you feel not only your own heart mind, as in individual, but start to feel this interconnected field. What do you notice?

Feel, even as you have this rest, letting your body rest ... not realizing it's almost lunch time ... letting it be hungry ... not trying to change it ... but simultaneously noticing this pristine, wide awake dimension while your body is resting ... Then notice your mind ... your mind may be sleepy ... a little toward the mid-day ... let it be sleepy ... let it be resting ... but also notice the wide awake, pain free, alert dimension that is here while your mind and body are resting ... Just rest as that, which is resting deeper than sleep, and is wide awake ... rest as that, which is always resting deeper than the sleep state ... as the void ... as the universe sky... vast, and deep, and silent ... and yet available and clear ... while your mind and body go through whatever they need to go through.

What is it like to tune into that and be aware from that? Even while your mind and body can be like this (laughter) ... drool is coming down ... meanwhile, DING ... behind it all is ahhh ... but you look like this ... (laughter)

Anyone want to say anything about that? Where you are? Or the practice? Yes?

S: It was like empty intimacy ...

L: Empty intimacy ...

S: ... and the energy was gone.

L: Heh ... you and the energy flowing?

S: Yes.

L: In and out ... or up and down ...?

S: It was looping.

L: Looping.

S: A particular person that I was sending it to was looping, but it was definitely energy.

L: Yes. How does it seem?

S: Now it's like peace.

L: Yes, but you're working with the energy dimensions, yes?

S: Yes.

L: Okay, beautiful. That felt comfortable?

S: Yes.

S: You know I have like a line of three or four people and I notice that the energy was not the same for everybody ...

L: Yes.

S: My son, was radiant. Then there was somebody that was gray and I thought that was her state of health. I wasn't trying to be psychic or anything, but it strongly ... she came as gray and it was a lot of work ...

L: To send ...?

S: Yes and I couldn't take it from her, either.

L: Okay, yes.

S: So I wonder what that was?

L: Yes, its' interesting to see. Just be curious as you go back and see her again. See what happens. Interesting.

Anybody else? How was it going behind your back?

S: I don't think I'm getting behind ...

L: Getting behind, being aware ... feeling like there was awareness behind your back? You usually feel more to the sides awareness? Or above?

S: More the sides but that's as far as it goes.

L: How about when you do "be aware of the plant ...?"

S: That's good. I'm aware of seeing ...

L: Aware of seeing ... now rest back to that which is already aware. Now, do you back and feel like awareness is back, behind you, that's aware?

S: More up here.

L: Okay. That's okay. If it starts in the head, behind the head, is okay. But getting to a place where it's not of your senses, that somehow it's where you are not seeing it; behind you. That's good. Some people that there, start in this area.

There is a guy called Douglas Harding, who talks about being headless. He says when you look through your mind, you feel like you have no head. The way he confirms it is he says "Just look down at your body ... see, there's no head (laughter) ..."

S: I met him. I went to his house in England. He's a great guy.

L: Yes, very interesting character.

S: Can you say something about doing these practices while there is a presence of some kind of physical pain?

L: Yes. The practice is to include and step out of the pain ... come back through the pain ... and be aware of that which is not in pain ... be with the signals that are changing ... go right into the area and into the molecules, and the atoms of the pain ... in them, around them ... outside of them ... be that which is with the areas of pleasant and unpleasant ... and then look right at the pain, then go a little bit outside the pain ... go way outside the pain, then come back through it ...

Then let the pain signal go to awake awareness rather than to the mind that's scared ... let it go out.

... Do you have a sense of that?

S: Yes, some sense. You just want to work it to dissolve it.

L: That's right, that's what's always attending. That's what pain signal tells you to do is, "check this out ... check this out ... check this out ..." You're processing, controlling, helpful mind is trying to say "Let me fix it ... let me put a band-aid on it ... let me stop it ..."

S: It kind of just pulses there ...

L: Yes, you say something ...

S: There is pain that seems to be persistent and constant. But if you tune into it, there's pauses literally throughout it.

L: The space, like the space between the words. Like that, right?

S: Yes.

L: You look for the space and the gap, that way it's not solid pain.

S: It's like pain ... pause ... pain ... pause ...

L: That's good. Find the space within, space around. Then, also work with the "where are the signals going through?" That suffering about the pain, the sufferer about the pain, work with that rather than the pain. Let that open up so the signal is going somewhere else.

S: I think you said just let it go to voice mail.

L: Yes, let it go to voice mail. (laughter)

S: Ah don't worry about it.

L: All the worry about it, yes, because you have to get out of that. I'm going to put together some very particular versions of this for physical pain and stuff at some point because I think there are particular ways that are different than mindfulness ways. I know the guy who does the research for mindfulness pain and he's showing 21% reduction across the board and pain signals using mindfulness. I think I'm going to get 58! (laughter) Then I'll be a winner! (continued laughter) Winning ... winning ... winning.

S: Who's the guy that's doing the research?

L: His name is Fadel Zeidan. It just came out. A new one just came out.

S: The level of the pain is reduced, the actual pain actually goes down? Or your being able to sit with it?

L: Kind of like your thoughts. You know your chattering thoughts? Where did they go? They go into the background.

S: Oh! Okay!

L: Like that. Pain signal and thinking aren't in the foreground and you are not attending to it. Like the sensations in your left foot right now, they just go into the background. Then if it's acute—if you do bump—you will definitely feel it. That's the basic ...

S: I had a root canal that didn't take so I went to a specialist and he said "You can live with it or you can maybe try to another way or you may lose it because the tooth may fragment." I said let me live with it. This could be my way. If I get tired of it, I will risk it and see what happens.

L: Yes, okay. You can work with this.

S: It's one of my timers too, he comes twice a day, that molar ...

L: You are working with it now?

S: Five minutes ago I was; not right now. It kind of went away. But it came when I was doing it.

L: This is important because obviously a lot of being are getting caught in pain. Pain killers are now becoming the new drug of choice. So many people are getting addicted trying to deal with pain. There's a possibility that this works with physical pain. It works with emotional pain. It works with psychological pain. It works primarily with suffering caused by this piggy-backing effect of the mini-me on any other pleasant or unpleasant situation. It craves after pleasant thinking it will resolve itself and it resists unpleasant, thinking that's the best strategy—fight the negative feeling; repress it, deny it, run away from it, fight it, flight, freight, freeze ... go to imagination, disassociate.

Instead of that, this is an opportunity to be with whatever is.

With that, let's go feed our physical bodies. (laughter)

23. Beginning from Spacious Awareness, Unhooking, and Local Awareness

(sound of bell)

Loch: Okay. Welcome back. Any reports from lunch or from this morning? Any insights or clarity ... clarification?

Student: Flowing more.

L: What is it?

S: Flowing more.

L: Flowing more, yes. You have a feeling more like it's transitioning from this room to walking, lunch and things like that?

Anyone starting to glimpse a little on their own as you are walking around? Yes?

The essential premise is this true nature is already here, equally available to who you are.—this awake awareness. And, that it is available to intentionally access.

One question that arises, certainly, is if it's so available how come people haven't found it? If it's so natural why hasn't it been put on the map of Western philosophy and psychology? That's the curious thing. A lot of it is about the way we know it and learn it and the way we know and learn other things.

In one Tibetan tradition they say there are four reasons why we haven't recognized it, even though it's here. The first one is, it's so close we can't see it. In other words we are looking from it. We can't see it; it's so inherent within us that we can't see it. The second one is, it's so subtle that our conceptual mind can't understand it. It's so subtle, so invisible, that we try to understand it; we can't understand it. The third one is, it's so simple we can't believe it; it couldn't be that simple. It must be much more complex and esoteric. So simple. And the fourth one—which may be the most important—which is, it's so good we can't accept it. It's so good that who we are can't accept it could be me; it could be for you. It could be who you are. We can't accept this basic goodness is real, so simple, so close.

Of those four, the trickiest one is the second one: that it's so close we can't see it. Well, okay but we can see it because it's so close. It's so simple we can't believe it; eventually you get that it is that simple. On the deeper level, it's so good, comes with time but it's so subtle that we can't understand it. That's what we are dealing with it a lot, how to understand or recognize, realize how to shift on our own into this.

We've tried a bunch of different way. It certainly may be a good time to review the different parts: the unhooking. Make sure you have unhooking from the mind. The key is not stretching. Not looking from here to the heart. Not looking from here to space. And, not stretching the mind down, (laughter) so you're "I'm aware from here ..." but you've

actually just stretched the thinking mind down. Or, you are stretching it out—you are half way in between each. That's why that metaphor of what I say "unhook" is detach, dis-identify, let go—it's a rope so you have to let go. You can't be in it.

The first letting go is letting go of the mind. The second letting go is when the local awareness recognizes spacious awareness. There is another letting go, or surrender, that you are not even doing the project of discovering. You surrender into that which is aware without your help. That is the second surrender or letting, turning over. Until that is aware and that's where you are located—and it's simultaneously located everywhere—but there's an ability from that to move and look and include, and focus without leaving the field of awareness.

Yes?

S: When you talk about the term local awareness, that's sort of what's directing this awareness with the instructions. When you say "go from spacious awareness now, back and forth ..." it's, I wouldn't say directing it—I'm not sure what the right word is—but is that local awareness's job then? I don't know if "job" is the right word.

L: In some ways all of this is already here. Nothing is being changed and it's really just the obscuring. Actually the most miraculous thing is that we can actually function from this limited consciousness. The fact that we can function from ego consciousness—we are not exploding or something or more insane than we are—that is kind of the miracle, not that there's this other system going on.

It seems like the local awareness is the first felt sense of the unity consciousness or the spacious awareness that is everywhere. Because this is a kind of inquiry method rather than a resting method—if you rest like the Zen saying "Muddy water let stand becomes clear." You could just rest until your mind ... maybe three days ... three months ... the three lifetimes ... finally rests. Then you wouldn't have to use local awareness to discover the spacious awareness. But then—let's say you do it that way. Let's try it that way. If you were to rest, do resting method, you are identified and you just don't identify, don't attach, don't particularize. Eventually maybe your everyday mind settles down and the background is now the foreground. That which is inherent is now primary.

Now, how are you going to move? How are you going to get up? How are you going to operate? Because it's pure awareness that is not embodied. So, what focuses from the awake awareness? Rather than going back to the attentional system and the will and the do-er, is you can stay here. Ultimately it is your awake nature that moves local awareness, just like your mind moves attention. It is your ultimate awake nature—which your local awareness is the same thing, as it—it's like the bubble, the wave in the ocean. If you say it's local awareness, it's not local awareness versus spacious awareness; it is ultimately your awake nature that can focus. But we are just reverse.

I just reverse engineered the whole thing and went back to say, rather than wait, just start with this principal that show up later and say that awareness is being obscured by this cloud. It's everywhere, so let's go find local awareness here, where it's caught. Now let's just separate it out and have it go find its source.

There is a term in Tibetan Buddhism called child awareness returns to mother awareness; that is actually at death. At death child awareness, child rigpa, returns to luminosity, mother luminosity. That's when the local awareness returns to the spacious awareness. So I figured let's do it before then. (laughter) Then at least we are practiced. That's the closest phrase I found I found.

Although, as I say in the book, I try to find little places ... like the secret of the golden flower ... the Taoist, turn the light of awareness around to find the sublime truth that is already here. Those kind of things point toward what I'm doing.

That's the reverse engineered way of immediately going from obscurity to having the background awareness, or the hidden awareness, become primary. Then, realize that is not only primary, but that's who we are. Then, to be able to inherent within your body so that you then you can move your hand from there, you can stand up from there, you can talk from there, you can direct local awareness to a particular place. Does that make sense?

S: Is it sort of like local awareness becomes fused with the spacious awareness?

L: In some ways it already is. From the beginning it is; that's kind of the paradox. That's actually the only reason it actually works, that it already is ... it's like the bubble of the water that is looking at a particular water, almost like a magnifying glass made of the water that can focus here or focus there. But it's of the same; it's just where it's focused rather than it being of different substance or something. That's the way it feels like.

Does that make sense?

S: It does. And actually the paradox appeals to me.

You already talked about the four obstacles identified in the Tibetan tradition, is there anything more you can say about that? What is it that gets in the way? Is it part of the culture we inhabit? And all of the distractions, the materialism ...?

L: Yes, it's a little bit ...

I went through it but it's a good things to say, again, that the creation of the little mini me seems to be this process of what's called self-awareness. It's a natural function of the brain which is supposed to think about thinking. It's actually the first mindfulness separation that says, "Oh, that's right ... I shouldn't touch the stove ... I shouldn't touch the hot stove ... oh yes, don't ... well you could ... but I won't ... okay ... but I want to ... but you shouldn't ..." It's that separation, that "you better not do that ..." Who's the you and who's the me? You are talking to yourself.

That little secondary pattern of thinking takes itself to be me. It's a little, "Well I know what you shouldn't do and what you should do ..." so it's a little controller, or judge, or little commentator that starts to feel like "that's me ... I shouldn't grab that ... I should have that ..." It's almost like it's directing your body, as if the body is your vehicle. Even your personality is the vehicle of this little mini me.

So, when that mini me relaxes—as we've been doing-- you begin to see that everything else is here, except that one who thought it was driving the car. But everything else works. If we just do this practice again, from the beginning, which is just ask yourself this simple question: what's here now if there's no problem to solve?

S: What is here now ...?

L: If there is no problem to solve? If this problem solving part that is trying to ... that thinks it's an entity that needs to get food, needs to get satisfaction, and needs to protect itself from dying—which is why it holds on so tight. Just relax. What's here? Just take its job away. What's here now when there is no problem to solve? What is this like? What is this awareness? What's this presence? What just went away?

To be clear, it's hard to see, right? That's why it's so close. All of a sudden it's gone and you're like "something's really changed ... I don't know what was here or what went away ..." It's hard to see what was here and what went away but it's clear something went away. It starts to be, more importantly, what's here? What's here? What's it feel like? Can you feel that?

We'll even do this advanced practice. Ready? Now you are here. Okay, you are going to have to stay with me on this one ... Ready? Let what's here when there is no problem to solve, now you are in this spacious, embodied open hearted awareness ... Now take local awareness and come back, identify with thought, and create a sense of "I" in your head. Go ahead. "Oh my god ... what in the world is going on?" Ready? Now unhook and drop. Now come back and let awareness identify with thinking. Let it create a thinker that's thinking about thinking, that's judging yourself and wondering what's going on. Stay right there. Open. Come back. Now stay there for a second.

Now, perceive that way, from there. Make sure you are identified, creating a thinker that's very concerned about many things. Now unhook and open to spacious awareness. Let that spacious awareness come back and include thoughts, feelings and sensations. So, it's not about thinking. It's not about thinking, right?

S: It was the focus ...

L: It's about location.

S: It's like thoughts without a thinker.

L: It's like thoughts without a thinker, yes. There are thoughts without a thinker.

This is all about unhooking. Do you feel that? Unhook ... drop ... open up ... open up this way ... drop down below your feet ... go through the earth, to the other side of the earth ... go that way ... that way ... go behind your back ... unhook ... back there ... and find that awareness that's looking forward.

Then just feel without ... make yourself go back and create that ... how could we do that to ourselves, right? (laughter) You feel that? What does that feel like? Then we call that normal, right?

Getting the feel for this first move—unhooking—whether it's into your body, hearing, out to space, above, below ... just get out and then into awake awareness, surrendering ... and then feeling, as awake awareness, you're spacious and pervasive ... Now feel like your heart mind is the place you can speak from, think from, and talk from so that you don't have to come back here or remain spaced out.

Then feel like this is no big deal, just the new normal. What do you notice about that? Isn't that wild? Now you get a feel for local awareness—that's what's doing that, what's about to do that. That's what that's doing. You're not moving thought. You're not moving your will. You're not moving your ideas. You're not moving your energy.

Try it on your own. Drop it ... step out ... go to spacious awareness ... Do it almost too quick. Do it very quick, like "Oh yes, right ..." As soon as you feel local awareness has definitely surrendered, come back.

S: It's harder.

L: It's harder when ...?

S: To come back.

L: To come back to?

S: Yes, after a few tries ...

L: Come back. Consciously, intentionally, come back. Reform intentionally. This is the strange thing. This is the un-meditation practice (laughter). It's like, "What we are going to do today, we're going to create suffering for ourselves (laughter) ... Oh..."

We are going to create the obscuration, just so we see how it's built, how it's formed and what it actually is. As soon as you step out a little bit, you feel like, "As soon as I step out, thoughts are still going, so it's not about stopping the story, or the thoughts ..." Story is still happening but you're not the story teller; you are not identified with/creating a character out of this looping. That's what's different, right.

Really start to feel what it is, what identification is. Because often, you even hear in Buddhism, "Suffering is caused by identification so I shouldn't be so identified." That's not it. Once you have the "I" you are already identified. The identification is here; you're too late once you're trying not to be identified. "Don't be so attached ... I shouldn't be attached to the pleasure and the pleasant ..." You already have the "I", that's the attachment that I'm talking about, that is the identification. This is the identification.

Now you're not identified. From here, are you attached to anything? That you need to do ...? Or be like, "I can do it ... I kind of like ice-crème so I'll have one ... (laughter) Do I need two bowls of Haagen Dazs? Probably not." But from here, the mini me grabs a hold. It's looking for satisfaction, it doesn't know where it is, and it isn't anywhere; it can't find it anywhere. There is no satisfaction for it. It thinks it's "how people think of me ... the emotional ... oh, it's the physical pleasure ... no, it's ..." so it creates addiction. Any physical pleasure thinks "Oh let's piggy back on that. Let's have the first bowl of Haagen Dazs," and it says "I got some relief. Let's go for two because then maybe I'll have nirvana!" (laughter) Then three ... and sick, "Ah that wasn't it ... well we could try again ..." because it doesn't know where to go. There is no hope for it to satisfy it, so it goes for reputation and money, and anything that piggy backs on any security, basic security—food, clothing, shelter. That's all you need but it will be "better clothes ... better food ... better houses ... things ... situations ... reputation ... who thinks what of me ..." Whatever. It's trying to get "Oh, maybe that's it ... emotional brain feels like it belongs so I'll be the president of a club and then I'll really belong and double belong ..."

You realize, when you step out of it, it's like "What was that all about?" Your natural tendency will be to belong with people you like to belong with and get along, get food clothing and shelter ... have enough and you're fine. Right?

S: Then our economy collapses. (laughter)

L: Then the economy collapses. That's part of it.

S: You were saying this morning about being able to deal with aversive conditions and big foreman does not want people to know that ...

L: I know that. This is a lot of subversive stuff going on here. But what are we going to do? We have to save the planet ... Like Einstein was saying, all we can do is try to be the best, create and find this new way of thinking so that there is new possibility.

Yes?

S: For me this feels like inner section of the emergent yearning that's always been, with skillful means.

L: Okay, yes. The emerging yearning is like the heart's desire to awaken?

S: Yes, that's what I would add to that list. You show the correct tool. I feel like other ones are kind of obscured or you have to see from them to get how you don't see them.

L: That's right.

S: But this is like ...

L: This you can feel.

S: It feels like it doesn't pathologize the desire, it just equips it.

L: That's right. And, it brings it back to its natural desire. It doesn't over-addict it by the secondary attempt to try to get more because there's some part that's still not satisfied, that's trying to double it up.

S: Yes.

L: Your eyes return to their natural state. Desire returns to its natural state. You don't need to be in a monastery.

Think about the first, the way they think about doing it. Take away desire, family life, money and jobs.

S: I tried it; it doesn't work.

L: It doesn't work so good. I guess it's okay for some people but the point is that's not the point, is the point of this point—the point I'm making now. There are other points probably ... currently the point is there is no point (laughter). All the points are ... a thousand points of light ... (laughter)

Yes?

S: When you are talking about food, clothing and shelter, I am thinking about relationship and then need for relationship.

L: Yes, that's the emotional part.

S: It's in there and that one gets complicated so quick because you can know when you have enough to eat. But it's sometimes hard to know and I think—I'm just thinking out loud here—one reason I don't know when I have enough is relationship is because I'm not in the bigger relationship. I'm not in the all-encompassing one.

L: That's right. Yes.

S: So I keep looking in small places for the ...

L: That's right. That's the looking for love in all the wrong places. The place to look is when you find the well-being and the love that you are. You realize you are the one you've been looking for and that it's already here, whatever you want to call that—spirit, or God, or you, True Nature, or ground of being. When you find that, you realize “oh love is here, now let's play with some friends ... Let's do some stuff, have a meal and talk to people ...” Because that's kind of cool, right? Then you are not grasping.

S: Then those small things seem perfectly satisfying instead of being not enough.

L: Instead of getting that secondary grasping onto that emotional bonding ... That's right. Thank you for that.

Yes?

S: When you do this—let's take the down and out—when you do this, do you still break it down like that? Or does it go into sort of one-on-one homogeneous ... I guess what I'm saying is if you take local awareness, goes out to meet spaciousness.

L: Yes.

S: When we, as that, meet spaciousness it's totally obvious that that is the same thing that we are.

L: Yes.

S: We, being local awareness. It's awareness.

L: Yes.

S: This whole recognizing seems like it's automatic. And then, becomes spaciousness ... spaciousness is everywhere ... it's in here, it's all over ...

L: Yes.

S: You say it's the inside of the atom ...

L: It feels that way, right?

S: Once it's aware, it's clear that awareness is spaciousness, then the whole deal about grabbing local awareness and going back in—which is fine—but we really don't need to do that. Because if you feel it all through ...

L: Do you also feel though, when it's clear that awareness ... the key is anything that takes to get clear, that's enough. Once it's clear, the first level is like now it's pervasive within your body. So immediately, when you realize that it's pervasive...

S: That's what it feels like.

L: And, does it feel like it's also non-other than then energy?

S: Than awareness?

L: Than awareness but that appearance or energy is also aware and made of awareness? Not that awareness is in it—like in an atom—but that actually the atom is made of awareness so the energy and the form ... form is emptiness but then does emptiness realize it's also form?

S: Yes.

L: Or is that a second move?

S: I don't think it's a second move. What it feels like in here is different than what it feels like out there. This is what you do. I feel that in there without ... so I guess it's the energy right there?

L: Yes, if it feels like it's kind of this dancing energy ... and is there no location from which you are viewing from?

S: Nobody's viewing.

L: Yes, all of it is clarity and checking. It doesn't have to go exactly one-two-three-four-five. As long as when you are there, if you look back you could check it. You make sure you are there because you could just go "I'm in just pure awareness ..." and you could be a little detached, you are not in your body. You are going to say "Well that just happened ..."

That is where a lot of people say to me—I just came back from California and that's the big thing out there—"I'm in pure awareness and this witnessing awareness so why should I do anything else? I'm free ..." I was like, how are your friends?

“Well they think I’m a little detached but I’m free ...” (laughter) You know what that is, but what is this? (taps hand)

“That’s an object in the world ...” Okay, well let’s check that out again. Now let’s come back and see if it’s true.

You can pop right in. That can be very stable, that witnessing awareness, but it’s other than this. Even though it’s pervasive.

S: Got it.

L: I just want to check on that.

S: In California I’d probably fit well ... (laughter)

L: That’s what I was checking ...

S: These mini-me that are proliferating as nuclear weapons ... (laughter)

L: It sounds like you (snaps fingers) there is no need to go. It’s just checking that you are not caught in one of the dimensions.

It does sound like, even your phrase of wholeness, that’s loving wholeness, right?

S: It is there.

L: That does sound like that is all of that. That’s great. If you can unhook and step right in, that’s great. Whatever it takes. You are simplifying a very simple system. (laughter). It’s going to be a one step ...

S: We have a whole town of people that do that (laughter) when they are not eating kale. (laughter)

L: Yes?

S: I’m aware the air hasn’t come on in a while.

L: How is everyone feeling with air?

S: A little warm.

S: Warm.

L: Here’s what I thought we’d do: this is a good time to do this and then we can air this room out.

Does everyone have a sense of a method that they can do on their own to unhook and drop in? Okay.

What we'll do is take a little walk up to the sanctuary. There's a beautiful little place. Unfortunately that air is not working up there so we are prepared for it now. (laughter) But, it's a nice quiet place and we'll do a 15-minute silent meditation. So take yourself into this and we'll marinate in a nice silent way. As you come down, I'll ring the bell ... come down take a bathroom break, and then we'll come back here and turn on the air conditioning.

S: Are we going to be in silence on the way?

L: Yes, do silence on the way. You can take the stairs if they are easier, but there's this back way which is actually a little path up the woods that I'll lead you up. As you go up, maybe when we get up a little ways, I'll just whistle and then we'll just stop in the middle of the woods. Then we can just stop in the middle of the woods and just look around for a second. Then we'll walk and I'll whistle one more time; we'll stop and then we'll just walk in. Does that sound good?

S: Are we going to come back when we hear the bell?

L: You'll hear the bell then take a break and we'll meet back here. It will be a fifteen meditation once we are up there.

24. Deconstruction, Trouble in the World, and Meaning That's Prior to Thinking

(sound of bell)

Loch: Okay. It's a nice space up there, heh? Very pretty. Very still.

Any reports from that? Doing it on your own and marinating a little bit? Practicing marinating? You find you are able to do it, find your way?

Alright, let's do a short little ... you want to say something?

Student: I was really feeling the ground of being with a quality of confidence, that really, I'm here, containing everything.

L: Yes. In some ways there are four stages the mahamudra talks about. The first is recognition, with is recognizing awake awareness. Then realization. Not only do you recognize awake awareness but you realize it's who you are. Then, there is abiding or stabilization where you lose it and you start to stabilize it. And, then expression, which means you are able to talk from it, walk from it, and live from it.

Recognition is the first moment, first glimpse. Then realization is what you are talking about, "Wait a minute, I'm not aware of spacious awareness; spacious awareness is who I am. It feels like it is me. This is the ground of being, my being." That isn't just separate me, that's separate me plus interconnected me, plus empty me, plus one-ness me ... That is realization.

Then, the small glimpses lead to abiding or stabilizing. It becomes the new normal. And then I think, actually, expression comes after realization. You start to express and you start to walk and talk. That helps with the stabilization. That really gets you trust. Trusting enough to say "let's give it a try ... let's try to type an email from here ... let's try to talk to somebody without thinking." You may get a gap ... you are sitting there and they are saying something. You are hearing them and going "I don't really have anything to say. If I were socially appropriate, I would say 'how's the weather?' (laughter) But I'm going to wait and see and something will come out ..." You'll be "That was interesting. I'm not sure who said that ... I didn't think about it, but I just spoke ..." Or asked a question ... or was curious ... or made a sound, like Hmm ... that's really cool.

Something comes up so you start to trust that you don't have to be in your social self and you can learn to speak and get the kind of new wiring online. Right?

Yes?

S: I just wanted to say that you were right. (laughter)

L: You wanted to say you were wrong, right? Or I was right. (laughter) There's no me. (continued laughter)

S: I found that I was faking it. I actually was staying inside the body, feeling very passionate and California-isk. (laughter) Then I got the spacious feeling and all that. It was missing, that real sense of wholeness or whatever it was, that felt very stable yesterday. So I slipped back into it; there were short cuts. If any of you want a short cut, I'd say don't do it (laughter). I now have three local awareness' as an end result (laughter). Take it one at a time.

L: It is. Each one is amazing. So even if you go from everyday mind to subtle body, it's like "Well this is the best ..." Then you go to pure awareness and spacious awareness is like "Wow! What was that?! This is even better than that." Then you come back to simultaneous mind and say "Who can ask for anything better than this?" Then the love comes and you're like "Ow that! Right!"

Each one you think, "I think I've got it." But the idea is keep mixing.

Again, the key is it's always mixed with thoughts, feelings, sensations, conditioning. Awakening is always mixed. There are moments of pure joy and thought-free, but even then, the humanity is always part of the awakening. A human being who's awakening that has human thoughts, feelings and sensations. So, don't take your spiritual temperature by the first levels of conditioning—thoughts, emotions, that are arising. When some part says "I can't believe that person! I'm really upset about ..." Then, just see who it's appearing to.

Step out of the identification and just don't judge the judging. Don't be angry at the anger; that's the key. That's what keeps it going, thinking "I shouldn't be ... I should be further along ..." that is the whole system one. In some ways the key is, the realization really is "I'm always this, no matter." That is one of the key things. Everything is awake all the time whether it knows it or not. That is kind of the realization.

Then, when you back into confusion, identification, just return because it's so much more comfortable than this. This is so much better than that. So you start to really feel the motivation comes from the discomfort because you know there's an alternative. That is the motivation. When you really start to become sensitive enough to realize, emphasize "Okay, I could live like this; I've been used to it. But now I don't have to." You remember. You realize you are caught or identified. You remember there's an alternative. You recall the method that works for you, whatever that is. Then, you decide to do it. Then you do it. That's about how it happens each time.

You have to realize that you are caught or identified. Or, you have a little reminder that comes up that says "Just re-recognize." So even if you are kind of in a little mood, feel pretty good, that you still do it just to clean house and come back to ground. Then, you will see that it's even better than you thought it was.

Then, mix it up. Take it out for a ride. Get it working in the world. Get caught again, no big surprise; come back. Get it operating and working.

Yes?

S: I have a question about your experience. You may have just answered it. You said you still practice on subways ...

L: Yes, yes.

S: Is that a clean-up for you?

L: Yes.

S: But otherwise you are generally operating from ...?

L: The general new normal is pretty clean and buoyant and blissful and accepting. The background has moved into the foreground and it's just pretty much there. I often wake up like that, but sometimes not.

It feels like fingers on the chalk board when I'm starting to get identified and I start to get some conditioning arises. Usually the way I'm caught is some conditioning will just sneak up the back about some attitude and something I'm doing ... I'm working and I'm a little contracted ... and then I'll go "Oh yes, that's not good ..." then I'll just follow it out. Then I'll go wow.

Often, it is connected to some pattern of sub-personality that has certain attitudes that are trying to be helpful and protect me, control me, or feel safe or feel like "I don't want to be hurt" or something about ... I'll see "Oh, that's what you're doing ... That's okay; you're trying to help me ..." I'll feel like it's all part of the family. It's never ...

There's many people who are now able to say that, that they are on the road of awakening. There is no landing, that's the key. On some level it's almost like an either/or because you can really feel either/or. You feel one is more primary than the other; it makes a difference just that little ... There is big change, or you're hooked, or you're unhooked ... But then when you're unhooked it's not like always ... the relative world is never perfect. Your internal experience is not always thought free. There is always stuff happening. It's the relationship to it.

That's the key. It's not about what's arising, it's about who is it arising to. And, what's that relationship to it?

Yes?

S: I was really struck by the way you talk about reconstructing the mini-me, and then back out. That was very powerful to me.

L: Yes, good.

S: So I thought—it was kind of humorous—all of a sudden I could feel I didn't feel threatened or something I had to do. I don't know how to say it. It just had a different quality for me. I was constructing great ...

L: Yes.

S: Thinking great ... ego-great ... So, when we went up to sit I thought "well I'm going to play with that."

L: Great.

S: I went through the space—I could do eyes and ears together—then got that 360 thing you said to do. I could feel myself going through that. Then, when I could feel Greg coming back—and he snuck up on me as he always does (laughter). So, then all of a sudden “Oh, number one is on board now ...” Then I went through the exercise. But this time when I went through the exercise I deliberately came back to Greg to re-create him. That was my whole ... I went back ... there he is again, oh shit ... (laughter) It’s like alright, did the exercise ...

L: That lovely guy Greg. (laughter)

S: That lovely little shit (laughter) ... I just kept doing that, coming back. But then I found myself doing that with subtle body. When I started to daydream or a little bit tired, I found myself “Oh I’m getting caught in blissful la-la land here ... Okay, I can do a 360 thing again ...”

L: Yes, yes. That’s right.

S: It was really fun!

L: It’s amazing, right. Yes, to see the construction that everything is just a pattern. It’s not the normal human being, it’s a developmental or a particular pattern constellation of consciousness that we can operate from but we don’t have to.

S: Right. And the strength, the paradox if I’m constructing it and de-constructing it.

L: That’s right.

S: It was very sweet.

L: Yes. It’s a really powerful way to see. You almost have to be able to get out to be able to really feel that you can construct it. And slow it down. You start to do it quickly, but really slowly come in out of nothing and watch the clouds form.

S: (laughter)

L: Then really watch. Once you realize the emptiness of self, the emptiness of that construction, it’s like that’s not real. But I think the key is there’s a lot of ...

Some research now—particularly by a researcher from Brown, who studied a lot of vipassana meditators—she found that there’s a group that gets flooded by their unconscious. So when you start to do meditation and you deconstruct the ego and don’t have the new operating system of awake awareness, you’ll deconstruct the ego, deconstruct the defenses, and then you unconscious will just come up. People are sitting in retreats going “Ahhh!!!”

It’s not enough to deconstruct. You have to find the constructive new context. That’s why I decided let’s find the solution—go out of the problem and find the solution—really clarify the solution, familiarize with the solution. Then come back, keep going to that. Find that ground, feel that ground. Feel that open hearted awareness go. Find the solution. When you find the solution, now let’s go back and look at some of the other problems and issues that are here, in terms of that.

Until then, don't focus on what's in the way or what is the self ... who's your self ... what's your story ... the story about self in terms of this meditative part. You can still do psychological work and other stuff but ... Finding that ground then looking at the construction. Because then, when you deconstruct, you have somewhere to go. You are like "Okay ... look at that ... I really don't need that ..."

Isn't that weird? Now, from not being there, just consider that. Feel that. Who was that character? That point of view? That constellation? It's a curious seat. It's like a seat of the self that different parts will come and sit in—the judge, the worrier ... They will come and they will sit right there, right at the head. The hurt child ... Keep that seat free. Stay home and open. Let them come up but they are coming up to this, not to this—not to talk to themselves or talk to another part in the head.

Does it feel like that? Does it feel like it's really a location? It could be like emotional body too.

Yes?

S: Would you be willing to just say a little bit more about how you ... you've devoted your life to this ...

L: Yes.

S: We are so lucky to be here. How do you hold the way the balance so tightly fold where, for many lives, it seems like the third dimension is—I don't want to say designed to, but—it's design tends to really calcify and solidify the odds or remaining in a closed gaze in the way that some peoples are so full of struggle. And struggle can actually beget struggle, where the nervous system is almost in a repetition/compulsion, especially is there is early pre-verbal trauma. It just seems like a poignant set up, the whole human gig, considering what we really are.

How do you hold that? Do you think ultimately there is no escape from liberation or is it mitigated by the deeper truths of all is well? What do you do with the way some lives don't seem to have the possibility of a glimmer? Or do you think it's arrogant to even say those words because who knows?

L: It's not arrogant but who knows? I probably have some pretty good theories but the fact that I used to have some theories and now they've changed probably assumes that the ones I have now will probably change.

It ends up being some principles that seem true but it's also ... It's tricky to get into the big questions because ...

S: There's a lot of trouble in the world, you know?

L: There is a lot of trouble. It's unimaginable, really, what the answer could be. It does seem a little crazy ...

S: You have to feel sad ...

L: You have to feel the compassion, right. You have to feel that sweet, tender heartedness toward ... almost like you can't really make sense of a design. You can but as soon as you do it gets very intellectual and philosophical, or theological. It just gets a little too thin, a little too quick. Like "Ultimately, everything is okay ... and relatively ..."

S: Can I just finish the question?

L: Yes.

S: When you say you had some theories but then they fell away and now you have other theories ...

L: Yes.

S: But there may be some principles that ...

L: There are some general principles, like all is ultimately well and there is some kind of unfolding. And, there is some realm of this ... this realm is a realm of suffering, and confusion, and delusion, and pain. It's always been that way and I don't know that the human realm is ever going to be ... is going to have pleasant and unpleasant experiences and ...

Compassionate action seems to be very ... not the norm, but has some tremendous effects when you are able to be that and respond to people and treat people that way. So there is some group of people and some possibility of doing that. Starting from there, from your own self; widening the circle seems to be a good principle.

It's hard. Once you get into "all people should ... or everyone is ... or why is it this way ..." it gets very ...

You start with your own widening of the circle from your freedom to share it with others. The why and the cause, there are many different possibilities and probably even those are guesses at best.

S: So it seems like it's inextricably interwoven with the function, in a way, of free will/free choice that there would have to be a realm of duality for that to seemingly function?

L: I can't even think that way anymore. I can, it's interesting, and I could have a talk on the beach while we are looking at the water or something ...

S: Intellectually ...

L: Yes, I know but it's almost like the heart and the head are looking for reasons for safety in some meaning, some system and understanding the meaning. I don't know that that's the place to look for safety. For me, it's not.

S: In safety, you include ... you said "when I'm this ... then I go back to this ... and it's like nails scratching the board ..." It's that sense, for some people, that's their whole life.

L: Yes, for a lot of people; for most people.

S: And you just leave it be and do what you do.

L: I'm trying my best to. (laughter) I invited everyone. I invited thousands of people here. (laughter) You guys are the ones who showed up. Thanks for coming. (continued laughter)

You have to start from home. As soon as you get into a warrior or savior mode, you get a little trouble. If you think you know ... it's kind of like you can do what you can, widen the circle when you guys go back. Just be yourselves and speak to people from your heart. That is the best thing that people can do.

It's kind of like Einstein said. That's why I wrote that. He said we're going to need to widen the circle of compassion and be free of the self, and discover a new manner of thinking. That's about it. I agree with that. That's a pretty good way to say it.

Something in the craving for structured meaning ... for something that's so big—around the questions of cause; where did it come from? Why is it this way? That I don't think that anybody has ever answered. There is general religions are about but there is always questions—if God is love then is he on a lunch break? What's going on here? You get all this ...

S: Ramana Maharshi used to say to those questions, "To whom is this a problem?"

L: Yes. There is always both; there is some grist, there is some level that there's just ... you know if you read the newspaper. You are going to feel the pain of compassion. That seems okay. Then you do what you can and you also realize you can only do what you can. You don't want to burn yourself out, or try to be the saviour of the world, or do what you can't do ... and make your life into something miserable because you think it's helping somebody you don't even know.

That's why I stay with the how to and the essential principles, and the widen the circle of compassion. Change the way of thinking and being, then keep sharing from there and do the things that everyone does well. That's about the best you can do.

Because the trickiness of the why and the cause ...

S: Part of the answer here is not trying to be coherent. To Rumi, the great Sufi Mystic, said "He who doesn't realize that the world is made of contradictions and paradoxes is not truly realized." So when we try to make a coherent model for everything, it falls apart.

L: Right. Yes, I think that's right. I think that's a good ... something like that.

What it is, is a different kind of knowing. I know you are not being intellectual but there is something that can only be answered by the new knowing that has paradox and doesn't have a coherent meaning but feels like all is well and it's really sad. Something like that. All is well and oh my god, what a mess, and it's beautiful, and it's tragic, and it's sweet, and it's so painful ...

S: And I want to do what I can.

L: And I want to do what I can—and I can only do what I can, and not more, and not other than. I am part of the particular skills and talents ... do your part according to your abilities, right.

S: From my experience, it seems like—and I've spent a lot of energy that way—is that try not to have the coherent idea why. It's just an extension of the problem solver. It's a closed loop that is really nasty; puts you into despair.

L: Right. Right. Thank you for sharing that.

Many people with great hearts are driven to try to find some meaning. Then they will choose one and go with it and it's very hard. You can tie yourself up in knots. And yet we're not going to go to nihilism because of that, right.

The existentialists who got to the place of post-modern thinking and they all realized "Oh well, you create your meaning ... perspective is your perception so there is no real meaning." There is not meaning; they forgot to add that even that meaning has no meaning. There is no meaning. They went off and committed suicide, this whole group of people. When they got into this existentialist post-modern deconstructing of meaning until they got no meaning but they didn't deconstruct no meaning because they were in their heads. It was all mental formation of that.

I think this is an important discussion because it is relevant because we do want—and there's a lot of—what's the meaning of life? It seems like a spiritual project? And shouldn't we have a purpose? Your purpose in life? Like we should know it ... or we should think it ...

We are starting from the new intelligence to find new motivation and new meaning that's prior to thinking, that's really natural and that moves from love to meaning in the Now—like right now. What's now? The meaning ... now? Then, what are you doing? You start to build. "What can I do? I can do this ... Or I can do that with my life or with my time ..." Then you start to say "why? The reason I'm doing it is for this reason. I think I'm good at it and I help people ..."

Then they come in, in more practical ways, as you start to put things into choices. Then some structures of meaning ... but even then it's informed by this heart desire.

You feel that spatial dimension. You feel the now.

Let's do a little more behind the back and then we're going to do 15 minutes of cave of the heart before we go take our break for dinner.

25. Exercise - Open Hearted Awareness and Compassion

Loch: Let's just try, just to feel behind the back and then we'll feel this balance of inside and out. Then we'll do the cave of the heart.

So let me turn this down.

Why don't we start with this ... send your awareness out ... become aware of the plant ... I am aware of seeing ... Become aware of what you see, the seen, then be aware of seeing ... then be aware of perceiving within you ... then be aware of that which is aware of perceiving and seeing.

Let awareness go back ... be aware of the space between you and the plant ... be aware of the space between your eyes ... be aware of the space between your ears ... be aware of the space behind you that is already aware, forward ... So your local awareness is going back behind you to discover behind your head, or behind your heart, or behind your back, that awareness which you are surrendering to, which is then looking out without your help.

You feel a field of awareness behind, field of awareness within, field of awareness to the left/to the right, down below your feet all the way to the center of the earth, and below the earth into space, above your head into the universe ... Then feel this sense of equally space, inside and out ... movement of sound inside and out ... energy ... Then feel as if you can be, from this awareness, you can be ... the awareness is equally aware inside and out, at the same time from this kind of heart level.

So you can feel your breath inside ... you can look at the plant as the object ... not alternating in and alternate out ... or just noticing that alternating until you stay with that awareness that's the primary awareness that allows your brain to balance ... You feel like a continuous field ... seamless ... seeing without a see-er.

Feeling that open hearted awareness, the sense of compassion, love and tenderness ... sweet sadness ... tenderness and with a little compassionate ... And just distinguishing the difference between sympathy and compassion ... In sympathy you merge with the feelings of someone else's suffering ... Compassion you feel with, but don't take on, the same resonance/feeling.

Just into your heart now, just think of one far away situation—not close, but far away—but big something like children soldiers ... starving people ... war torn lands ... people with disease ... Let them rise in your heart and be here now ... Stay in your open hearted awareness ... stay spacious ... stay compassionate ... remember the beauty of the trees outside and the situation ... Let it be curious, be included ... don't run from it but don't go into resonance ... See what shows up moment to moment in the now ... changing relationship.

Feel some gratitude for being here now and some sense of support for you from outside, from this spacious awareness, open heartedness ... What do you notice? From here, what do you notice when you felt this balance, open heartedness, and then brought compassion, tenderness to this situation?

Student: Makes you sad.

L: makes you sad, yes. A certain kind of sadness that is bearable?

S: Barely

L: Barely bearable. Yes.

S: Experience this tonglen and I left very stirred up.

L: Okay.

S: But what I did find was ... I was thinking about the dogs in India ... and I notice though, I didn't get activated. I didn't feel like "Oh God, I can't stand it!" I could go there but instead I just felt a deep sorrow. It was what it was. I didn't react to it, it just gradually dissipated.

L: Yes.

S: I hope that's not indifference.

L: No. No. That is compassionate awareness of that.

Anyone else have a curious, interesting ...?

S: I really like the instruction to remember the beauty of here and now and mix them.

L: Mix the two, yes. Being here and now, suffering ... some suffering within us, from the tenderness of compassion towards our self and our own suffering from childhood ... any hurt that we've had ... and the wonderful resource and time together now ... with any trauma, any past hurts, anything that's happened to us ... and gratitude of having this resource and this loving group of people ... Self-love ... love of bringing other's pain, our own pain.

It's about this wide open hearted awareness that can bear what seemed unbearable so that the beauty and the pain can all be brought into this human life without pushing something away or without completely focusing on it and obsessing about one or the other. And trusting there is something big, something bigger—maybe that's one thing—there is something bigger that has some intelligence, for reasons we may not know, that seems to be with people whether they know it or not.

Anybody else want to say anything?

S: Have you ever worked with UN officials or war zones?

L: Not officials, no.

S: People who are legitimately trying to do some in absolutely terrible situations, how do they stay rational and sane without losing it?

L: There are a lot of people that've worked in difficult situations. There is often some beauty in it, some tenderness, and some tragedy in it all.

Everyone feel a little ... Yes?

S: So, to hold that, not so close but, more distant suffering while staying in other, the thing that came up immediately was—I'm just reporting—now I really have something to offer. There was a way of not having it involved or registering in the constellation pain, but actually it wasn't a coldness, it was almost like a realer intimacy ...

L: Yes.

S: Can you say something about that?

L: Yes, that's more the compassion. Rather than the detached coldness or the obsessive mind obsessing about the huge tragedy ...

S: Or identifying ...

L: Or identifying, or not wanting to deal with it, there is some intimacy with all beings who are suffering and all beings who have this awakens within them. Somehow they are all part of us and we are all part of each other. So here we are, holding them, right now with us. They are with us now; we are with them. There is something true about the microcosm and the macrocosm on some level.

S: Have you tried this with PTSD people?

L: Yes.

S: Are they able to connect?

L: Oh yes. Yes. Not this exercise, but using open hearted awareness with the PTSD, yes. Oh yes. Very good.

Should we do a short cave of the heart?

S: Yes.

L: Okay.

26. Exercise - Cave of the Heart

Loch: You can either be sitting up or lying down. If you're lying down of you might fall asleep (laughter). Ultimately you want to learn how to do it sitting up because you don't want to go to sleep state, you want to go into this deeper.

You can also start with a progressive relaxation. I'll do a short local awareness progressive relaxation so you unhook you feel local awareness filling your whole body ... unhooking, going down to your feet, then come back up. Then we're going to have local awareness come down.

On the left side of your chest is your physical heart. Where we are going is this heart space or safe space somewhere in your body, below your neck ... maybe right here ... maybe it's here ... here ... here ... somewhere. You'll find it. It often is like the night sky ... When we're dealing with awake awareness we are dealing with it like it's the day sky, so clean and clear, right. This is like the universe, this is like we're going into this safe black velvet room that we just melt into the night sky or we melt into the awareness that's resting deeper than sleep ... then let go so that you don't go to sleep but you actually go into this state.

There is something called yoga nidra which is like a state in yoga. In Tibetan Buddhism, they have something called the near black attainment, others call it the void. But it's like if you were awake while you are asleep—if you are in total deep dreamless sleep and awake awareness was awake during it. There is nothing happening; it's totally black. Maybe there are pinpricks of light, like the sky there is one little fire. Sometimes when people do it, they have a little cave with a little fire in it; they start with that. Something like that, some very comfortable, deep, expansive. This can be like a portal to the universe or just a save way of letting go of all senses and thoughts into the night rather than the day; rather than spacious awareness which is very clear sky.

Does that make sense? We'll see what happens.

Starting with your awareness wherever it is, if it's up near your head, unhook your awareness. This time you are dropping your awareness into your jaw and your smile ... then let it remain there even as you include your throat ... relax your throat and your jaw as the awareness knows your shoulders from within ... knows your arms, elbows, hands and fingers from within ... then let your local awareness expand from your shoulders, your upper back, your chest, your upper torso ... filling and relaxing your body from within, down to your belly ... your lower back, your spine.

Letting go of any holding, micro-holding in any way as you come down your trunk, your waist, your buttocks, your thighs ... let awareness just relax and yet remain awake within your knees, your quads, down to your calves and your shins ... Let awareness be aware directly from within your ankles and from within your heels, your feet and your toes.

Feel as if that awareness can come back up through the system while awareness remains within every cell of your body ... up again, filling as if you are filled with this subtle body awareness, all the way back up to your head ... then unhooking awareness from your mind and having it now be in a focused globe of awareness as it drops through your jaw, through your throat.

Now, let this awareness which is your full intentional focus of awareness, drop into and find this safe space of your heart on the right side of your chest ... deep within the space where your heart would be on this side ... Just let awareness relax

completely ... letting go of thinking ... letting go of sensing ... allowing your awareness to find this kind of black velvet rest ... nothing to do, nowhere to go.

Letting go and just being ... resting deeper than sleep ... enjoying a peace that passes understanding ... feel as if every cell in your body can relax as this awareness enters and rests completely in a black velvet silence.

Just letting go ... letting go ... letting go.

Just for the last minute, let every cell in your body drink of this deep rest ... feel like the night sky's pervasive all around and within ... that sense that everything is held and taken care of ... Just let go into that trust, to that feeling of well-being and safety ... joy.

Feeling not only is it in your body, but feel now, the spacious awareness all around ... that also has that intelligence and rest ... that is infinite and here ... a connection to the entire universe that is here ... boundless ... everywhere, nowhere and here.

Feel that soft tender open hearted feeling as you let a smile come to your face. Take a deeper breath and let go of any other holding ... letting your eyes open when you are ready ... feeling a soft gaze and remembering that hearing is receiving and seeing is receiving.

Anyone want to say anything about that one?

Student: Warm and soft.

L: Warm and soft, yes. Do you also feel the spacious quality now too, even though it was a kind of a subtle body ... like bringing the spaciousness in but it also opens up, even though your body feels very soft, right? The world seems softer too, doesn't it? It's kind of a soft gaze.

S: I felt a sense of healing.

L: Yes, a sense of healing. Healing every cell, right? Every cell in your body.

Okay. So this is a nice rest. Continue to enjoy this evening of retreat, the cool breezes, and nature. And, your ability to rest back, drop down and see from being without analysing. Just wonder about and having dinner ... enjoy an easy no pressure, nothing to do evening. Then we'll meet again tomorrow. We won't have a test (laughter).

S: We meet at 9:00 tomorrow?

L: Yes. Same time. 9:00-12:00 and then we'll have lunch and go. So we'll review and finish the awakening that started by tomorrow (laughter).

Have fun.

27. Time, Present Moment, Deathless Awareness, and Ego

Loch: Thank you all. It's been a pleasure to spend this time with you. And, we have some more time ... and we always have now—infinite, eternal—right.

Do you get that feeling of what now is?

The first new feeling particularly is spaciousness. Rather than the feeling of time and then space as subject/object, "I'm in this space; this is the space. This is my location. I'm in here looking out at other objects." You get the sense "Oh no, my identity isn't here.

That first relaxation is this feeling of boundlessness, openness, spaciousness, non-local ... then it goes to unity, interconnected. Either, whatever that is, that feeling of space, right. When you feel that space you can just unhook on your own, drop, open ... and then be aware of space ... space is aware of itself ... then be aware from space, as space, that is also appearing as this aliveness.

Now, the now quality isn't the present moment. The present moment in fact, the thing you learn in mindfulness and vipassana is, notice how things change. What changes is the present moment. The present moment is like this ... tick ... moment ... moment ... moment ... moment ... moment ... moment ... When you hear "be in the present moment," good luck. They mean the now.

If we start with understanding what we know about present moment and present time—the time present—those two are not the now. Just to clearly get a feel for this, it's important to recognize that present moments come and go; thoughts come and go. There is no solid thing, like a mood, that is going to be here forever. It's not solid, it's coming and going. We were talking about pain; pain is not solid. It's a moment and then space ... moment then space.

Knowing that moments come and go—what they call *anicca*, or change—is really one of the keys to understanding reality. You feel that? Things are changing and flowing so there is not "Oh my God, this will always be this way ..." In fact, moment is described in the dictionary as a short amount of time. A short amount of time, that's the normal definition.

Just let the moments go. Let the moments come and go. Thoughts ... feelings ... We'll go through a little with feelings that "I am ..." removed from "I am sad ..." which is identifying with the feeling ... To I feel sadness ... To I am aware of feeling sadness ... Now sadness is a flow ... to "sadness is welcome by the spacious, open hearted spaciousness ... to sadness and awareness are welcome ... and sadness and awareness are simultaneous but awareness is primary.

That is following up on that open hearted experience so that present moments are coming and going within the open hearted awareness and within the now. We are going to get to the now.

So then present time, that's not it either. If you read "we'll just be more in the present ..." that is the solution. The present, actually, people who are in severe depression, their suffering is feeling "this is never going to change," the present condition. There is not past. "There was no change and I can't remember anything changing in the past ... and there's no hope for the future ..." So the solution "just be in the present" ... "Ahh!!" It's no exit, from start/play you are in.

The present is just one of three times: past, present, future. You can be in the now and easily plan for the future. There is nothing wrong with the future if you are in the now. There is nothing wrong with remember, “Oh yes, what happened ...?” Learning from the past, right. Those who don’t remember the past are doomed to repeat it; that’s the phrase then. Those who don’t plan; if you are not a squirrel, planning a little bit for the future then you may be starving. Past, present and future are three normal times.

Now we are clear that the now is not the present moment and it’s not the present. So what is it? We have to feel it. It’s the timeless that includes the time. It’s not just the timeless; you can feel the timeless when you are in pure awareness, right. When you go too far out, you go to 70/80% pure awareness there is this timelessness, right?

The timeless in open hearted awareness, that includes present moments coming and going, thinking about what happened—what am I going to do? I’m going to unhook awareness ... that’s right ... go to memory ... and I’m going to ... Okay, ready to do it ... okay ... unhook in the present ... and open to the now and the spaciousness that has the now, in which time is coming and going.

Feeling both the space/time. Space and time have changed. There is almost something about the now that feels like all-at-once; all-at-once-ness. Something here ... but also eternal ... that is the paradox. It’s like eternal, timeless but also something just allows you to be right here and interconnected. Because you are not referencing time. You are not referencing thought. But that doesn’t mean thought doesn’t exist. Doesn’t mean any problem with past, present or future. They are all relative, functional. Clock time is fine, it’s relatively true on some level.

Do you feel the spaciousness, which is non-thought? And the timelessness, which is non-time? And then the open hearted awareness includes thought and includes time ...

What do you notice?

Student: Bliss

L: Bliss.

S: Like being in time but not of it.

L: Yes, like being in time but not of it. So not having an aversion to time, an aversion to thought, or an aversion emotions, or any conditioning that’s arising. It’s actually loving time because it’s existence, it’s this life; it’s this precious human life, somehow. You are not caught in it. It’s not running you; that’s the key, right. You are not run by the future, identified, “when I do this everything will be okay ...” You can be caught too much in the future. You can be caught too much in the past, “My life, if only I’d done this ...” You can be caught, also, too much in the present “Forget the past ... Put your head down and go ...”

You feel that freedom and the whooh of the now, eternal now, and the here? With space, right. Then the interconnected change. That change is happening, is the aliveness, dancing emptiness. But you are not trying to hold onto the bliss of the dancing, “Let me get that ... let me get that ...” Let it go.

The ground is now in space. Space and now; ground. All at once-ness. Everything is just awake. On some level nothing’s coming and going. On the level of now and on the level of relative reality, everything is changing; moments are coming and going.

What does that feel like?

S: It’s sort of paradoxical. Realizing that there is no time keeps you in the moment.

L: Yes. The thing is ... I still think that’s such a strange phrase, “you can’t be ...” From the definition of moment, you can’t be in the moment.

S: Right.

L: I think people are trying so much to be in the moment that they are actually becoming very mental and too effortful. They are actually ending up trying to be in the present time. And they are squeezing the now into this small limited thing.

The word is, being in the now helps you be in the now—not in the present moment. Because the now is what’s been called the present moment. In some ways it’s just a matter of semantics, but I’m only clarifying it to make sure you get the now, not to worry about whether other people use present or present moment.

S: Because the moment is really like momentum. If you grab something you are going to get hooked on it.

L: That’s right. You get on the train.

S: It’s jumping on a train.

L: Yes, that’s right. Then you think “Well maybe I’ll jump on the train ... then I’ll jump off the train ... then I’ll jump on the train ... then jump off the train ...” trying to be in the moment, “jump on the train ... jump off the train ...” Or, just jump on the train and trust that I’ll be taken somewhere that’s good.

S: I’ll get on enlightenment ...

L: Get on enlightenment train, right.

All this semantics to point—just as we’ve been pointing to this unusual, indefinable, invisible dimension—you want to feel the support which takes away a lot of the anxiety of the now, that it’s timeless and includes time. “Oh, it includes time ... okay ... so spacious awareness includes thought and emotion ... oh ... so I don’t have to be one or the other ... I don’t have to be timeless or time ... I don’t have to try to be in the moment or be out of the moment ... I’m thinking too much about planning for the future ...” It’s like well, sometimes you have to plan for the future. You can be obsessed with any of the three times.

The Tibetan definition, one translation is, “The now is the fourth timeless time, that includes the three times.”

S: Oh wow!

L: Just that. All that to say, can you feel it? Can you feel, what does it feel like when you feel space? What does it feel like when, as the spacious now-ness, you see thoughts coming and going and you don't get on the train? You see moments of time passing and yet you feel this timeless eternal beauty of freedom—like eternal freedom. How much more time do you need to live, if you are in the now? Are you worried about how many years you have left? It's like in the now, all of a sudden “wow ... “ everything opens up. “Where was this coming ...?!”

Like you said. Do you want to say what you said?

S: When I first started with the glimpse practices I would go and I'd be doing something, like brushing my teeth, and I'd be going “Wow, I've never done this before!” It was little event like that through the day.

I also used to say “Is this what everybody else was experiencing?”

L: No, they were ... just a few. Just the ones ...

Yes?

S: From this now, the existence of times seems sweet, very sweet. Sort of like, that same thing ... the mini me is sweet or all kind of arising firsts. Here's this sweet little stream that's running. Then that saying that I heard from somebody, “Time exists to keep everything from happening at once.”

L: That's good. I like that. It has a use; it's useful for relative reality, for human existence, right.

S: Yes.

L: Not fighting with it and arguing with it. Sometimes it's part of the imperfection of life, is your relationship to time. It's part of the stress of functioning and imperfection, shows you pleasant and unpleasant things. You take time to come on a retreat as a pleasant; but then you have five things to do in your afternoon and you know you can only do three of them. But you have five people asking you “I need this by today ... can you get back to me ...” You're like “time ... you little rascal... why did you do it to me?”

It's part of the grist. It's okay; it's not time's fault. It's nobody's fault.

I used to live in Northern California. I used to say “It's San Andrea's fault ...” That's the only fault I know.

Yes?

S: Two thinks; one you're talked about. Time exists to keep things from happening together? What popped into my mind right at that moment was this cosmology concept that I do not pretend to understand of the singularity, where everything is compressed into an infinitely small kernel. And, time itself may not exist within ...

L: In that, prior to the big bang and that there's something before time ...

Time is a creation, part of the existence. That makes sense. Time would be part of creation, or existence, or human life, or human universe, is part of time/space. Anyhow, we don't want to get too much into all that ... Just noting that.

S: if you look up to the stars, you think it's there but you're seeing light that could be over there because it took over 200 years to get here.

L: that's right.

S: As a matter of fact, if something was 3000 light years away and there was an observer looking down here, they'd be seeing Jesus on the cross. And if another one was at another distance, they'd be seeing the industrial revolution ... all at the same time.

L: That's right. Time is irrelative within that.

Recognizing relative time for relative time and just getting a feel for the simultaneous timelessness and the combined relative and timelessness which is where we live from. Timelessness is of spacious awareness/pure awareness and time is of the mini-me and the everyday mind referencing by time, referencing by thought. Then the timelessness in the open hearted awareness, eternal now, with time ... so everything is included, embraced. Everything is welcome.

You get this sense of relief, another sense of relief. You feel that?

Yes?

S: Would you say, something earlier about death ... I forgot exactly what you said ... but what came up was that American native phrase "Today is a good day to die." I never quite got that but it's like yes, if you're in the spacious awareness and there is a contentedness then, yes, it is a good day to die.

L: Yes, it's beautiful. And there's something, these phrases like, "die before you die." What that is about is let go of the one who thinks it's going to die before you die. The little mini-me is afraid it's going to die; just let that die. It actually doesn't die, it just retires, but it's afraid it's going to die. Then it's co-opting the physical program and is living in time and scaring your body by sending adrenaline and cortisol thinking, "I can't step out of this because then I'm both this and this ..." But it's not this and this; it's just a looping thought pattern. When it retires, or you die to it—meaning you die to the control or the fear of fear, the fear that its fears are true and that it's trying to survive—otherwise you are going to go into nothingness when it relaxes or you die to that identity. Maybe that's best ... then you are free, you are in eternal now.

You feel a kind of presence, right. Presence is like the moving, feel the change happening. Feel the stillness and then change ...

What do you notice? Your mind ...?

Yes?

S: Calm.

L: Calm, yes.

S: A little while ago you used the word semantics and that triggered an association for me with unhooking, particularly coming from the perspective of acceptance/commitment therapy with relational frame theory and structural/functional contextual-ism.

One of the things that is articulated by that perspective is that we get so caught up in conceptual and analytic thinking that we're literally unable to experience what's happening here and now.

L: That's right.

S: They put a huge emphasis on that being built into our language.

L: Right, that's right.

S: I was wondering, as part of the unhooking, what they call present moment awareness, acceptance, cognitive diffusion and perspective taking ... it was just a connection that came to me listening to you.

L: Yes, I think there are a lot of systems that are very clear on the problem. I don't know that they all take you to the solution. It's easier to see what's wrong and how it's formed and what the pattern is. Then, do you go to a psychological self? Or do you go to a calmer subtle bod self, or mindful witness as the solution—which is a half-step solution to that.

But, I think the analysis is absolutely correct.

S: If the analysis is correct, one of the implications—at least for them—is the claim which is the problem. We've got another problem we tend to use language to address the problem. So they put a great deal of emphasis on experiential exercises and also on metaphor—huge emphasis on metaphor.

L: Metaphor as a pointer system, yes.

But again, metaphor also becomes ... there is almost something seductive about poetry and metaphor. You read a poem and you going into "that's so nice ... it's like that." Then you realize, where were you? You were kind of in a dreamy world pointer. It's not the languages' fault, it's the imperfection of language which kind of has to be accepted.

But I do think in this case of be in the present moment, or be in the present, is kind of co-opting the now to a lower common denominator of like “well most people can’t understand the now so we’ll just have them ...” The ego kind of co-opts and says “Be in the present moment ... I think I can do that ...” There is something about if you are lost in your mind, coming here now, in any way—whatever you call it—is going to help for a moment. “I’m worried about this ... I’m thinking of the past ... well just come into present moment ... okay ...” You are focusing on the present, in a mindful way. So you are in subtle mind. That’s good, that’s okay; that’s relief from the obsessive mind for a second but it doesn’t take you into the now. It’s not the now. Even though those three seem to be interchangeable—be in the present, then you’re in the now; the present moment is the now. If the present moment ... it’s like no. There are three different things.

All this to say the potential of open hearted awareness is radical. You guys have had a taste of it and now just notice the now dimension in relation to time. Because thought and time are the things that often take us into the animal, stronger emotional, survival brain is about “Where’s the food? I’ve got to eat now ...” It’s normal; you have to eat, you have to find this ...

S: Survival.

L: Survival. And then you get dominated by that present. The present can be a prison. The past can be a prison.

S: Then we’re trying mindfulness, a rollercoaster ...

L: Right.

S: Actually we should practice this on a rollercoaster ...

L: Yes, right. You’ll get in the flow.

S: Reading a math book ...

L: reading a math book ... that’s good ... you should do that ... The hypotenuse ... you could do all that in the now because you are not afraid because the fear goes.

That’s coming back to what you were saying about everyone’s recognizing simultaneously the timeless and the time. Recognizing simultaneously that you are the unborn awareness and that you are a human being that had a birth and will have a death. And, you are the unborn awareness that was never born and will never die; you are the deathless awareness. And, there is this precious human birth that has very particular time space, and you don’t even know if it relates to old age; it could happen today. Tomorrow. Next week. Nobody knows.

That’s normal, just like thought and time, and yet there is this deathless awareness that you always are, that is here. And the now shows you the eternal now. Really, all you have is now. But now is eternal, so that’s pretty good. Right?

Feeling that, bringing that in. Bringing those two in, letting them both be here so the denial of death is not unconscious and sneaking up from behind you. Bring it into the preciousness and feel the feeling of loss and fear, right. You feel that? Unborn.

Is it clear that you are the unborn and the deathless? Can you tune into that? And that there's an eternal now? You can feel the precious human birth ... think of a baby you know ... and think of an older person you know ... and think of a person who died a little young ... and think of somebody who's got a great deal of youthful energy ... There is all this stuff going on. Somebody who's healthy and then you get sick ... you feel better ... you get injured ... then you feel better.

All that is part of the sweet sadness of life, this tender hearted "Yes, that's true ... yes that's true ... but it's true ..." The eternal now is also true.

What do you notice?

S: The clarity is always there.

L: Clarity is always there.

S: Even when you are totally fuzzed out.

L: Yes, even when you are fuzzed out emotionally.

We've all had loss. You know the story about the grieving widow, grieving mother, in Buddha story who comes and is just totally overwrought with grief over the loss of her child. Buddha tries to talk rationally and tries a little dharma medicine. No, it's not going to work. "I'll tell you what. I will cure you of your grief if you will go to every house in this village and get a sesame seed from all of those houses that have not experienced death or loss." What she does is, as she goes to them, obviously she doesn't find it but what she finds is that everyone invites her in. They say "Oh, my goodness no, but come on in ... Let me tell you about my life, my story ... we're the same ... we all experience this ..." "Okay, let me see if I can," still hanging on, "going to the next one. Maybe I can get a sesame seed ... I don't know how many I need but ..." The next one invited her in again. "Oh no, you lost your child? Come in, come in ... let's sit down ... sit down ..."

All that, and we're bringing in this advanced course here. We're bringing in the suffering of the world ... now we're getting to death ... we may as well ... we had a full weekend, we may as well, you know ... I invited everyone in the world. We may as well solve ... bring it all here so it doesn't sneak up on us later one. So we didn't have a blissful retreat and then boom, something catches us later.

So, bring it all in while we are in this open hearted awareness. Bring in time ... bring in the world that's imperfect and suffering ... bring in this sense of mortality, of the human span ... of the vulnerability ... the sensitivity ... It's amazing that the sensitive instruments that people live as long as they do, given all the things that can happen. It's just vulnerable animals, that we live a certain life.

What does it feel like to feel this now ... deathless ... unborn ... precious human birth ... Others we love have precious human births and they have deathless awareness, whether they know it or not. We are going to go preach to them that they need to know that. I'll help you, here's a book by Loch Kelly. You must read it! Otherwise you are doomed. We could start a religion today! That's where the pre-chi comes ...

S: I knew it was there ... damn it another one!

L: Just waiting til the last. I thought he was different ...

Yes?

S: I'm in line with what you are saying. What can be disturbing for me sometimes is there is this push in human beings to change that.

L: To change which?

S: If we could just find a gene that causes age, we'll shut off and live forever.

L: Yes.

S: I'm a singularity, download the consciousness and be forever.

L: Those movies, right. Those movies about changing the bodies and consciousness into a new body. There are some, even, chi gong, that is about immortality. Some of the smaller sects of that are about learn this so you can live forever; the immortals will live 400 years old live in the hills somewhere, as if that's the answer.

Yes, there is some of that imagination. Heaven ...

S: I think the vampires have that down.

L: They do? Okay ...

S: ... the singularity is near ...

L: Yes, Ray Kurzweil, that's his whole work, yes. Who knows about all that? And yet we know what we know on a basic level, which we are trying to come to terms with, right. What do you feel when you feel the now and you feel the deathless and you feel the precious human birth?

S: It helps open to open hearted awareness.

L: It helps open to open hearted awareness. And open hearted awareness helps come to terms with that, right?

S: My quote from Eckhart Tolle that he said "Grief, if you find that whole—that big empty hole in your abdomen is usually where it is—and you just stay with it. The wings of grace will blow through that hole."

L: Yes. That's beautiful. That's a good pointer, right.

Yes?

S: I want to practice using my understanding and experience and your model always seems to pop. In my experience with spacious awareness is they occur simultaneously. With space—the term I use ...

L: Use your term.

S: Spacelessness and timelessness always occur. They are just there, together.

L: yes, that's right.

S: That's what makes it full. So it's not a vacuum, it's full.

L: Right.

S: It feels that way to me ...

L: The emptiness is full.

S: As an abstract it always seemed a little bit anxious, "Oh, it's emptiness ..." but it's very full.

L: Right.

S: That was my sense of timelessness.

L: Right. Yes, beautiful.

S: But when you were talking about people struggle with the now, I was thinking of your teachings earlier in the week. And, even with the synchronicity, which is while ego can't—I don't want to sound abstract but—ego can't experience timelessness.

L: That's right.

S: So why would I want to create synchronicity where I bring him along? It's like my work with physicians and I want to say "You have the best technique of surgery but you are bringing the ego along ... think of how much more healing you could do if he wasn't there when you were doing it ..."

L: Although you want to not negate or denigrate; but you want to step out and include what's left of the ego function. The ego thinks it's doing it.

S: I'm taking credit for it and it's okay to bring him along for the ride, but not in the driver's seat.

L: Right, that's right. When ego identification is in the driver's seat you can't experience spacious awareness or timelessness.

The way of dualistic perception needs an object and a reference of its own self-reference in the object world to be itself, let alone perceive what it perceives. It can only perceive ... it's like an early computer program that could only do certain tasks. It can only do certain tasks so that computer program works fine for what it's trying to do with ones and zeros but it can't perceive all of reality. If your ear, no matter good your hearing is, it can't see. There is nothing wrong with the ear but if your ear is trying to be the center and it's trying to be what you are seeing with, it can't see; it just can't. The ego can't; it's just not meant to be that way. It's meant to be a function; it makes a lousy master but it's a good part of the team, right.

S: Ego is the creation of time.

L: yes, it's a creation in time.

S: It can't observe what created it.

S: we've been trained by ego's to become egos.

L: Yes, that's right. The ego's trained us to socialize as egos—this is the way you do it.

S: otherwise we would still be in the woods, walking around with a little loin cloth.

L: That's right. And that's why the way I think of it is, that ego centeredness is a developmental stage. It's not bad, it actually makes sense. It is a progression from living in primitive world.

S: We can hit the moon with a missile.

L: Yes, we can hit the moon and that's because we know about time, how time and space works.

S: We know the calculus.

L: Yes, we know the calculus and we know medicine, rotate crops, all these things that have been very helpful. That's ego. That's ego function. That's the development of ego function, it's just that ego function was a better form of identity than primitive "if someone comes in your territory, kill him" which was the old system of just primitive brain. Fight or flight. Kill or be killed. Now, thank you very much but let's continue to grow and develop.

S: Now the planet's heating up.

L: Now the planet's heating up, yes. It's good motivation.

S: So you could do it's like the playing out of open hearted awareness.

L: Yes, absolutely.

S: So the parasympathetic, the fight or flight thing, just engages the good parts of ego quickly?

L: Yes, it gets online fairly quickly because mostly, the ego's scaring the ...

S: Oh, so it has limitations?

L: Which?

S: Ego.

L: Yes. It's a function. If it's interpreting, if it's saying "someone's upset at me ... this is dangerous ... I could die ... get ready ... fight or flight ..." adrenaline, cortisol ... it's making the innocent survival system get to work and it doesn't have to.

S: I see but what if it has to?

L: If it has to it's absolutely ... that's what we're doing and we're going to do this ... I'll say one more thing and then we'll do another practice and go outside again because it's stopped raining, which is good ...

But we're returning our humanity to its natural condition. It's amazing that it works. Talk about existence, even pre-ego and all that, the fact that the animal's animal body works—that little turtles are born and they go right to the sea. That kind of intelligence ... what?

S: Unless they get the lights in the wrong direction.

L: Right.

S: Which really happens.

L: The fact that there's some animal intelligence that is prior to ... it's amazing, the whole thing, that the body works the way it works. It's just incredible, the miracle of that.

So that this is working as well as it's working individually for all of us but basically it's working pretty well and good enough. So we're just returning it so it's not being over worked, over scared, confused. That ignorance isn't driving the car. Then it just relaxes and you feel bliss.

The natural feeling in your body when you are not referencing thought, there's a scientist in Bowling Green university that did a study about moving from thought. She's an addiction study specialist and she started realizing "When people are doing self-referential thought it's the same process as craving addictive substances outside." Basically, my sense is, that's what I'm talking about.

"That's what I'm talking about. That's the mini-me. (laughter) That's what I'm saying ... hey come on now, that's the craving." That's the mini-me. What she did, because she was from a Tibetan Buddhist, she had people do awareness of awareness, non-thought referencing awareness and natural sense of bliss in the brain—dopamine and serotonin started

naturally being part of the person's system at a low level, not the spiky level. When that happens your body feels "Ahhh ..." That's the way we could be living, feeling like you feel.

That is kind of the way—to respond to you—that's the way my body feels these days. It didn't feel that way 20 years ago. I feel totally loose as a goose. I feel like a little puppy dog and I feel that, basically, no pain can really stay very long. And very comfortable in my own skin, everything. No micro bracing against anything that is happening ... and still living in New York! That's the advanced practice, right. With all the noise. We take the subway every day. It gets stressed but it doesn't hold.

Another study says that an emotion felt fully, that is not reacted to, lasts 90 seconds in the brain. Like fear, a car honks and you get startled; that should last about 90 seconds if you don't start associating, "Oh my God I'm so afraid. That reminds me of this other time ... I can't believe ... speaking of fear, what about that thing that I have to go to tonight ... these people don't like me ..." And all that associated into emotional brain, social brain.

That's the natural. Does that help to answer your question?

S: Yes. I'm thinking my grasping ego is thinking "before I go in to have a coronary bi-pass, I don't want the surgeon to say 'and I'm practicing open hearted awareness and could bliss out.'" Do you know what I mean?

L: No. No, open hearted surgery and open hearted awareness ...

S: There are times ... I guess I just don't trust.

S: I'd want mine to.

L: Yes because it's a flow state.

S: It's totally a flow state.

S: Yes.

L: And you don't want them overthinking it or getting scared.

S: Yes, you don't want him freaking out with anxiety.

S: Yes or leave the scalpel in there.

L: It is a high ... A couple more and then we'll do a practice. Short ones?

S: Yes. Just a short survival point that she's making then I'll shut up.

If, on an experiential plane, if you ever talk to anyone who's a martial artist—years ago I used to love to spar. The reason I loved to spar was not because I wanted to get my aggression out ...

L: Oh come on.

S: You love it, come on.

S: No, truly. It was the high of how relaxed I can be in a very confrontive situation and respond incredibly instinctually fast and protective while totally relaxed. But if I tried to be stressed about it and worried about it, I was just dead meat.

L: Frozen. You get frozen.

S: Yes, I was dead meat. It was always fascinating to me how, through the training, my body just responded. You're right, I could feel that there was no residual cortisol. There was no rage; if I did, then I would lose.

L: That's right.

S: So truly you do want a pilot, when the plane is going down and crashing, you want him to be in open hearted awareness because he's going to respond incredibly fast, instinctually for each moment without residual moments interfering.

L: That's right, yes.

S: Gottcha.

S: To this point I had an experience last night where—the details don't matter- but a very heavy air conditioner fell on my foot and sliced through my nail and my toe.

S: Last night?

S: Yes. In that moment my first thought was "this would be a really good moment to do what we've been doing." That was my first instinct and it changed everything because the pain was still the pain, which was significant, but it was that larger presence circling back into the pain. And for a moment it felt like it would actually have no preference as to whether there was pain or there wasn't pain because everything was like the same beauty. But then this other component of tenderness kicked in, which then wanted to take care of it. So I didn't know what that shift was from having literally no preference, like everything had the same beauty to almost circling back like a boomerang. Then there was that tenderness saying "Yes, you know ..." Then I looked down and there was a bright pool of red blood and it went right back into survival and then I could again take another step and take care of it from that larger place.

When I was handling it from the presence everything went smoother than if I had done it from the survivalist. Then it just stayed and even changed the relationship to pain. I guess the two questions are: what was that shift between truly no preference—everything had this tender beauty—to almost circling back in and including this more.

L: You really went through. The spacious awareness is like the no preference part. Then as it starts coming in and feeling the beauty, you are in the embodied awareness. Then the open hearted awareness is almost like another

dimension of loving presence. It almost seems like, even though it's one, it seems like it's two now, which is a little more of the Sufi beloved comes in or something. There is that.

That's amazing right. That's beautiful.

S: It made me, if anything, more efficient in the handling of it. But it didn't have the same experience that ... there was a whole space around it that actually made it hurt less.

L: Yes, it's painless. In the timelessness, you step into the timelessness which has no pain; you are a little detached but you're in a dimension of your consciousness. Then that dimension comes and stays primary but mixes with the unpleasant or the pain signal. Then, it's relative to that.

The pain signal is just basically trying to get your attention to say "something happened, you need to attend to this." It doesn't have to scream.

S: ... by the ego again.

L: Yes, and it doesn't have to be the reactor to it. The pain doesn't have to create a suffer-er about the pain. Pain is part of the human condition; suffering is optional, that's what that means.

Thank you so much. That's quite a remarkable report of the potential of what this is about. And here it is in extreme form. Are you okay?

S: I feel so relieved.

L: Feel so relieved, yes.

S: The pain doesn't have to create a sufferer.

L: Yes, the pain doesn't have to create a sufferer. That's really it. That is the relief of suffering right—relief of sufferer. It's not what Churchill said. What did Churchill say? "There is nothing to fear but fear itself." Right? That's his saying, "There is nothing to fear but fear itself." But for us we'll translate it "there is nothing to fear but the fear-er itself." (laughter) It's not the fear and it's not even the fear of fear that's the problem; it's only creating a fear-er. Fear is not a problem. It's not the pain, it's the pain-er. It's not the pain, it's the suffer-er that loops it and condenses it, contracts it into the story, and the identification And, the present prison of present time that feels there's like there's no future, remembering "I've been hurt before and I healed." Or the future which says "this too shall pass." That's the positive future, right.

That's about the best description ... Thank you so much for that. Yes?

S: I think something we've been actually touching on is that there's a mistake and belief that sympathetic and para-sympathetic are opposed.

L: Right.

S: Whereas they are really complimentary and when they are able to accessed in the flexible way they are very conducive to survival.

L: Yes.

S: So in the first responder of the military community you have people taught how to do completeive practices.

L: Right, that's right.

S: And the outcome of that seems to be that people can be incredibly aroused and alert externally, able to respond very rapidly. But internally they experience a calm that is conducive to the retention of working memory to situational awareness, to the ability to process information effectively in situations of high stress. It's really those two things are integrated.

L: That's right.

S: But I think what happens so often, you know, is the inflexibility comes in because the sympathetic is so powerful, it gets stuck in the ON position. That may really, in come people's outlook, that's our own doing.

L: Yes. That's the doing. The sympathetic is the conscious intentional doing, and the para-sympathetic is the breath and heart rate and the relaxed quality that you are able to respond from without overriding with this other type ... Breath is happening, para-sympathetic, but you can breathe, that's sympathetic. Or you can respond naturally with the para-sympathetic or you can try to drive too hard.

I think there is one level of studies that have been done. I know Amishi Jha, who's doing the studies with the military, and actually did an experiment with here where we actually compared mindfulness and then did effortless mindfulness and showed little improvement. It was just a small thing. I think it's going to be, when I figure how to set it up a little better, it will show even more ability to go to that tai chi level of response and relatedness.

Let's do this practice and then take our break.

28. Exercise - Moving into Open Hearted Awareness

Loch: Let's do the eyes again because we are going to walk out to the nature and we'll include the now—or the now will include us, maybe that's better.

Hearing ... the experience as we go down from identification to opening up ... to this is probably more subtle mind ... then we'll come into subtle body ... we'll go subtle mind to spacious awareness ... and then come into our body simultaneously and go to open hearted awareness ... and then in the simultaneous mind is where the spacious awareness, as timeless, will meet time and aliveness. Aliveness existence ... time/aliveness is changing, dancing nature of everything, inside and out. Seeing that the awareness is happening inside and out, and the sound is happening outside, and the sound is happening inside.

The light is happening inside ... close your eyes ... look at the lights and squint and see the little dancing light. If you close your eyes you can imagine the light ... now you see it impressed inside ... so the light is inside, the memory is inside the retina ... see it ... There is inside and outside energy and aliveness and then there is also a level that everything, from seeing to feeling that there is gravity and there's a physical body.

Gravity is a feeling of grounded-ness on the physical level and there is solidity so that there are objects in the world, there are people, there are trees, and they are matter or physical level, energy level, space level and awareness level. The awareness is primary, then the space ... then aliveness.

The we are returning. At the level we are returning the eyes and all the senses to their natural condition and letting the mind be less dominant in the six senses ... and letting the eyes be less dominant in the six senses.

I'll be saying that again, but it's the say it first and then do it so that you don't have to think about it so much when I'm saying it, right.

Okay, so hearing (sound of bell) ... is the vibrational level, right ... neither hearer, nor heard (sound of bell) just hearing.

Vibration outside, called sound ... (sound of bell) travels in waves, vibrates the air and vibrates your ear drum ... vibrates to perception which knows that it's sound ... may even, (snaps fingers) just for a split second (snaps fingers) without even knowing it knows it's (snaps fingers) a gong or a bell but it doesn't have to think what it's called ... (sound of bell).

Then you can look for where is the hear-er ... there is sound ... there is hearing ... seems to be an object ... There seems to be on one level travelling of (sound of bell) sound ... but then there is just inside and out awareness ... and hearing ... (sound of bell).

Kind of a fluid sense of hearing as receiving ... and then notice that seeing is receiving ... light is reflecting off of object, coming to you ... Soften your eyes, letting them be one of the six senses ... stepping out of the thinker, out of your awareness ... feeling this receiving of information from sound, perception ... and just perceiving without a perceiver, letting it go to the spacious awareness within ... behind ... all around.

Soften your eyes, let them be gentle ... just open, the way your ears are open ... not going out to reach ... not going out to hear ... just open eyes, open nose, open mouth ... tasting, smelling, sensing ... being ... interconnected simultaneous field.

Then feel like you can see vertically, everything all at once rather than pin-point ... so you are kind of seeing everything on the table rather than one thing ... just seeing a whole, seeing the board and me all at once without looking at one thing then the other, then the other, then the other.

You can do this seeing this side of the edges around you, if you'd like to do that ... you can just do it without moving your fingers or with moving your fingers ... You don't feel like you are looking ahead but that you are aware of the periphery below in this circle and then we'll do this circle so that we have a whole, all the directions.

Then resting, receiving light ... and then letting your eyes remain ... your eyes are not moving, your awareness is moving to open peripheral vision, initially ... Just gently, without strain, and as you get to a certain point breathe in the cool air and smile ... relax.

Let awareness lead you ... trusting ... letting go ... and then unhooking awareness when you get to the sides so that awareness is now interested in the space in which sound is coming and going ... and now awareness continues to move at the same pace around, behind you ... so that it becomes aware of the space behind your head or behind your back ... equally ... 360 degree panoramic view.

It's a new view that feels the space between you, and the flower ... the space between your eyes ... the space between your ears ... the space behind your head ... just open above you ... below your feet ... all the way through the earth to the other side.

Feel like the new ground is the awareness for your identity ... Feeling not only is your view open, but you are viewing from the openness ... Just inquire "Am I aware of the spacious awareness or I am aware from the spacious awareness, back toward thoughts, feelings and sensations formally known as me" Am I aware of the spacious awareness? Or is the spacious awareness, has it always already been aware? Have I surrendered back to discover this awareness that's aware within me and through me, without my help?

Feeling this falling back or resting as the awareness that is already aware ... just dissolving local awareness into primacy of spacious awareness ... that doesn't need any help to be aware or to be everywhere ... then feeling that spaciousness is also pervasive ... so not only looking from awareness but actually awareness is inherent, inhabiting, arising as this wave ... so the ocean of awareness is rising ... there's a wave of awareness here ... and a wave of awareness everywhere energy and forms are happening naturally.

Just check to see, as this awareness is able to be aware within your body from head to toes ... whether there is any self to be found ... any point of view ... any manager that is needed ... instead of this spacious field everywhere, nowhere and here ... And upon not finding a location of a self, just let go again into that which is already supportive and loving.

Notice the dancing aliveness that is naturally happening as physical sensations, mental sensations, without particularizing or being interested in meaning of any thought or sentences or what a word is ... just not interested in orienting by that particular formation ... just orienting by awareness and aliveness ... this ground and this all-at-onceness of the now.

Feel that thoughts are welcome ... past, present and future are welcome ... let the spacious open hearted awareness and the dancing aliveness are here all at once ... eternal now ... deathless awareness ... precious human birth ... just feel that quality of open hearted alertness.

Even as your body and mind are resting, just tune in to that which is wide awake, clear, crystal clear day sky ... pure, fresh, clean, alert, loving, welcoming heart mind ... as big the universe ... and just surrender one more level.

With trust, find the trust and the okayness and the well-being to surrender to ... Feel the new ground, boundless ground ... feel the support ... and surrender one more time to that which is always here ... always been who you were and who everyone is.

Let hearing be hearing ... seeing be seeing ... just notice what it's like from open hearted awareness to see without a see-er ... so if your eyes are closed just squinting first ... feeling sound as vibration ... feeling that thinking, as a sense, is not primary ... and that seeing, as a sense, is not primary ... Awareness is primary, aliveness mixed with it is primary ... and that each sense is equally available as it appears in this also, solid, human body ... which is here, supported by the space of awareness and open hearted, loving perception.

Just see the dancing light ... feel the dancing sound inside and out ... feel the awareness is inside and out ... there is no inside and out ... and feel the sound is inside and out ... sensation ... mental sensation.

And resting as being ... and being open hearted awareness, there is nothing to know to be ... you don't need to think to be and to be intelligent and aware ... and you don't need to do anything or get anything to be and to feel the well-being and love...

Just finding your own way to tune in ... feel when you get caught in a state and just gently noticing, and returning ... kind of re-balancing your own system ... if one sense starts to dominate just gently notice no big surprise ... just re-recognize and then just let be.

Then adding speaking, what would you say is here? What is this open hearted awareness like? What does this open hearted awareness know? What's true? What's real? What's here now?

S: Peace.

L: Peace, yes.

S: Fullness.

L: Fullness.

S: Now.

L: What is it?

S: Now.

L: Yes.

S: Ordinariness.

L: What is it?

S: Ordinariness.

L: Ordinariness, yes. This is the natural condition. This is not an altered state; the other is the altered state that we walk around in. This is ordinary; this is the new normal.

It will get a little different as you add a little more activity to it. You will get a little more mixed, but its foundation remains like this. Even as a little more activity is added and it gets a little of the older feelings into it. This is the new ordinary, ordinary mind. Ordinary heart mind.

So let's take a little walk and say hello to the trees. And again, with this practice, first of all, feeling this awareness in your body from head to toe. Feel like you can stand up as if you are not standing up from your mind; kind of pop up. Feel what it's like. Let's actually do a little movement.

Stretch from inside, almost like you are being lead. Without thinking about what you need to do or want to do, what is your awareness and your body like to do to feel.

Stay here as long as you want, stretching a little bit. Then just feel like your open hearted awareness is going to walk out. Staying with awareness, changing aliveness, take a little walk out in the area and then take a little break and we'll meet in ten minutes.

29. Debrief of Exercise

Loch: Okay, any reports? One report I thought was interesting, as you started to share your experiences today, first you said an air conditioner fell on my foot and people went “Oh ...” Then, the first thing I thought of was to do this and everyone just laughed. Because it seems like “how could that possibly be ...” As you continued, I think everyone was just like “Wow, this is possible, in that kind of situation?!”

Student: But it was such a short time.

L: Yes, in such a short time.

S: Less than 24 ... it’s amazing.

L: Yes.

S: For a moment.

L: For that ...

S: For that now.

L: For that now, yes.

Just to say, to kind of show that it’s amazing that it could become the ordinary mind or the new normal. And that that kind of ... it takes examples of you guys hearing yourselves, not just hearing one character in the front that helps to realize, “oh, that’s me ... really, is it possible?” That develops the trust and the confidence that, if it’s possible, I would do it. And if I would do it, what does it take?

It seems what it takes is some kind of daily small glimpses, many times for a period of time. This is an intensive period.; this was 2 ½ days. But just moving it up the priority list. That often takes being in a lot of pain that motivates you to do it, or falling in love with it. Which means for me, that’s what I felt. I felt at some point I went “Well this is what I’ve always wanted, freedom, love, joy, peace ...” So what else was I going to do with my life? What are the other things that are ahead of that? I literally asked and then I went “ Alright, forget it. Let’s do it.” Then, trying to share it with others is part of that natural compassion.

There was one brain, neuroscience from Ricky Davidson in Wisconsin, where they were studying compassion in the brain. What they noticed was that one little area would light up that they didn’t realize was related to compassion. They were looking at certain areas, like “oh, that’s good ... what is that area that all of a sudden lights up when compassion comes on?” What it is, is that part of the brain that needs to light up before you take an action. So compassion comes on and then all of a sudden, the ability to act comes on. They were all excited about that.

That’s interesting, not just compassion internal bliss, subtle body, that it actually is like, “How are you? What’s going on here?” It leads to relatedness and creativity, motivation, that kind of thing. That’s a good sign, yes?

Any reports from this morning? This meditation? This walking out and seeing?

Yes?

S: I have a bad knee, among other things, bone on bone hurts like hell when I go down hill. So I went down to get some coffee and it didn't hurt at all. I'm going "What is this?!" because it's been killing me around this little hilly place.

L: Yes, that's what that is.

S: The orthopedic surgeons you can bribe them...

L: The pharmaceutical companies seem to do well with getting in the door with them ... here's my product ... and give them a little payoff ...

We were just talking about that. I think the next audio, before I write—I'm going to write a little, a little book—with pictures and diagrams that just have the practices and ordering it a little differently, maybe. Just the introductions and the introductory practice ... but before I do that, I think I'm going to do one on physical pain as a doorway to emotional pain. Because it's such a grip; it grips the fear based brain and it makes people contract into their physical body so much. There is so much going on.

I'll probably call it physical and emotional pain so it does extend beyond that. But it is about expanding this dimension of awareness that opens up and that comes into the pain area and opens up the mini-me so that the pain signal goes into the intelligence, just like thoughts go into the background. Just like where did those thoughts go? Thoughts are here; now where did they go? Your brain didn't stop activity.

In the FMRI, when they ask people "Just relax ... don't think ... don't do anything ..." your brain is completely active. It's not like you are stopping, your brain just goes dead. They are going into the background of your awareness just the way we did when I said "bring your awareness to your left foot and see how much activity is there." If your awareness is on your left foot, you are going to be very aware of the physical sensations in your left foot. If your awareness is trained to look at mental sensations, you will be constantly feel like there are a lot of mental sensations.

Once you train yourself to be aware of awareness and then awareness is aware of all your senses, and you develop this new intelligence, then automatic thoughts are like that bird chirping in the background.

S: Right on cue.

L: Any other comments? Questions? Yes?

S: A couple weeks ago when I was moving, I kind of spun out one night. I didn't get a lot of sleep. So, I had a friend who came over and she worked with me and did some guided meditation. She does angels and stuff like that.

The next day I woke up—I got sleep—and I was like “okay ... moving day.” Big day. I had people help me move but it went so smoothly. The movers came, it was a great team, moved me up to the other place and I joined them, eventually. I heard from one of the organizers, she said “The guys think you are great. They said you have such nice energy about you; you’re really chill.” I’m like?! Nobody has ever said that about me! I knew that it was probably just a temporary state of bliss that followed that day. The next day I was back to my old self. What was this? It feels like this, I guess? It was like to be like that more often ... it was amazing.

L: Yes, there are many doorways in.

The thing is, what recognition and realization is, is not just having the effect of some process on you, but realizing what the ground is that’s continuing it. Not just having a good effect from a sauna, a good meditation, but realizing what’s the ground of what can be calm and relaxed all the time. Does that make sense?

S: Yes. And how to get there without having someone else guide me.

L: That’s right. Or with somebody guiding but then when they guide you, you realize where you are. They’ve pointed there, so that’s okay, and then here’s this ... and this is what’s aware now ... What’s aware now? Where am I aware from? What it is about other states that are happening?

S: Okay.

L: Good, thank you.

Doing practices, small glimpses every day. Certainly if you want to use the support, you may have already started, of listening to some of the audios. That’s a way to rely on the guidance so you don’t have to remember.

Ultimately the next level is to start to find the favorites of them, which ones you like to use in different places—put it right on your semi-smart phone that gets smarter when you put these on. And then use them as needed, while you’re walking ... because you can do them with your eyes open, right. Use them as your coffee break during work ...

Then, internalize so that you start to make them your own. Then you do them with your own language or with no language.

Yes?

S: Concerning your favorites, I find I have a favorite—shifting of local awareness of thinking mind to vibrations coming in from one ear. I find I’m doing it so often that I’m concerned that I’m using it as an escape mechanism for not dealing with my problems, perhaps.

L: Yes. So you’re just going from just unhooking and just going here, or ... because I do it in like a series. Like unhook and go just to hearing. Unhook, go to hearing, now just be aware of space.

One of them on audio is awareness of space, then it ends. Then the next one is the same series, start again—unhook, come to hearing, awareness of space—now it continues. The next one is called the awareness of spacious awareness;

now you have spacious awareness. Now the next one is, as spacious awareness—so I break them up into steps and then eventually, once you get each of the steps, then you go to the fifth meditation, which is awareness of hearing, awareness of space, awareness of spacious awareness, spacious awareness aware of aliveness, aware of open heartedness, aware of relatedness. Each one will take you step by step, to make sure you got each one, but then you can just listen.

Are you say you are stopping?

S: I'm stopping.

L: The other way to think of it is you're training to make sure you have that. That is taking you ... at least you are doing subtle body meditation, which means you are getting relief from thinking.

S: Yes.

L: That's great. That's a meditation that's like most preliminary practice meditations around the world. If that works, you are getting that benefit. Then, play with the next step. Or, maybe the next step, the step of awareness of space, you could skip that one and go right to awareness of spacious awareness.

That one in the series is a half-step. So, if that helps to feel content-less, no object, that helps you actually make sure the thought based identity is not looking. Then, be aware that local awareness is aware of spacious awareness. But you could just step from unhook, come to hearing, and then local awareness dissolves into spacious awareness.

You'll see which one is easier because that step of awareness of spacious awareness and spacious awareness back is really where all the big action is happening—the surrender, the letting go on the second level. Unhooking is like the first surrender—am I aware of spacious awareness or is spacious awareness back? Then it's aware of itself as space, and then aware of itself as aliveness, which is what we were doing with the sound and the seeing. That's where the now and the dancing.

The last part is the open hearted awareness, which is where you operate from so that you don't have to go back to create an ego manager. You can create a non-conceptual sense of intelligence that is able to remain at home in the heart and have Wi-Fi from the files in your memory, come to your new intelligence. Then you can speak, and talk, and type, and walk, without going back up to think about thinking, and create a thinker.

It's not the thinking that's the problem, it's the think-er. "I think therefore I am," is the problem. That is where ended up. At that point it made sense rather than don't think about it, just do it—just act out before that, maybe ... the 30 year war ... 100 year war ... Visigoth and then, you know. Look at the history channel, it's like "oh my God ..." But then you realize it's still happening!

S: Yes, Ray Domachowski ...

L: Right, that's right. That's coming from that primitive ... being identified with the primitive level.

So the renaissance, “I think, therefore I am” philosophy took us to this level. Now we’re just not spending time critiquing or judging that; just keep going. Let’s just keep going to the next level and use the good parts of intelligence and skills that were developed.

What this is about is a new way of knowing and a new sense of identify from which everything else is occurring. That’s all this is about, is about shifting knowing from conceptual knowing to non-conceptual knowing, and then identity from ego based looping, small sense of self, referential in your body to spacious, embodied open hearted awareness that has much more capacity for even having an air conditioner drop on your toe. And, dealing with life in its pleasant and unpleasant normal everyday life—that part’s not going to be perfect. That part is not going away. That part has its ups and downs, right.

Alright, so here’s what we’re going to do: we are going to do the transitional practice to returning to your next part of your life.

30. Exercise - Open Hearted Tonglen

Loch: I always feel that getting it online, practicing it a little, challenging the next level, you just have to trust and practice it. So we are going to do the open hearted tonglen practice with a partner. You are going to face somebody and you are going to feel like you're sending it through them, to the awareness behind them. It's going to come back like this. You can do it with eyes opens or eyes closed, that's fine—whatever you are comfortable with.

When you are finished, I'll guide you. It will be easier and then you'll do a little bit. Then one at a time, I want you to decide who's going to go first; then, from the open hearted awareness say something about something you are going back to in your life. So, bring here, into open hearted awareness, some situation that you know you will have to go back and deal with. "When I go back home I know I'm going to have to deal with this person or this situation at work ..." You are bringing the retreat into your world from open hearted awareness. Does that make sense?

Whatever level of that you want to do it at. Something that, going back Tuesday/next week, some situation I'm in ... I just moved so what's that about ... whatever the thing that might be.

So in the now, you can being the future. You can being planning. You can bring thinking about things, relationship. Just be curious. Don't know what it's going to be like; have that sense of curiosity. Does that make sense?

Alright, so find a partner to pair up with. Face each other and then I'll guide you through this practice.

See if we have the right number here.

I'll be guiding you through the normal thing and then I'll let you do it on your own for a little bit. Then I'll ring a bell. So, ahead of time, you should decide who's going to go first. Who's going to share first?

Everyone have a sense of something to share about, that they are going to integrate into your life, right? That's understood?

Okay, everyone paired and introduced yourself to each other?

Eyes open or closed, whatever is comfortable for you is fine.

Just settling in ... feeling comfortable ... make sure you feel comfortable in your chair and the position you're in so you can remain ... if you need to shift around, the idea is comfort not stillness of your body ... so you can move as you need to during this exercise. It will be fairly short and effective.

So you're both doing this at the same time. Simply being aware of where your local awareness is, particularly maybe in your thinking or in your eyes ... then feeling that you can either go—whichever way makes you feel good—to come to

your ears and open to the space behind you, or drop. I'll do the one that's dropping through the jaw but you can start if you want to go out the ear, or you can step right back behind your head and go down behind your heart.

Just feeling like awareness is identified with thinking and it can step back, half step back, and be aware of space ... and then drop be become aware of your jaw and your smile directly from within ... then making sure you are unhooked from thought as this globe of intelligent awareness knows your throat from directly from within.

Breathing in and smiling as this awareness drops below your neck ... so you are not looking up to thought to know and you are not looking down ... this globe of awareness is dropping into your heart space and knowing your upper body, the aliveness, the awareness and the space directly from the place that's known ... the knowing and the known are felt to be happening in your heart space.

Breathing into that ... if you pop back up, just return ... then just as local awareness was able to unhook from thought, it can step back through your body, feeling the middle of your heart space and then behind, the back of your heart space ... and then open up beyond your body.

Local awareness surrenders back to this space behind you and dissolves right into, and discovers, tunes in, to that field of awareness that's already been aware ... so it goes home, like a wave returning to the ocean, until this ocean of awareness is discovered to as this amazing support ... as this pure awareness, this ground of being, that's always been, that's been waiting as this presence in this pure awareness ... then as that awareness knows itself as awareness for one moment, without thought or senses ... just surrendered ... Rather than being aware of spacious awareness, notice that spacious awareness is aware by itself.

Feel that ocean of awareness is infinite everywhere, so it not only is behind you but, while it remains open and pure and spacious, it also is pervasive ... it is coming in or already noticed to the arising as the wave of your alive body ... from head to toe, feeling this effervescent dancing, changing awareness appearing in awareness ... this sense of scanning your body and noticing this aliveness that has no self-center, has no manager.

Then feel the awareness in your heart space go out with compassion, with unconditional love, with positive regard, toward the person in front of you ... Notice their awakens, their humanity, ignorance and suffering that they've had in their past, present and future ... just that human condition ... Feel love and kindness toward them, just as a creature of being, like yourself.

Then, feel as if that awareness goes through their heart space and discovers that they too, have behind them, this spacious awareness which is infinite and supportive, loving, and already awake on the level of pure awareness ... Then feeling that pure awareness which is everywhere, come back through their body and bring with it both the awakens, the ignorance, suffering, and humanity, back ... supporting that, connecting to that as none other than who you are and everyone is ... feeling that there is a unity and an interconnection between you around all of those levels so that you can bring that back to you.

Notice your own awakens, ignorance, humanity, suffering ... let both of those be surrendered back behind you to the infinite source of mind, of the universe of spirit, of loving presence ... the timeless, contentless, boundless field that is both behind you, within you, within them, behind them, all around ... above/below, within.

That awareness is both coming into you, filling you from top to bottom ... noticing your humanity going out with compassion and open hearted awareness, acceptance, and love to the other person in front of you ... noticing their humanity, suffering, awakens ... Then, through their heart space to that behind.

So this feeling of this flow back and forth and also this all-at-once-ness ... that all at once, you are the same ... all at once, you are interconnected ... all at once, you are in the now ... all at once, things are changing.

Feeling that flow. When I look back and find nothing, that is wisdom. When I look out and see everyone and everything, that is love. And, between the two, life moves. Just dropping from head to heart, opening to spacious awareness ... spacious awareness is embodied ... and it notices the dancing aliveness and the presence ... then the open hearted awareness is what it's all appearing to ... that is also local and non-local.

Continue for another minute and then I'll ring the bell and you can transition into talking.

So even as you begin to transition, remember to stay at home ... that hearing is receiving ... seeing is receiving ... and listening to someone talk is receiving, so you are simultaneously connected ... there is no going anywhere ... and hearing is receiving, so you can stay in your open hearted awareness.

Slowly transition ... gently opening your eyes ... a soft gaze ... hearing is receiving ... seeing is receiving ... listening is receiving ... speaking from your heart with kind of a curiosity ... trying to stay, even as you remember details, remembering from your heart ... bringing your life into, and from, your heart mind.

31. Debrief of Exercise and Guided Tai Chi Process

Loch: Thank your partner and dosido.

Now the question is, is there any problem to solve? How did those two go together, the first exercise and the last, right. What's here when there is no problem to solve, is the first one. And then, what's here when there is a problem on the relative level to solve?

Student: What's the second one?

L: What's here when there is a relative problem to solve? Relative means daily situation called a problem in your life. You're going to ask, what's here when there is no problem to solve, on the level of identity? Then from there, how do we deal with everyday situations—often called problems, or issues, or stuff, or choices—from here?

Those are the book ends ...

What would you say? Anything from that exercise? Report?

S: No comment. It's all apparent. Next ...

L: Next, like what are we going to say? It just is.

Anything about that for you guys?

S: You could always feel that there's a problem and there is going to be, potentially, an acting out.

L: Yes, that's right.

S: Maybe you could intervene. Maybe you can live with the feeling of hatred and wanting to rip their heads off, whatever.

L: Yes.

S: But don't act it out because they really have been reacting to you ...

L: Yes.

S: You keep the ball rolling. If you stop the ball, maybe over time and not instantly, it will diffuse.

L: Yes, that's right. Beautiful.

I remember first, when I first taught a course way back when, when I was teaching mindfulness, there's a difference between feeling angry and being angry and acting angry—those are 3 different things. Everyone was like “What are you talking about?” You can feel anger. And being angry means you are identified. Speaking angrily ...

Student: What's that?

L: There is a place where you can say anger/aggression means no. You can say no. There is nothing wrong with the occasional right use of anger/boundary/stop; that's aggression. But I'm talking about perpetual or identified discharge.

S: You can tell somebody, instead of acting or lashing at you, you could say “That really makes me uncomfortable and angry.”

L: Yes, that's right. You talk, from this IFS language, you talk for the part rather than as the part. This is Internal Family Systems, a language. You say “there's a part of me that's angry ... I just want to let you know I'm feeling angry/some part of me is angry ...”

S: It bugs me out.

L: Rather than being the angry one speaking, you say that you have anger or you are uncomfortable/you feel hurt—maybe even before anger, is hurt. “I feel a little hurt by why you said ... can we talk about that?”

S: And you don't have to sound airy and spacy. Because I was in a position where I basically—eventually—having to lie. I don't like lying so I was like, what the hell do I do? I have to keep lying every day I go to work. So then I just said, you know what, when you do this it really bugs me out and I ended up having to lie to you about it.

L: Good.

S: It diffused the whole thing.

L: Beautiful.

S: Of course I never traded with him again.

L: That's good though. That's beautiful. That's a really skillful method. Great.

Yes?

S: I found this exercise very powerful. I really appreciated that you gave us a good long time to get to that place. I could feel, when I was listening, I could very clearly feel that flow. I could see that behind my partner was a great supportive space and everything. It was very powerful moving through ...

And then as the speaker simply being listened to in that space, was also wonderful. I didn't solve any problems but it made the sense of support of the universe pretty big.

L: Beautiful, that's great to feel that behind them.

Yes?

S: I felt a change. This may sound like something ... it's every day ... when I go back I am going to have to go to jury duty and in Chicago I'm going down to California on the second, which is the scariest place to go in this whole thing. And so, there is a fear of that, but then there's an anger about being interrupted. I got this back before Easter and because I'm a pastor I can get out of it because of work. But now I can't.

There's anger and a fear kind of thing too. But as we were in this relationship, especially with tonglen, that grounded the support and the energy ... what came up, what was up here, was the fear and the anger and all of that. But what came out of here was "okay ... you can be compassionate toward whatever situation you're encountering, and to be with those folks. It's a situation where you know you see that it was very unjust and all that, all the Americans that are there who know that whole system is ... to encounter that bodily ... but somehow I would be able to ...

L: Yes.

S: And act out of an open hearted awareness. I don't have to be the change agent/controller up here but I can be the presence.

L: Yes, beautiful. And you really felt that?

S: Yes, switch. Because it was a switch it was a shift.

L: Yes. It's really a switch and a shift, right? Beautiful, thank you. That's a great example.

Yes?

S: It's a little different when you get to be my age because you don't have too many problems. But I do see people with problems, as part of the volunteer job. It just seems that the relative problems can be turned over to the absolute. It's about faith, that going up here what will happen ...

L: That you can respond rather than react. That there's enough capacity to respond. Yes. Beautiful.

S: I kind of felt a new take on compassion for myself. I could feel compassion for the other person, for their suffering, ignorance, suffering, their humanity as well as my own. That was very valuable to me because it connected me more with people and even with my own death. I could feel more compassion, more open to that because everybody is going to die, just like that story you told. We were talking about that story, me and my partner, about that woman who went from house to house and nobody gave her a seed but everybody invited her in. That was very valuable for me, to feel that compassion.

L: Yes, beautiful. Thank you for that. That's beautiful.

S: This feels so complete. I could have done three of your workshops—one in Ethica, one in Garrison and then this one—but this is like now it's complete because where you started with the problem solver to now. I didn't have closure, but now I have closure, which is really cool. I see the whole process. It takes me a while to read through the book but now I realize I can get a little nook. I'll be able to read it better. I'm taking the audio out.

L: Great, great. I'm so happy.

Any other comments? Final comments on the day?

We're going to go out and take a group picture that we can put up on the Google group. Any other final questions? Comments? Reports?

Or, let's do this before as our final practice. Everyone stand up. Do our tai chi. That's the best way to end.

First, I'll talk you through it then I'll let you do a couple on your own. Identify with thought, local awareness is attached or identified ... You can do this physically, yes ... We are doing it like (laughter) you weren't here when we first did it.

We're doing a tai chi thing ... the hands are just feeling and emphasizing what's actually going on ... it's not energy, it's like awareness identified and attached ... awareness steps back, so it's like a little globe ... then drops down, feels your jaw directly from within ... feels your throat directly from within ... and is not looking up to thought, not looking down from thought ... and is knowing your heart space directly from within your heart space ... thought-free wakefulness.

Just as awareness unhooked from thought, now it can open to space all around ... then be aware of spacious awareness ... So, it knows and feels spacious awareness aware of spacious awareness ... as spacious awareness, you can now notice that spacious awareness is not only spacious but pervasive, inside and out ... neither inside/nor out ... simultaneous mind ... everywhere/nowhere and here ... in the now with time.

And then the feeling of having this kind of open hearted awareness that has dropped from head to heart, so there is a feel of connected and protected, safety and well-being ... From here we can create and relate ... going out into the world ... feeling interconnected naturally and also acting with compassionate expression and creative activity ... (laughter)

Just doing it without any words ... you can do it at your own pace, slowly or quickly.

Yes! (applause)

S: I want to see a video of you doing that on the subway. (laughter)

S: Do it with a hand-cam (laughter)

L: Nobody would even notice, they'd be like "Oh yes, right ..." (laughter)

Should we go out and take a little group photo right there? Then say goodbye to each other ...?

S: It was so worth it.

L: The trip was worth it?

S: I'm so glad ...

