

## TRANSCRIPT

### TENET 11: Mindfulness, Concentration, and Insight

<https://www.youtube.com/live/1j5lxmlslF4?si=7TCZMiTOENdG-g2i>

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00:04 great begin with the three sounds of the Bell we can just come back to our breathing come back to our body and if you like you can touch gratitude to have to have to be able to practice together as one body in a physical space together and uh yeah especially to have a chance to have so many members of the order of interbeing here and future members what it is um yeah I know the monks and nuns we are very happy to have you here because it's been a long pandemic and it's still going

00:56 on but I personally touch a lot of gratitude in every moment for the vaccine and for That allows us to be here together and many other conditions so we can touch our gratitude as we listen to the sound of the Bell for....I so dear respected Thay, dear Noble community, so today is the 23rd of June in the year 2021 and we're in the Ocean of Peace meditation Hall at Deer Park Monastery and um so during the pandemic I've been teaching a course on the 4 tenants of Plum Village and um yeah this is I think the largest

03:39 number of people that have been in That's class at least physically because it's just been uh some of our sisters and brothers here um and many of them have hadn't had a chance to study directly with That and so um uh one brother asked me if I would go into these teachings which That gave in I think I think the first teachings were in 2005 and then it continued in 2006 and 2007 we were studying the uh mainstream schools of Buddhism traditionally there are 18 mainstream schools of Buddhism that

04:31 flourishing from the beginning of the Common Era until 4 or 500 years later or um kind of just a rough estimate and uh these schools had many different teachings and so it took a I think at least two winter retreats to go into all the different teachings That had Arisen um of course in the core they were mostly the same but they each had particular particularities um one very famous school is the Sasada school um which for example had the understanding of impermanence that

05:31 phenomena exist are really exist in the past also in the present and then in the future and so that's why they're called Sarv it means always being whether in the past present and future um and there

are various reasons why they came to that understanding and um there was another school called the *Pudgala* which thought there's no self but there's a person so these kind of things um came up in these different schools and so Thay went through those schools uh one by one and then Thay asked the question so where does Plum Village

06:18 fit in these schools what have we learned in the plum Village tradition and so that went on to be this Core teaching on what Thay through his own practice and understanding had learned in in 60 or so years as a monk at that time and uh and also what we collectively had learned in Plum Village so as you know Plum Village is not about just one teacher, Thay is a root teacher but it's also about all of our own experience and insight that we bring to it and so it's an and Plum Village is we can say an explicitly

07:05 evolving tradition so and just like a river it's not like we are fragmented right there's a continuity so the river is changing but it uh is somehow has a sense of continuity as well and I think That's why I was particular really attracted to this tradition and because if we look into the history of Buddhism we see that Buddhism is not just one thing but it has also evolved and so T talked about evolving d so the Dharma helps us to touch the unconditioned in ourselves not out there we touch it everywhere but the

08:20 nature of the Dharma can evolve according to the situations That present itself in in the world and society and so in a maybe largely agrarian society certain aspects of teaching the Dharma are more prominent than others in like a PO industrial society like we find ourselves in now and we have to be very skillful and very honest in our practice and looking into how we can incorporate insights That come from um our own time into the Dharma so That they can help people to touch the unconditioned and so this 40 tenants for

09:13 me are to deep looking into the tradition and recognizing how it has evolved and how it's continuing to evolve and they are not set in stone they are based on Thay's Insight at that time and hopefully as we continue to go into them we help to evolve the dharma and there always aspects of any tradition as it grows and continues to flow that end up being a kind of dead end right like the water goes off but it doesn't really go anywhere it just goes into a little Inlet and then ends up coming back to the main river...

10:10 and so we also need to recognize um that our conditioning can if we're not careful and we really

are honest with our the fruit of our practice it can also lead us into more conditioning so that is the beauty of the evolving Dharma like we know in the using the example of evolution of living beings on the planet Earth That there have been uh many living beings I was just looking at a an image of a trilobite I don't know if you've seen a fossil of a trilobite it kind of looks like a

10:58 a horseshoe crab. has everyone seen a horseshoe crab? I grew up in New England, we have them you know when you go to the beach and I don't I've not seen them here in Southern California yeah but they are um quite similar to a trilobite, they have kind of a they look like this and then they have a little part here and a long sharp thing and then underneath they have their feet this is kind of a shell and actually the eyes are here so this is their tail but usually when people find it

11:46 they think this is the head when I was a kid I used to think this is the front because it kind of looks like this looks like the front of a crab but actually it eyes are right here and it just kind of walks along in the shallow water and basically this animal as I understand it has more or less been the same for 350 million years the horseshoe crab and so not quite to the time of the trilobites but it kind of moves along and I think it sometimes it goes onto the beach I'm not sure if it's because it.

12:22 has to lay its eggs in on the land does anybody know anyway so I was looking at a fossil of a trilobite and of course there are no trilobites today there's only something a little bit like a trilobite and so it's a kind of evolutionary path that for whatever reason flourished enormously for a certain amount of certain many millions of years tens of millions of years but then for some reason environmental climatic um or other That we don't know disappeared and so similarly with the dharma we can see That there are certainly in our time

13:06 there will be forms of the dharma That will be extremely popular like the past the past 20 years mindfulness is an aspect of the dharma That has become extremely popular but if you look back into say 7th 8th Century China it was like Insight, Prana, which everyone was trying to get like how can I get get Prana and that was much more prominent and so when you read like the Sutra you see a lot about prana insight and Samadi but now we are more interested in mindfulness so it's a bit like that

13:44 in the Buddhist uh river that sometimes there are things that just meet a certain need in the society that become much more prominent and uh but we

don't know maybe I don't think I'm not if you take mindful out of the Buddhist tradition I'm not I don't think it can still be the Buddhism but uh um it's just to give an example there can be something that becomes very um intrinsic to Buddhist communities and we don't even know we don't even realize that it's we all take it for granted you know as we as we practice and then but

14:25 somehow then it just dies out and then 50 years later people say oh you know back in that time in Deer Park, and they were always talking about--- I don't know I'm trying to think of something.... the 10 mindful movements remember we always doing those 10 mindful movements. I was just talking to my sisters this morning and I said why we don't do the mindful movements during walking meditation at Deer Park; I tried this Spring to get it back into the program, I said you know in Plum Village that loved to stop and just... maybe that did it

15:03 or another brother or sister or sometimes that gave a long dharma talk and you recognize oh people's knees are hurting and oh gosh you know why don't we stand up and do the 10 mindful movements but I noticed I've been in Deer Park since last August - nobody has done the mindful movements, and so I don't know will the mindful movements like be like the trilobites? And they just kind of this thing That we spend a lot of "you remember when we used to do the 10 mindful movements all the time?" and then you know we just have like a somebody

15:36 surfaces an old DVD of That doing the movements and they think oh yeah it's like a fossil it's been buried gosh we forgot That we did I like to do them so I I'm part of the reason I'm saying this is that maybe we can keep doing them but not everybody for some reason likes the 10 mindful movements so That's the nature of evolving dharma is and there are some things like the horseshoe crabs which are just so well-designed for their environment That they just quietly continue for 350 million years it's incredible huh so the

16:18 hopefully there are some aspects of the Dharma like that so the dharma is the of the Shakyamuni Buddha has been here for 2600 years so hopefully there are some aspects that are like the horse shoe crabs that they just quietly inconspicuously continue their wonderful natural way so it's a topic that I remember when I was a novice and Thay talked about evolving Dharma I was like wow that's so cool but now I see it the longer

we're in the community we see and uh you should remember that evolving Dharma helps us to

17:04 practice patience and sometimes Evolution takes time and we.. They always talked about we within all of us there is the progressive and there's also the conservative even we consider ourselves the most Progressive of the progressive of the progressive but we still have like almost the fact that we consider ourselves the most Progressive of the progressive makes us conservative right so That is not a about politics but that's actually a nature of evolution the reason we're still here is

17:47 there's some conservation we don't yeah if there's a mutation it doesn't if there's a mutation which is too radical then we and like some people have U pass on gen uh genetic diseases in their family and That you know goes on and now because of modern science we can find ways to treat them but um in the past they would have just that lineage might have died out you know a famous example is the you know the royal families in in Europe that were constantly intermarrying and very closely and then

18:28 caused a lot of um genetic diseases to then manifest more prominently so anyway a little bit about evolution in the Dharma so we should recognize that the conservative element sometimes has a positive aspect because just like the horseshoe crab is it's quietly keeping and maintaining itself over many, many tens of hundreds of millions of years um so evolving Dharma but also there's a continuity that's the beauty, I don't know that every Buddhist tradition looks at themselves in that way but we

19:12 as a plum Village tradition we consciously look at ourselves as part of a living tradition That is evolving I always tell my young younger brothers like when they get very passionate about a particular thing because That always happens there's always new things coming in and that's the beauty of the tradition we have many young monastics in our community and they bring in so many wonderful uh new things That they've learned That have been important for them in their in their spiritual path and but there's a tendency to want

19:49 the community to reflect their uh their point of view as quickly as possible which is very normal right because That's what's meaningful for you and it's what's touched you and That's the community from which you have come and which inspires you and I always say well just stay around for a few years I saw so many brothers they left and then like just a

year later or the two years later exactly the thing they were most passionate about just manifests -there weren't enough conditions yet and then boom two years

20:26 later three years later we have an organic farm in Plum Village and people living there growing organic food for the community, and I watched many of a few of my brothers like leave the sangha because they were so impatient that we didn't start an organic farm - so it's just an example if we see the nature the evolving nature of the Dharma, then we can have a lot of patience, and we know that with our good intention and our experience that we contribute to this sangha and it will continue to evolve – the sangha is always listening

20:58 and learning and seeing how to adjust and grow okay so that's the story of horseshoe crabs and this is these 40 tenants are a beautiful example of evolving dharma.

We can listen to a sound of the Bell.

(Bell)

21:56. So, we're on the 11th tenant; *mindfulness concentration and insight are the essential practices* that give rise to liberation.

23:35 So, you can see on the glass window “Smti Samadi prashna” - these are the three trainings are the pillar of Plum Village practice and if you look in many of the

24:15 traditional text you'll see instead of smti you'll see “Sheila Samadi Prana” so “Sheila” is uh precepts but we translate it as a “mindfulness training” because That had the insight as a young monk he said why do we have to practice precepts in order to get the Liberation and then he had the Insight that actually precepts are mindfulness they are not separate when we are mindful of uh the effect of our actions on ourselves and on others then we naturally behave in a way is harmonious and you know kind

24:57 rather than aggressive violent impolite and so forth and so and he saw that in the uh core Buddhist teachings in the heart of the Buddhist teachings you have the five faculties, and the five powers and they both include “Smti Samadi and Prashna” so you have a “Faith diligence mindfulness concentration and insight” and so he had the realization that in the heart of the Buddhist teachings there is “smti Sami prsna” appearing many times and then these three trainings

25:55 which are Sheila Samali Pra and that's when he put the two together and had the Insight That mindfulness are the "mindfulness trainings" and that's where the name *mindfulness trainings* actually come from so That saw that the word "precepts" in English is maybe not so inspiring and so uh yeah rather than call them precepts you see these are trainings which cultivate mindfulness and that is uh what he calls a pointless all three of these trainings are um in Sanskrit an "asraa" so we can translate it as

27:02

"taintless" or um "not leaking" - not leaking because uh the root of this word which here becomes shroob /shab is to flow and "an" is means not flowing so in the sense that when we are overwhelmed by uh desire or desire for sensual pleasures, desire to be somebody, desire not to be somebody, then we lose our balance, we lose our solidity, it's like we're leaking something, if you have a balloon right and you're holding it and it's very nice and buoyant but then you put a little hole

28:15 in it and it starts going all around right... so it's a little bit like that it's not so stable anymore erratic and so mindfulness is has the quality of we can never get too much mindfulness-- it is it is a quality that we as we cultivate and it will not lead to leaking, so the more mindfulness, then you're aware of the leaking that's going on in terms of what you're taking in through your eyes, your ears, nose, tongue, body and mind... it's interesting this phrase "Asura" is very ancient goes back to the earliest

29:11 Buddhist teachings -- and it's not only in the Buddhist tradition, but also in the Jain tradition- what's in modern times called the Jain tradition- which was one of this Samana movements at the time of the Buddha, so there were many um like Indian bit of Indian history in a nutshell so he had these Brahmanical ritualists who were in the mainly around the area of like Delhi now, spreading Eastward, and coming into contact with many tribal peoples in the more eastern part of the Gangedic plane That uh had relatively egalitarian

29:59 societies and so at that time of the Shakyamuni Buddha these societies are starting to trade more amongst them so business is becoming a more prominent occupation and some of these small tribal societies are coming together into larger kingdoms... and so as these peoples came into contact with the Brahmanical teaching many of them could not accept the tradition that came along with that which included animal sacrifice in order to generate Merit and also usually very what it

30:49 becoming an ossified class or cast system right with warrior class and the Brahmanical class and then merchants all others below them, and farmers and so forth, and so going from a more egalitarian society to this kind of more ossified you know class based Brahmana, the brahmins who are the spiritual ritualists and then the Shadrias who are the Warriors who then defend the country and then all the merchants and then farmers and so forth um and even slaves who are were not part of any cast or um and so this Samana movement arose

31:35 somewhat um in response to that situation and and so the many young men and many very few unfortunately young women went on the spiritual path by leaving home and trying it out like experimenting in in themselves in the forest, you know not having a family, not deciding on a career being a householder and uh trying to understand their mind and many teachers came up so these were outside of this Brahmanical tradition, so they it's called the Samana movement and so the Buddha saw one of these wandering monks or Samana and

32:26 that inspired him to leave home to leave behind his family and his wife and only child and go forth and then try to live like--- eat roots, he tried living you know by eating uh roots and fruits that were found in the wild and the forest and um kind of sometimes he felt himself like a deer looking from the wild into the human civilization, I don't know if you've ever had that experience sometimes when I was backpacking for many days and then I would.... you I did a few times in Vermont in that area, and I would suddenly come

33:10 on a house or something and with a nice Garden you feel like this is the way the deer sees human beings everything looks so civilized after this wild free you know life in in the forest... so the Buddha tried these kinds of practices as well in his early path as a Samana and then went to a number of spiritual communities and learned from those teachers and one of the prominent contemporaries of the Buddha who um was teacher named Mahavira and so he is considered um one of a succession of what they

33:58 call Jinas, like conquerors. That's why you get the word Jain it means the one who is of the conquerors and they had for example the five precepts:- not to kill, not to steal, not to engage in sexual misconduct, not to lie and not to drink alcohol or intoxicants---- and so the Buddha actually learned from so those precepts were not uh like just invented out of the blue by the Buddha, but he saw that they

were good and he incorporated them into his teachings, and so those are already teachings that were um largely

34:42 risen up in the Jain Community as far as we can tell, and "Asrava" is also a term that the Jains used slightly differently... they translated it as "inflow" whereas the Buddha saw as an outflow like a leaking, but in the Jain sense you have the because they talk about an Atman or self and so it's like these contaminants that are coming in and sticking to the self ...they like they encumber you and they kind of stick ...stickiness --- but of course the Buddha had the Insight of no self that everything inter-is

35:26 and so in the Buddhist tradition is uh thought of a little bit differently as things that are leaking out like uh our desire our anger so it can be a synonym for Klesa, afflictions, usually we so far in this class we've talked about Klesa, sorry in this in this class I use more Sanskrit terms.... just for fun not too many! Sanskrit became the "Lingua Franca" of India, and the main kind of along with Pali, and which is very related closely related to Sanskrit, so these terms are

36:12 kind of quite core, so I try not to use ones that are excessive, but just a little bit is also nice, so Klesa is a term which came to be used in the Buddhist tradition to mean afflictions, and so Asrava and Klesa are related - sometimes there are different layers of the tradition which are coming from different areas Asrava is quite ancient in the tradition and um Klesa when we get into the Abhidharma teachings of Buddhism which kind of broke all of reality down to atomic particles That could be described according to the is

36:58 teaching then you see much more often Klesa but in the early text we have we still see Asrava but Klesa is tends to talk about uh more frequently about afflictions -- so Asrava is a sense of like uh leaking and that comes from us not being happy where we are.... like not learning how to dwell happily in the present moment so we see that calligraphy of That "you already have enough" and so That is to practice the practice of Ansara you don't need to keep getting that and that and ordering this on Amazon and you know watching that movie or

37:51 getting that book or becoming part of that movement ... you can do those things but there's a way to do it without leaking, wanting to get something you're not you're not uh yeah trying to get something out of a situation.... but you bring your happiness and your joy to every situation. Somehow we really, we're very sensitive as human beings we know when somebody's trying to get something

they're not telling us like what they want what does he want we feel this---

38:31 kind of stickiness and uh you know because we're a good practitioner we don't say I don't say what I want but we feel something want something so that's a kind of Asrava and it can be very strong you know if we if we really um are feeding our desires every day. then and it becomes so strong that it's like a big oak tree... you can't easily move it can't uproot it very easily because it's so conditioned by our consumption, what we consume, through our eyes and ears and tongue and so forth but

39:20 uh yeah, I try to look every day and see you know why I want to go do that or like why do I want to do that?... especially lately I've been looking and seeing I'll be walking from one activity to another and I'm thinking about oh you know when I get back to my bed I've got that really good book to read - that is so interesting you know and like oh but I really stopping and saying wait I'm not enjoying my step, I'm just already my mind is already in my bed taking a nap reading my book! And here I

39:54 am in Deer Park Monastery and many people want to come here and just stay here where I'm standing right now, and enjoy the sound of the birds the beauty of the Blue Sky the mountain, and all I'm thinking about is this book and you know somebody could be ordering that book on Amazon but be at their home and just thinking about oh I wish I could just be standing in the parking lot behind the dining hall of Deer Park Monastery you see it's a bit silly but That's the way we you know That's the way our mind works and so I've been

40:32 learning lately Ah that's an Asrava, that's a leaking-- I'm leaking somehow -- I'm not fully with my step I'm not fully with my body and so there's still something that's looking for the next thing and the next thing always the next thing and then if I don't there not a bunch like if I have a lot of meetings or you know something not I consider not so pleasant coming then I just got to get through it just plough through it and then that'll be happiness on the other side just I'll be able to take a nap after

41:11 lunch so that's... I'm exaggerating a bit but this is kind of what I notice in my mind sometimes That thought comes up like I can't there something That doesn't completely tolerate the present moment and is looking for some something that will resolve my suffering in the future and that's Asrava, that's a leak and then you just recognize it you don't get angry at it but you say oh I'm leaking a little bit to and then

mindfulness the beauty of it and why Thay talks about it with regard to this

41:55 tenant is that these three qualities they help to uh stop the leak so as we cultivate mindfulness we become aware of the ways in which we are That mind of always trying to find happiness somewhere in the future is leaking into our Consciousness and driving us onward always to the next thing so it's causing us to run but in this with this metaphor we don't talk about running necessarily but leaking we're leaking a little bit it's just like a faucet that's a little bit open like I noticed outside our tea

42:41 house with the brothers that we have some irrigation hoses and one of them has been leaking and I was thinking oh gosh like how many buckets of water after many days from that one little leak.

And we just came back from a camping trip in uh Arizona and on the way back I well on the way over but also on the way back we cross the Colorado River, and I'm very fascinated by this River because it provides water to so many people in this in this area of the country, and it's been this subject of so much Intrigue and real like nasty Water

43:27 rights fighting over the past few centuries and then noticing that the Colorado River is smaller - when we drove out we drove out on the Northern route so I forget the name of the town but it was more to the North, and then on the way back we came back along the Mexican border, and I noticed that the Colorado River is smaller next to the Mexican border than it was farther North and so I was thinking about the leaking Colorado River all the water that is being siphoned off because of

44:07 our constant need for this precious resource water --so in the same way our mind can leak like that and with mindfulness we become aware of it and we see ah I need to stop maybe that nutriment that is causing me to leak to think that my happiness is somewhere else in the future like what is it that is oh okay well maybe something in that book why is reading that book bring me pleasure that's why I ask myself oh do something reminds me of this that was that something happy that happened to me

44:54 when I was a child and so or maybe it's just I like being kind of snuggled up in my bed with a blanket and nobody's bothering me or asking me to do anything like teach a 40 tenants class, and I can just enjoy reading this book. you know and nobody's going to bother me because brother Manim is my roommate and he's so lovely, he's just quiet and in the corner, and I can just lay there and read my book

and so whatever it might be it might not be the book it might be the situation there's something that's kind

45:26 of drawing us there and we not really totally dwelling happily in the present moment so that's the practice of mindfulness of the leak and why we call this uh these three trainings the three taintless trainings or we could call them the three non-leaking trainings:

(Bell)

That taught us that there's a kind of synchronicity which happens when we cultivate mindfulness in every cell in our body it's not that just one cell is mindful or just our like lung cells are mindful or our brain cells are mindful

47:25 or our intestine cells in our intestine are mindful but there's a kind of synchronicity that happens and so it's it there's a sense of unity rather than fragmentation or differentiation so that's why we there's a very strong feeling when we cultivate mindfulness of that you know one is in all and all is in the one as they say in the Akatam Saka Sutra this sense of Oneness that we can see the whole universe within our very body now we know that is true scientifically because the elements in our body are made of the

48:10 supernova of stars and just as the Earth beneath our feet and the air and so forth all these heavier elements you know there are I think only a few I can't remember the number but it's very small number of what they call non-metallic stars still existing in the Milky Way galaxy it means that they are mainly hydrogen and helium but most of the stars are not uh like original stars from The Big Bang but they're actually second or third generation so there's been a supernova which

48:58 is necessary for heavier elements like Oxygen and all the way up to iron and so forth to be generated to be by this massive explosive force of supernova and then that gaseous matter is then pulled together by gravity and then forms a new star and so you have metal in those later generation stars and we can look at the Spectrum of the stars and be able to tell that --that's how we know you know a little bit about how these heavier elements that make up our body have come about so we can know That scientifically

49:37 but the experience of it to really feel it needs mindfulness it needs this capacity to bring awareness to what is going on in the present moment within us and around us that create a sense of togetherness

somehow that these cells in our body are operating as one that is a the beautiful experience of mindfulness and when we do that when we cultivate that then there's concentration way so these are these three are interrelated and concentration also leads to mindfulness so concentration means

50:37 is a kind of mindfulness has is kept over time and synchronous throughout the body so all of our cells we bring them online -- so T described it like an electric current they could say like a computer cannot come alive without the electric current and so the same thing is true of our body if we don't if we're not cultivating awareness cultivating mindfulness and it's like we're The Walking Dead I find it so fascinating That in the popular culture that zombies are have become so prominent isn't that a strange

51:28 thing is it what does that have to say about our culture that you know, we I just when I go to New York City or I go to a big city and I see people walking around, and I mean I guess it's because we look around and we see oh these people are walking like zombies, maybe none of them are really are they like are really alive, maybe I'm the only one who's really alive, and everyone's a zombie did you ever have that thought? No okay! That's the kind of thought I think I had as a 13-year-old kid like oh gosh you

52:02 know what if anyway so we can be like zombies without that the electric current of mindfulness bringing ourselves alive.....and the beauty is that we see that's enough, with more mindfulness practice, you see you already have enough so you don't continue to leak so much because you realize your happiness is it's not going to come from that thing that you want you might get a bit of pleasure for a little bit of time but it's not going to bring you lasting happiness That's very solid and secure and that's what keeps

52:47 bringing us back here to Deer Park I think that's what keeps me as a monk is recognizing keep keeping the seed like oh gosh the there's another condition thing that I've been relying on for all these years and then when it's taken away, I feel oh gosh I'm devastated .... you know you like is a I find as a mindfulness practitioner that you know at the beginning, we kind of get healing and we continue to get healing, but there's a lot of Joy I mean my first Retreats were just like I was walking in heaven this

53:25 is like this is exactly what I've been looking for my whole life, and wow I'm going to get Enlightenment and no I didn't really think that but I thought at least I'm going to suffer less you know I

was just hoping that I can get stronger mindfulness so I don't continue to have so much suffering and uh but then yeah actually I discovered that with more mindfulness I discovered all kinds of suffering I didn't know I had, beyond the ones that brought me to The Practice Center yeah and so and then

53:59 they I'm always still uncovering new ones new habit energies and then when I talk to my parents I say oh gosh, yeah I have that too you know that's in me I do that too I mean now I just it's like it's like it's so quick that it happens I don't I used to criticize when I was like maybe many of us my parents when I was younger in my early 20s but now I just right away:- it's like oh I do that too yep I do that [Laughter] too and so I put it in you know I see that there are things that I haven't recognized that I also do myself but

54:39 it's funny how other people can see it more clearly my brother's here like one of my brothers came up brother Fabu came up to me he said "you're so like your dad" like "oh God I mean after 17 years of mindfulness practice I'm you still I'm still like my dad?" okay so that wasn't the point was to not become my dad of course not so somehow um yeah there's always things that I continue to discover that um yeah they're contributing to my solidity and my stability.... a recent one for me was coming here to Deer Park because I've

55:24 been living in Plum Village for 11 years straight and I see that wow it really became my home you know when I drove up the hill to Upper Hamlet it was like it felt like when I was a kid driving up the hill to my home that I grew up in in my hometown like it had reached that point in my Consciousness where it was just in a beautiful but in some ways like a such a mundane thing, that just driving up the hill to Plum Village which would be for some people, like a once in a lifetime thing was for

55:59 me just like driving home after work and uh and so coming here last fall to Deer Park and then in the middle of the pandemic and I noticed that wow there are some things that I've really gotten i' I created habits in Plum Village in my way of relating to my brothers and the community and the way of doing things in the Sangha which don't really apply and they don't really work here in Deer Park because this is a much smaller community, and it's a different culture and so I yeah oh gosh.. I turned off ...that's my uncle calling!

56:43 sorry I turned off notifications anyway

so I learned that uh there's some something in me that uh I like things of about Plum Village just the about the buildings about the brothers in the community about the way that we make decisions about the way we do things that I had somehow become dependent on, and when I didn't see them in the same way here at Deer Park I said I would suffer and I think oh gosh here I was even in the monastery and I'm still getting conditioned... so I didn't get angry like I

57:36 used to when I was younger in the practice but I just recognized and say I'm also human being... and I get attached to things and when they're not there anymore then I feel a sense of loss, a sense of like oh gosh this gaping hole but only it was you know I saw that it's not so big as it was when I was in my 20s or when I was younger before I started to practice, I noticed that the leak that happens that kind of allowing myself some sorrow or some sadness is not is not so big as what this the sorrow and the

58:20 sadness that drove me to the practice... yeah so that so some improvement maybe? You have to allow yourself to see that there's some improvement you know there's some there's some less suffering now that the beauty of the practice and that's um you know I think that's coming clearly from mindfulness um and maintaining that mindfulness over time so allowing it to deepen concentration it really it brings uh sense of focus and Oneness and it lasts over time so concentration is something that supports

59:05 us over time so it's not just an instant of mindfulness but we're able to maintain it and uh and then Insight when our mind is scattered fragmented it's difficult to see what's going on we're like That balloon That's just spinning around with a little bit of air leaking out of it is is quite erratic but when everything is when we're Mindful and we're able to maintain That mindfulness over time concentration then we can see clearly the fruit of our actions in our very body so this present moment is the fruit of

01:00:01 our thinking our speech our action maintain has led us to this point and maintain thinking That speech and action the karma the karma is action is the fruit also of our parents our ancestors our community family brothers and sisters parents larger culture things like the color of our skin um the religion all these things have contributed to what we think are is me which actually is all not me it's all made up of not me elements right That's the Insight

of interbeing this what I think is me is actually only composed of non-me elements just

01:01:00 like the flower is made of the sun and the rain and the Earth in the sky and so forth coming together with certain conditions and so maintain Insight maintain we get from the flower we can apply to ourself as well and by doing that we get the Insight that um that the experience of the present moment is just a process yeah there doesn't have to be a self or Soul or some kind of thing that we is removed from reality somehow or separate from experience but that we just like all phenomena are like a river flowing this body these feelings

01:01:47 these perceptions and so forth and the beauty is that we can recognize with when we have Insight that there's suffering that's why it's a Noble Truth you see the suffering and then you can see That this suffering arises due to causes and conditions so what is it that nourished that suffering everything needs nutriment nothing can exist without nutrient so when you see suffering through Insight you can learn to see its roots in your thinking in your speech and your bodily actions and that then

01:02:37 you can change that the essence of the practice and um change how right so at the beginning when we're suffering so much we cannot see clearly how to change so mindfulness trainings so we say okay I see there's a community of people they know how to dwell happily in the present moment and this is how they live what if I try to live like those people because we can recognize when somebody's happy even as a young child can recognize happiness or sadness anger these basic emotions so we ourselves uh we can also recognize when

01:03:25 there's a happy community when somebody we want to be near somebody who has a lot of Joy a lot of happiness and so when you see people like that then you kind of you want to be around them and then you say well how do they live their life what are the what kind of things do they consume edible food sense Impressions volition Consciousness what if I also nourish myself with those kinds of edible food you know sense Impressions and so forth and that's where we get the mindfulness trainings

01:04:05 so not acting in violent ways knowing the suffering that comes about due to violence and killing knowing the suffering that comes about from stealing from exploitation social injustice and so forth which is a kind of stealing doing the suffering That comes about from sexual misconduct right sexual abuse um and discrimination of gender all these



things have created so much suffering and continue to create suffering in the present moment so we can make the determination not to contribute to this kind of

01:04:50 suffering uh lying yeah not being truthful is a big suffering people feel people rely on us they trust us and then when we we're not honest they lose their trust and intoxicants you know alcohol other kinds of things That um create addictions emotional addictions and also cause us to lose our mindfulness lose our awareness so That we say things and do things which then later are hurtful cause us regret so this this is these are things so the mindfulness trainings are not the like Commandments from God

01:05:32 but they're coming out of community out of the Sangha community at the time of the Buddha out of from the Janss and applied to the Buddhist tradition as well and so we take on those trainings because we want to learn the way of dwelling happily in the present moment and you know learning ways to stop the leak the leaking from happening so that's how Insight can contribute to our making a change in our life and then as our Insight grows we're able to see more clearly and more exactly how one thought can lead to

01:06:11 suffering one word can lead to suffering one action can lead to suffering so the so there's an element of precision increased resolution the stronger the mindfulness and concentration the stronger our resolution and then we it's not that the it's like you take off the training wheels on your bike so the mindfulness trainings are like a training wheel so it doesn't mean we don't continue to balance the bike right that's the misunderstanding people think I don't have the training meals anymore but then

01:06:48 they fall down because they actually haven't learned how to balance the bike yet but when you know how to balance the bike and you it means you've cultivated these three trainings mindfulness and concentration are strong then the Insight the resolution increases and increases and so you see for yourself just like the Buddha and you get the Insight so you see That this is a helpful practice this is a nourishing practice and then you can help others to who still are quite fuzzy you know and they they're not quite

01:07:24 clear what to do but they know That of suffering and have them practice the mindfulness trainings offer That say well okay I see you're so happy you're so joyful how do you do it well these are some things That I do and then That gives them That's a doorway into the Dharma but when they

know well how to balance the bike then they can they don't need to just I mean the thing I Love About Time is t t always includes all skillful means he doesn't try to like get rid of some aspect of the Buddhist teachings or

01:08:07 even other teachings like Christian teachings That if he sees That it brings happiness we can include it and we don't have to be exclusionary and say oh no just mindful breathing that's it or just this or just that but Thay is very inclusive he's wants to bring in everything and he knows That there are sometimes we don't see the get the deeper Insight yet and that's not for the sake of being Superior it's for the sake of helping people to see for themselves right and we know that we've all been in the place

01:08:44 where we're just suffering so much we just need something we just need to be around happy people and just borrow the energy, but we also know that won't last that we need to cultivate it within ourselves, and that's what the three trainings are there for to learn how to uh strengthen our mindfulness so it's lasting so that it unifies the fragmentation in our mind through concentration and we get clear view of what's going on so *Prajna* um Insight is not just intellectual knowledge it's a direct view into the

01:09:29 nature of reality in ourselves and around us and that's a ... yeah you you're like a you become a professional like to Tour de France bike rider, even somebody pushes you and you can still ride your bike you know you quite able to balance you you're not easily upset you've um you cultivated Anasrava - not leaking- okay so we'll finish here Thank you and welcome for everyone so for those of us who are online we are just starting our order of inter being Retreat and this is just kind of like a

01:10:22 Confluence of our regular Wednesday class and welcoming all of you here...we're so happy to have you here, it feels... I told our uh brothers and sisters in the meeting on Sunday that we don't have to do too much is even have to have an orientation because, these are this is our family, they know the practice, and they'll help us to practice, I didn't say that but anyway I thought that -- I always remember in the plum Village the 21 Day Retreats as a young Monk and just saying oh no I just I don't have

01:11:03 to other Retreats you feel like we always have to be fixing this, or dealing with that yelling child, or you know this person, who's very unhappy about this. but then the 21 Day Retreat and all the OI members come, and we can just like lay back and relax, because everybody knows how to practice. this

is wonderful we just support each other, so much easier, and we benefit we learn-- so Thank you for coming to join us.