



kona Gant: hi

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Stim:)

kona Gant: which room are we in

Stim Morane: Hi Scathach

kona Gant: ok

Stim Morane: kona, are you here for the 2pm discussion? If so, it's over where "Stim Morane" is sitting.

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Solo:)

Solobill Laville: :), HI folks!

Stim Morane: Hi Solo, Fefonz

Stim Morane: Eliza

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Fefonz:)

Fefonz Quan: Hi Scath, stim,

Eliza Madrigal: Hello :)

Solobill Laville: Stim, are you using voice?

Stim Morane: No, text only

Solobill Laville: ok

Pema Pera: hi everybody!

kona Gant: hi

Bleu Oleander: hi

Solobill Laville: hi, pema :)

Stim Morane: Hi Pema

Fefonz Quan: Hey Pema)

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pema:)

Wester Kiranov is Online

Eliza Madrigal: Hello

Stim Morane: I'm getting a lot of lag again ... I may have to log off and return

Pema Pera: I won't be able to stay very long, I'm afraid . . . RL engagement in twenty minutes :(

Yichard Muni: Hello :-)

Fefonz Quan: Hey Yich, nice blue you got there

Stim Morane: Hi Yichard

Yichard Muni: lol

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Eliza, Blue, Kona, Yichard

Bleu Oleander: hi

kona Gant: hi everyone

Eliza Madrigal: Hello all :)

Solobill Laville: :)

Stim Morane: we'll start in a minute or so

Stim Morane: Hi Wester

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Wester:)

Wester Kiranov: hi all

Stim Morane: OK, shall we begin?

Wester Kiranov: yes, let's start

Fefonz Quan: hey wester

Yichard Muni: is voice used, today?

Stim Morane: there's so much lag, I'm a bit concerned ... but let's try.

Stim Morane: This is text-only, Yichard.

Yichard Muni: okie

Stim Morane: Today I would like to talk about the nature and role of View in contemplative practice. People learning meditation these days in both the East and the West often think that View is irrelevant and that the practice will give them everything they need. It might be interesting some time to explore what lies behind this attitude, but for now I'm just mentioning it.

Stim Morane: Before we say more about View on a general level, let's ground our discussion in some actual practice.

Stim Morane: Try this---spend the next two minutes working with the following token practice and view: breathe normally, and count each exhalation. So start by counting the first exhalation as "one", and the second one as "two", etc..

Stim Morane: Frame this practice with the view that an unfocused, scattered mind lies at the heart of many of life's problems, and that the practice should be used to help you learn to control the mind so that it eventually suffers no distractions and enjoys strict, uninterrupted awareness.

Stim Morane: If you lose the count, be aware that that has happened and start again at "one". Don't cheat!
?

Stim Morane: Count towards a total of twenty-one. I'll be the timekeeper, and will stop you at the two-minute mark.

Stim Morane: If someone else enters the café while we're doing the practice, just continue with your breathing. I'll greet them myself and clue them in. You might want to turn your speaker or headset off so you don't hear typing sounds.

Stim Morane: Start the little practice now.

Stim Morane: That's two minutes

Solobill Laville: :)

Stim Morane: Please tell me: are there questions, difficulties or observations you would like to discuss?

Solobill Laville: This is actually a part of practice - do it everyday :)

Solobill Laville: *my

Yichard Muni: what do you mean exactly with the "view"? sometimes words differ from a practice to another

Fefonz Quan: 21, though the mind get distracted between breaths :)

Wester Kiranov: yes, it's amazing what you can come up with between two breaths

Stim Morane: Sorry, too much lag. I'll be back!

Fefonz Quan: did stim just quoted the terminator ? :)

Solobill Laville: Fef, could you describe your distractions?

Fefonz Quan: well, i was hearing a song in the head phones, so jumped to it a little

Fefonz Quan: then to other thoughts, and jumping back to counting at each breath

Fefonz Quan: felt a little like multi-tasking :)

Fefonz Quan: (after the first two times i had to start over)

Stim Morane: Sorry about the delay

Yichard Muni: ... hmmm... I tend to count automatically in the background, when I am distracted :-)

Stim Morane: Yichard, you were asking about the "view"?

Stim Morane: Do you have the text chat description I provided for this 1st exercise?

Yichard Muni: yes, what do you mean exactly, words can differ from a spiritual path to another

Solobill Laville gave you New Note.

Yichard Muni: no, it is the first time I come here

Yichard Muni: ah, you mean, the meditation theme or topic

Stim Morane: Frame this practice with the view that an unfocused, scattered mind lies at the heart of many of life's problems, and that the practice should be used to help you learn to control the mind so that it eventually suffers no distractions and enjoys strict, uninterrupted awareness.

Stim Morane: This view is what guides the method

Yichard Muni: okie

Stim Morane: Fefonz, your experience with the mind is quite normal, of course

Stim Morane: But that's the rationale behind the practice itself, that we're scattered

Fefonz Quan: well, i am dissapointed :)

Stim Morane: :)

kona Gant: so you control your mind or watch it

Stim Morane: Yes, I've had students who thought they were quite advanced who couldn't get to "three" before having to start over.

Stim Morane: But this is normal.

Fefonz Quan was just kidding

Stim Morane: Oh:)

Stim Morane: well, let's try another practice ...

Stim Morane: This time, count the breath as before, but instead of practicing the sort of mind control that figured in the first approach, meet all distractions with compassionate inclusion. So anything that arises within your nature which seems likely to throw you off or make you lose the count should be met in a welcoming and inclusive way... and an appreciative way!

Stim Morane: The view here is that there are no real distractions, only things that we haven't yet learned to appreciate as actually contributing toward a larger sense of presence. Practice that way.

Stim Morane: I will stop you at the two-minute mark.

Stim Morane: Go ahead!

Stim Morane: OK, that's 2 minutes

Stim Morane: Again, questions etc?

Fefonz Quan: 12 now, but no stopping and much less distractions

Stim Morane: I know these sessions are too short, but we can do more of this sort of thing later, I hope.

Solobill Laville: 31...! Can this lead to a trap of "blissing out"?!?

Stim Morane: Good, Fefonz.

Wester Kiranov: That was actually easier than the first one

Fefonze Quan: so guess somehow longer breaths?

Pema Pera slinking away noiselessly to his RL appointment

Stim Morane: Solo, it's possible..

Pema Pera is Offline

Stim Morane: Bye, Pema

Mickorod Renard: 12 on average for me

Yichard Muni: well, I had some really bad thoughts, difficult to accept

Kiremimi Tigerpaw is Offline

Lia Rikugun: 18

Solobill Laville will consider that..

Stim Morane: Yes, this approach is more accommodating, so for various reasons it's "easier"

Stim Morane: But the bliss-out is less likely as one really attends to the point behind the View, which is to appreciate the ordinary.

Stim Morane: So I wouldn't worry about it.

Solobill Laville nods

Fefonze Quan: RL, be back later

Stim Morane: By the way, the lag is gone now.

Lia Rikugun: me too RL

Stim Morane: Oh, later Fefonze.

Stim Morane: Bye Lia

Stim Morane: *Bye

Stim Morane: So are there questions or comments re this second practice?

Eliza Madrigal: Oddly, I'd never done that..have let thoughts come and go, and done breath counts..but never that.

Stim Morane: Yes, this is a little less common.

Stim Morane: But it has much more scope than the 1st approach. That's the point.

Stim Morane: View matters!

Solobill Laville: Indeed

Yichard Muni: what is difficult is trying to fight the random thoughts. This makes them stronger.

Wester Kiranov: then don't fight them

Stim Morane: Yes, that might be true early on. But if you worked with this for a while, I think the random thoughts would not be a problem because they too would be included.

Stim Morane: i.e., included in presence.

Stim Morane: This is very possible.

Eliza Madrigal: Felt like when I want to write or am studying, but pressure free..no real goal to it :)

Stim Morane: Yes.

Stim Morane: But higher-level contemplative practice is much more like this practice than it is like the 1st approach

Yichard Muni: I mean refusing them is much more a problem than accepting them? No meditation path recommends to fight them

Stim Morane: Yes, true.

Stim Morane: But actually I'm supplying the 1st approach as a clear case of a "secular" view.

Yichard Muni: yes

Stim Morane: It's not really a spiritual view at all.

Stim Morane: And in fact, there are some (not so great) traditions that do advocate a pretty repressive view, rather like our 1st exercise.

Stim Morane: Anyway, more comments?

Solobill Laville: Questions...:)

Stim Morane: Yes?

Solobill Laville: What then is spiritual?

Stim Morane: That's for us to decide.

Stim Morane: But hopefully based on more experimentation and evidence.

Solobill Laville: What are some of the repressive approaches?

Stim Morane: These are fairly recent Indian-derived but not classical Indian teachings that emphasize "mind control"

Stim Morane: I won't name them.

Solobill Laville: ok, that is enough, thx :)

Stim Morane: Shall we move on?

Yichard Muni: "mind control" has some nasty sounding anyway

Yichard Muni: sounding

Stim Morane: Yes (shudder)

Stim Morane: But it has figured in some teachings. I want to argue there are better ways, but that's precisely why View matters.

Stim Morane: It's not a technique issue per se.

Stim Morane: OK, let's continue.

Stim Morane: One final practice: count the breath as before, being disciplined and focused but also welcoming toward the messy bits of our mind functions and perceptions that would normally distract us... but attend in particular to the aliveness you can find within each part of the breath. Enter that aliveness and allow it to open up to more of itself.

Stim Morane: This is not about imagining anything, only seeing more of what is there. The view is that this dimension of aliveness is open-ended and central to our existence, our being. It even exists "inside" our distractions! Practice that way.

Stim Morane: I will stop you at the two-minute mark.

Please go ahead.

Stim Morane: Two minutes ...

Stim Morane: Again, questions, comments?

Solobill Laville: This is very interesting

Stim Morane: Can you see the difference?

Solobill Laville: oh, yes

Wester Kiranov: that caused huge gaps between breaths, so I only got to half the count

Stim Morane: Yes

Stim Morane: It's a different View

Stim Morane: It aims us at different facets of our being

Solobill Laville: This is like embracing what I call the "gremlins" in an appreciate way, as part of whole miracle, hmmm

Stim Morane: Yes, it'll like the 2nd practice, but includes an extra dimension

Stim Morane: This is quite ancient, arguably the first Taoist practice.

Stim Morane: It may even predate the Tao Te Ching.

Stim Morane: Or even be the basis for it ... although that's more debatable

Stim Morane: Anyway ... let's summarize.

Stim Morane: The first practice that we did today doesn't really count as being spiritually significant in my opinion. It's really a secular and perhaps even selfish orientation, but it is based on the valid observation that we are more scattered than we should be, and that condition this needs to be acknowledged and dealt with somehow.

Stim Morane: The second two practices illustrate the barest beginnings of entry into a more spiritual orientation, something that is more appreciatively awake.

Stim Morane: The traditional contemplative perspective is that without a View, practice is blind ... like a tool without an informed user.

Stim Morane: Yes?

Stim Morane: Another way of putting this is to emphasize that we always have a view... if we don't avail ourselves of the View offered by an inspired tradition, then we are inevitably and unconsciously falling back on views we already have, views which are probably very habit-ridden, unhelpful, wrongly directed or limited in scope.

Yichard Muni: yep

Stim Morane: This is something I wanted to introduce today, so we could base future discussions on it.

Stim Morane: Comments?

Solobill Laville: What is the diff. btw the 1st practice and traditional "no-thought" practice; e.g. shikantaza, etc.?

Yichard Muni: interesting

Stim Morane: Shikantaza, strictly speaking, is far more advanced.

Stim Morane: It's based on shraddha, "faith" which = confidence arising from understanding, that we are already complete.

Yichard Muni: Shikantaza?

Solobill Laville: isn't that then a leap to something akin to the 3rd practice?

Stim Morane: Everything is then seen as implicitly or explicitly within an enlightened dimension

Stim Morane: It could be. But the 2nd and 3rd are distinct and can develop in distinct ways.

Stim Morane: These latter two little practices could each be the basis of a life-long exploration.

Stim Morane: They are potentially vast.

Stim Morane: Shikantaza is still more vast.

Stim Morane: Anyway ...

Stim Morane: So... the real point of all contemplative practice is simply to come to see the truth of a profoundly-informed or inspired View.

Stim Morane: The view should be something you can see and it should be broadly and pervasively manifest, not narrowly applicable or abstract or dubious.

Stim Morane: This, of course, requires a lot of practice!

Bleu Oleander: so for a beginner, is that the take-home point?

Stim Morane: It might be.

Stim Morane: But I know you will each see different things, which is fine.

Stim Morane: *fine

Storm Nordwind is Online

Stim Morane: My students often say that initially they couldn't understand the View I was teaching at all, and then once they did start see it, they couldn't stop seeing it everywhere they looked. This is the way a View should open up for us.

Stim Morane: Practice is a way of entering "seeing"

Stim Morane: Ultimately there is only the View. No practice is needed. But this involves bringing out a higher mind or appreciative awareness that is beyond self, action or time and that is present in a radically new, uncontrived way.

Stim Morane: In many of my forthcoming Kira Institute presentations, I want to explore with the group how traditional contemplative practices and views function in the context of modern life. Do they need to be restated or at least reconsidered? What new factors and issues do they need to take into account?

Mickorod Renard: cool

Stim Morane: That is the sort of thing I hope to explore with you. But I'd also like to stay grounded, connected to some practice we can do together to make discussion meaningful.

Solobill Laville: perfect

Wester Kiranov: i'd like that

arabella Ella: yes me too

Scathach Rhiadra: yes, me too

Stim Morane: Would any of you volunteer to continue working with the second or third of today's exercises between now and next Thursday, providing more feedback on your experience when we meet again?

Solobill Laville: sure

Bleu Oleander: sure

Scathach Rhiadra: yes

arabella Ella: yes

Wester Kiranov: yes - it made me smile

Solobill Laville: #3

Solobill Laville: :) (Wester)

Stim Morane: OK, good. That would be a big help.

Mickorod Renard: please

Stim Morane: I'm getting a lot of lag again, so perhaps we should wrap up ...

Solobill Laville: thank you Stim :)

Bleu Oleander: thanks

Wester Kiranov: thank you very much

Eliza Madrigal: Thank you. :) Enjoyed this.

Myna Maven: Thank you, Stim.

Mickorod Renard: thankyou Stim

Stim Morane: Thanks! Bye everyone!

Solobill Laville: Bye, all :)

Yichard Muni: Thank you Stim. This was an interesting approach

Scathach Rhiadra: thank you Stim:)

Stim Morane: It is the only approach I'm interested in. :)

arabella Ella: ty stim

Shoal Mahogany: Thank you Stim

kona Gant: yes