



Pila Mulligan: hi Stim

Alfred Kelberry: hey, stim!

Eliza Madrigal: Yes...there was this lemon/cayenne tea recipe going around, but after a few days upset the system a bit...will think to try rosemary

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Stim

Wester Kiranov is Online

Stim Morane: Hi Eliza and Pila!

Pila Mulligan: cayenne is hot, of course

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Alfred Kelberry: i really liked ginger tea advice (korean thing apparently)

Pila Mulligan: we're talking home remedies for colds :)

Alfred Kelberry: i add honey in it

Pila Mulligan: hi Storm

Eliza Madrigal: Love ginger tea...good to fight inflammation

Storm Nordwind: Hi Pila

Eliza Madrigal: with one m...inflamed my word

Storm Nordwind waits to rez

Pila Mulligan: yes, and some garlic also for infectious stuff

Solobill Laville: Hi, folks :)

Eliza Madrigal: :) Hi bill

Pila Mulligan: hi Scath, Fefonz Solo and Wol

Alfred Kelberry: hi, storm, sol

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello all:)

Wol Euler: hello alf, stim, wester, eliza

Alfred Kelberry: oh, so many of you coming in :)

Alfred Kelberry: hey, wol

Wol Euler: and pila :)

Pila Mulligan: hi Wester

Fefonz Quan: Hello all :)

Wester Kiranov: hi all

Alfred Kelberry: btw, pila. i met a guy yesterday, he had a very similar look :)

Stim Morane: Hi everyone!

Alfred Kelberry: em.. forgot his name now

Pila Mulligan: may be a cousin, Alfred

Solobill Laville: Scáth

Alfred Kelberry: yes, could be :)

Eliza Madrigal: I think I'll move because I'll need to leave early...will make room for others

Pema Pera is Online

Solobill Laville: Eliza, is so polite... :)

Eliza Madrigal: I do try... :)

Stim Morane: :)

Alfred Kelberry: eliza, this is most coziest place in the cafe :)

Eliza Madrigal: :) fluffy cushions

Pila Mulligan: hi Pema

Alfred Kelberry: yep and warm fireplace

Wol Euler: hello pema

Alfred Kelberry: hi, pema

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pema

Artemisia Svoboda: hi everyone

Stim Morane: When Storm first build the cafe, I tried to sit in every area ... they all seemed cozy!

Pema Pera: Hi everybody! (sorry, will have to leave at 2:15 . . .)

Stim Morane: Yes, too bad.

Eliza Madrigal: So this is the leaving early section :)

Stim Morane: Let's wait another minute or two, then start.

Pema Pera: :)

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Bleu, Pema

Pema Pera: (yes, it's the lecture series I am leading in RL at 5:15 pm EST)

Pema Pera: Hi Eliza

Solobill Laville: /sca

Stim Morane: OK

Stim Morane: Hello and welcome!

Stim Morane: After two odd starts contending with second life basics and also a computer meltdown, we've just begun to follow a little exploratory journey together. So this is really only the second meeting of our new series on science and contemplation.

Stim Morane: Did some of you do the homework from last week?

Solobill Laville: mmm hmmm

Wester Kiranov: yes

Scathach Rhiadra: yes

Fefonz Quan: a little

Stim Morane: OK, great. We'll get to your experiences in a bit.

genesis Zhangsun is Online

Storm Nordwind looks at his shoes

Stim Morane: Let's start at the beginning then.

Stim Morane: For now, I'm concentrating on the nature and role of View in traditional contemplative practice. The point is to give us all a common ground for some delicate discussions later, regarding how contemplation might be understood in the modern, scientifically-informed context. The implications bear on both theoretical issues and on living --- living in a fully meaningful way.

Stim Morane: So, let's get to work! As before, I want to invite you to perform a couple little contemplative experiments, each hinging on the issue of the power of View.

Stim Morane: We will step through the same set of exercises we used last week, because in fact there is a lot to notice in the performance, the “doing” of such things ... I spent years in mountain retreats doing practices like this, without ever exhausting their significance for life, ethics and spirituality.

Stim Morane: Try this---spend the next two minutes working with the following token practice: 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: This shouldn't be a stretch... such a view is common.

Stim Morane: If you lose the breath 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: Start the little practice now.

Wol Euler: (I want ot close my eyes, will you ring a chime or something please?)

Stim Morane: I'll text a stop, someone else can chime?

Fefonz Quan: i guess

Alfred Kelberry is done counting; looks around

Stim Morane: OK, good ... that's two minutes. Please tell me: are there questions, difficulties or observations you would like to discuss?

Stim Morane: Chime?!

Wol Euler: ty

Wol Euler: (it's ok I heard the typing :)

Storm Nordwind laughs

Stim Morane: For starters, do many of you prefer to keep your eyes closed?

Storm Nordwind: not me

Stim Morane: Yes, I thought so re the typing

Solobill Laville: no

Pila Mulligan: no

Scathach Rhiadra: yes, dometimes

Stim Morane: Good

Wester Kiranov: i like them open

Alfred Kelberry: counting distracts me. keeps me focused on my breath.

Wol Euler <- beginner

Eliza Madrigal: Not with this one

Stim Morane: I would encourage "eyes open" if possible

Stim Morane: But we can talk about that now, if you like

Wester Kiranov: are we supposed to stop at twenty-one, or restart?

Solobill Laville: (beginner = good, Wol)

Alfred Kelberry: i'm alright with eyes open

Stim Morane: If you get all the way to 21, start at 0 again

Stim Morane: but if you get vague about the count, start at 0

Stim Morane: This is central to "seeing the mind"

Stim Morane: A question: what "self" can you see as being centrally involved in this approach? What sense of action, and of time? Do you see how local, determined, and channeled it is?

Pila Mulligan: the breathing self :)

Stim Morane: Yes. :)

Stim Morane: Does the breathing self really help breathing?

Wol Euler: my time sense was completely off, I thought it was about 40 seconds.

Stim Morane: Yes, I fel that way too.

Stim Morane: Partly it's the technical issues, chime, timing etc

Alfred Kelberry: not for me. i find it hard to relax counting.

Stim Morane: And 2 minutes isn't very long to get started on this

Stim Morane: Alfred, does your tight focus on counting help counting?

Wester Kiranov: i got irritated at the texting during this exercise

Stim Morane: Yes, so that would count as a "distraction"

Wester Kiranov: and i wouldn't during exercise # 2 or 3

Stim Morane: Yes, precisely.

Solobill Laville: ah

Stim Morane: Shall we go on to exercise #2?

Solobill Laville: sure

Storm Nordwind: fine with me

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.

Pema Pera is Offline

Stim Morane: Please go ahead.

Stim Morane: That's 2 minutes

Stim Morane: :)

Fefonz Quan: 10.

Stim Morane: Here the view was that everything was included

Stim Morane: Can "distractions" actually contribute to "counting"?

Stim Morane: What do you experience?

Fefonz Quan: they don't contribute, but don't distract neither

Storm Nordwind: I found that I wanted to stop counting to more fully experience the wonderful inclusion of everything else. The counting was the distraction from the inclusion

Stim Morane: OK

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: Interesting, Storm!

Eliza Madrigal: Felt that way too

Wester Kiranov: i found my eyes tended to unfocus a bit

Fefonz Quan: the counting took just a small effort ant time

Stim Morane: But since we're being friendly to distractions, it's not a bad idea to be friendly to the nasty counting!

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Stim Morane: It too is our presence, our life

Stim Morane: Anyway, a good experience you're mentioning!

Stim Morane: Some of you volunteered to work on this practice as homework since last Thursday. Do you have anything you'd like to report, or raise, based on your practice at home?

Solobill Laville: It is easy to smile while doing this

Stim Morane: Yes, I literally do

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: Homework?

Solobill Laville: Yes, that is from my homework

Stim Morane: OK

Stim Morane: so the dog didn't eat your homework

Solobill Laville: I've done it before, just naturally, I guess, but this made it happen

Stim Morane: Yes

Stim Morane: and it is indeed a natural response

Stim Morane: That's part of my point

Stim Morane: anything else?

Wester Kiranov: I found there was more space in 2 than in 1, and much more space in 3 than in two

Storm Nordwind: Happiness spontaneously arises from a peaceful mind

Stim Morane: yes, We'll get there soon ...

Stim Morane: Yes, literally, Storm

Wol Euler nods

Stim Morane: And inclusiveness may be part of that

Stim Morane: otherwise we're back to sights, typing sounds, etc being a "distraction"

Stim Morane: followed by a judgment, etc

Stim Morane: Anyway, moving on...

Stim Morane: Consider: it's easy to think that the first, "control-oriented" practice is somehow wrong-headed, or trivial or unnecessarily limited or limiting. But let's not be too cavalier about this --- I want to ask you now to see how the view implicit in that first approach may actually still be present in your way of using the second, more appealing, approach. Can you see its influence, even in cases where you've officially left it behind?}

Stim Morane: Try the 2nd practice again, but investigate: be sensitive to the question of whether View #1 is infecting View #2. Try it now.

Stim Morane: Another two minutes, of practice 2 ... but seeing if View #1 is lingering

Stim Morane: Start now

Stim Morane: OK, back to the ranch

Stim Morane: OK, good. So ... do you see contamination of view #2 by view #1? Could you let it go? Or is it entrenched?

Artemisia Svoboda: I can feel hardly any difference at all between 1 and #2

Wester Kiranov: I had to let it go because my husband came back from work just now - so I just worked with that

Fefonze Quan: I felt that I shouldn't get back to one, because the parallelism of view 2 is what allows me to go on counting without losing it up

Solobill Laville: It seems to also help to contribute to be aware off these thoughts...like exercise to be able to be more inclusive

Fefonze Quan: view 1 goes to one-task orientation

Solobill Laville: (typo city, sorry)

Stim Morane: OK

Storm Nordwind: This time the counting was not a distraction for me. There became no separation with the breathing, the counting, the fan blowing, the curtains flapping... no separation at all. No inclusiveness, in a way, because all was already included!

Stim Morane: I'm just bringing this up because a truly welcoming, inclusive view is beyond anything that "we" could "do"

Stim Morane: And it is actually a fact, a facet of reality and presence, not something we add.

Stim Morane: Great, Storm

Stim Morane: Exactly

Stim Morane: So for you, the answer is that view 1 and even the limited version of 2 weren't needed because they weren't prior, present

Stim Morane: Anyone else?

Stim Morane: OK. Well ... To extend this point, I maintain that if you are able to learn to see your life more directly, from time to time or even moment to moment, you will see that the first, more control-oriented, approach emphasizing limited horizons and agendas, is actually dominant in the way you live your life, deal with situations, make choices etc.

Stim Morane: But it's not needed

Storm Nordwind: Can we convince our bosses of that though? ;)

Stim Morane: So we'll discuss how to let it go ... but as Storm pointed out, it's already "let go" really.

Stim Morane: Let me know if you find a way, Storm

Storm Nordwind: hehe!

Stim Morane: But really, I think you have already convinced them.

Stim Morane: Anyway, something to consider. My real question is Are we living in a way that's friendly and inclusive, and that benefits from letting everything contribute, or we still narrowly excluding or trimming things away? Investigating this point could be an ongoing homework assignment. Up to you...

Stim Morane: OK. On to our 3rd practice and View:

Stim Morane: 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. Is there a limit to it?

Stim Morane: This is not about imagining anything, only seeing more of what is there. The View here 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: Please go ahead now

Stim Morane: OK ... perhaps we should stop

Stim Morane: Here the issue is not only to include, but to appreciate what we are including

Stim Morane: It's possible to miss that

Stim Morane: Comments? Reports?

Wester Kiranov: I find I sit up straighter when I do this.

Stim Morane: Yes, I'm not surprised

Solobill Laville: :) Good here

Wester Kiranov: in a very relaxed way

Stim Morane: the chi redirect your posture

Stim Morane: there is a serious point here about aliveness ...

Stim Morane: normally we don't notice it

Stim Morane: But when we do, does it have limits?

Storm Nordwind: What kind of limits Stim?

Stim Morane: People usually think aliveness is contained within their organism, their biology

Stim Morane: and that most things are EXCLUDED

Stim Morane: Is this true, as seen directly?

Stim Morane: (this must all be based in part on the previous exercise, of inclusion, of course)

Solobill Laville: The aliveness is infinite, nothing is not included

Stim Morane: we have to include everything in order to consider this properly

Stim Morane: That is what some ancient practitioners found

Stim Morane: but here I'm only asking ...

Stim Morane: it's up to you to explore

Stim Morane: the point is, a view can help to get us started

Stim Morane: as I said last time, without View, practice is blind

Storm Nordwind: It is possible to get caught up in the bliss of the experience and to let yourself become separate. On the other hand, it is possible to maintain that all inclusiveness it seems.

Stim Morane: I see, yes

Solobill Laville nods to Storm

Stim Morane: We can discuss this later, and fine-tune our approaches more.

Wol Euler: I find htat my sense of "outside/inside" has been diminishing with each exercise.

Stim Morane: You have mentioned two of the issues we'll need to consider

Stim Morane: Yes, Wol. Of course part of it is just that we've been relaxing and practicing longer. The 1st two minutes is pretty frazzled

Stim Morane: I wish we had more time together

Wol Euler nudges Gen. Maybe we do need eight days.

Solobill Laville: hehe

Stim Morane: :)Anyway, as I also said, we ALWAYS have a view ... running in the background. In this series, I want to help you become more sensitized to those views.

Stim Morane: Views can poison our appreciation of life, or aid it

Stim Morane: And they also bear on our understanding of theoretical issues

Stim Morane: Like, for instance, the many things people debate when they talk about "contemplation and science"

Stim Morane: For now, though ... would some of you again try to do one or more of these exercises as homework?

Wester Kiranov: sure

Wol Euler nods

Stim Morane: can you apply practices 2 and 3 in the process of ordinary life? Walking, working? Is it helpful to try? Too difficult? How?

Storm Nordwind: Are they on the website too Stim?

Scathach Rhiadra: yes

Stim Morane: Storm, we will post last week's session and this week's shortly.

Storm Nordwind: thanks

Solobill Laville: Stim, how do you relate this to "Right View" in Buddhist terms (8-fold path)?

Wester Kiranov: i tried #3 when falling asleep last week. I got to 4 times 21

Stim Morane: Last week I had so much lag I had to leave, and this left the log a bit broken, But I've fixed it.

Stim Morane: Many of my supposedly advanced students never got past 3

Stim Morane: ... until I forced them to train in this

Stim Morane: The practices I've devised here are drawn from ancient training regimens

Solobill Laville: Chinese?

Stim Morane: The difference is that the ancients would spend years doing one of these, and we spend a few minutes.

Stim Morane: Yes, Chinese Taoists and Buddhist

Storm Nordwind: You recommend the counting as well when integrated with, say, working etc?

Stim Morane: Counting seems like a drag, but it has a value

Artemisia Svoboda: I think it's almost easier to do while doing something else, as well

Storm Nordwind: And the value?

Artemisia Svoboda: but it must be something easy, not work

Stim Morane: It requires and also brings in various features of mind that we need to notice more

Storm Nordwind nods

Stim Morane: Counting is, essentially, our token action.

Stim Morane: AND I want to wean you all off of action.

Stim Morane: To do that, we need something to work with.

Solobill Laville: ah

Stim Morane: Then we can refine the dross away.

Stim Morane: This > "wu wei" (in one understanding)

Stim Morane: It might seem strange to claim that this is all connected to theoretical issues involving science etc

Stim Morane: But I think it will matter for us, going forward

Stim Morane: For me, there are no "theoretical" abstract issues. Only concrete ones.

Stim Morane: Anyway, Homework: can you apply practices 2 and 3 in the process of ordinary life? Walking, working? Is it helpful to try? Too difficult? How?

Stim Morane: You don't need to emphasize the counting when you're walking etc, but you should consider the View components at least.

Stim Morane: Is life facilitated by these Views?

Stim Morane: What kind of mind is involved? What kind of Self? What is released?

Stim Morane: Questions before we stop?

Solobill Laville:Solobill Laville: Stim, how do you relate this to "Right View" in Buddhist terms (8-fold path)?

Stim Morane: We could talk about that next week, if you like.

Solobill Laville: ok :)

Stim Morane: But the basic answer is that "view" means "seeing clearly"

Stim Morane: It doesn't mean holding to a doctrine

Stim Morane: But teachings can provide well-informed or even inspired views.

Stim Morane: So we need to learn the difference between "right View" and dogma

Solobill Laville nods

Stim Morane: a good view is just reality

Stim Morane: That's where we'll finish, someday ... :)

Solobill Laville: Thank you, Stim

Stim Morane: Time to stop for now?

Stim Morane: Thanks, Solo

Pila Mulligan: thanks Stim

Wol Euler: thank you, stim

Storm Nordwind: Thanks Stim

Scathach Rhiadra: thank you Stim

Wester Kiranov: thank you, stim

Bleu Oleander: thank you stim

Artemisia Svoboda: thank you, Stim

Stim Morane: Bye, everyone!

Wester Kiranov is Offline

Pila Mulligan: bye

Scathach Rhiadra: bye

Solobill Laville: Good night everyone!

Storm Nordwind: Bye Solo

Scathach Rhiadra: night Solo

Wol Euler: 'night solo, bye scath

Scathach Rhiadra: night Wol