

The following is a transcript for the workshop of April 16th 2009

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Scath :)
Stim Morane: Hi Scathach
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pila, Gaya, Stim
Rober Varriale: yes, the problem is I have to leave soon :-(
Pila Mulligan: hi Eliza
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Eliza
Eliza Madrigal: Hi Pila, everyone :)
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Eliza :)
Rober Varriale: I would translate it "na razie" or "trzymaj się"
Pila Mulligan: hi Pema
Rober Varriale: nice I have talked polish in SL only once before
Pema Pera: hi everybody!
Pema Pera: Good seeing you again, Gaya!
Mickorod Renard: Hi Pila
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Pema, Wester, Mick :)
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello again Pema, Mick
Pila Mulligan: hi aurel
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Wester, Aurel
Pila Mulligan: hi Wester
Gaya Ethaniel smiles @ Pema. "I've been following the workshop online via the transcripts"
Rober Varriale: nice talking to you, bye
Pila Mulligan: hi Marion
Marion Diabolito: hi
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello aurel, Marion
aurel Miles: hello Gaya
aurel Miles: Hello everyone
Wester Kiranov: hi all/ hi again to some
Mickorod Renard: hi Stim, Eliza
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Storm :)
Eliza Madrigal: Hello Mick, Wester, Aurel, Gaya, Pema, Rober, Stim, Pila, Scath :)
Marion Diabolito: hi gaya
Pila Mulligan: hi Storm
Eliza Madrigal: And Marion
Storm Nordwind: Hi everyone
sophia Placebo: greeting
Mickorod Renard: hi Sophie
Pila Mulligan: gteetings Sophia
Pila Mulligan: r*
Marion Diabolito: hello sophia, i am just starting to learn arabic
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello sophia, Arisia
Marion Diabolito: are you fluent in it?
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Sophia, Ari
sophia Placebo: really marion ? how is it so far?

Eliza Madrigal: Hello Storm, Sophia, Ari, and anyone who arrives next :)

sophia Placebo: yes iam

Pila Mulligan: welcome back Stim, hi Arisia

Marion Diabolito: ah

Stim Morane: I'm having a lot of lag problems again today

Pila Mulligan: ok

sophia Placebo: though i didnt remmber meeting you befor marion

Pila Mulligan: hi arabella

Mickorod Renard: Hiya Ara

arabella Ella: hiya

sophia Placebo: hi arabella

Mickorod Renard: you can sit on my knee if u want?

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello arabella

Scathach Rhiadra: hello Ara

arabella Ella smiles was rezzing and careful not to sit on anyone!

Pila Mulligan: :)

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Marion Diabolito: masaa el kheer, sophia

sophia Placebo: massa e noor

Marion Diabolito: kaifa haloki?

Stim Morane: well, I'm not having much luck today.

Stim Morane: Let's start and see what happens.

Pila Mulligan: ok

sophia Placebo: kifa what?

Stim Morane: n general, in working with people individually or in groups I like to emphasize presentations and discussions based on actual practice. For me, this is the only way to arrive at true mutual understanding and a basis for going forward into new territory.

Stim Morane: Oops, formatting problem.

Marion Diabolito: hmmm kifa halki?

Marion Diabolito: not sure on spelling

Marion Diabolito: :)

Marion Diabolito: كيف حالك؟

Stim Morane: Sorry, I switched computer to get access, but now I'm getting another problem.

sophia Placebo: on what accent you are working marion?

Wester Kiranov: (maybe the people practicing different languages can move to another part of the cafe?)

Stim Morane: So as a novice here in SL, I'm just tinkering around trying to find a topic and "exercise" component that provide this kind of opportunity.

Marion Diabolito: not sure of that either, trying for generic / classical? lingua franca arabic

sophia Placebo: me thought the same wester

Stim Morane: How many of you are here today for the first time?

Marion Diabolito: all i have studied mostly though is ... whatever is in the syria, lebanon palestine etc. area?

Marion Diabolito: sorry storm

Stim Morane: Hello? Marion, are you here for the 2pm forum?

Marion Diabolito: stim, sure

Stim Morane: OK, and others? Newcomers?

Stim Morane: OK, none?

Stim Morane: Well ... Of course, I'm also very interested in just having a free-form discussion with you all, and I welcome suggestions and directions that I personally might not think of as being associated with some approach I initially suggest.

sophia Placebo: oh kiyfa haloki , or keef halik pardon my slow understanding elhamodo lellah

Marion Diabolito: sophia i think we have to go back to other "ways of knowing" :)

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: I'm not sure what meeting I'm in here.

Stim Morane: Let me just start with a question, then.

Gaya Ethaniel: I'm here for Ways of Knowing with Stim...

Marion Diabolito: Stim my notices schedule says "Ways of knowing" Kira Cafe, 2pm (I assume Linden's time)

Marion Diabolito: if that helps.

Stim Morane: Do any of you have any comments about your consideration of the ethical precept, "no lying"?

Marion Diabolito: stim once, a long time ago, i went over a month with no lying

Marion Diabolito: it was terrible

Gaya Ethaniel: I stop more often before I speak since starting the 'homework' to ensure I'm not lying.

Stim Morane: Yes, I can imagine.

aurel Miles: i don't lie

Mickorod Renard: oh yes,,i remember now,,I was terrible ,,very bad

Eliza Madrigal: Stim, just an observation that my lying usually deals with a misguided sense of "manners" to get off of phone calls and such..not attractive :)

aurel Miles: sometimes that means i don't speak

aurel Miles: but i don't lie

Stim Morane: :)

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: However we get there, it would be nice to discover some practice basis for our chats, preferably one that reflects something of the depth and focus of traditional contemplative explorations.

Wester Kiranov: I found that the groundwork of lying lies in deciding to hide

Eliza Madrigal: It isn't that I completely lie...just sort of exaggerate

Stim Morane: Interesting. Can you say more, Wester?

Stim Morane: And Eliza?

Eliza Madrigal: that's it ...trying to do better. :)

Stim Morane: OK

Yakuzza Lethecus: good evening

Gaya Ethaniel nods @ Wester... deciding what to say and what not to say [in my case]

Wester Kiranov: I was wondering whether to cross the street with red lights, and I wondered if that was honest, if I didn't want a policeman to see it

Wester Kiranov: and i decided that if I was going to do something I didn't want the police to see, I was preparing myself to lie

Wester Kiranov: and the i thought that probably is a general pattern

Stim Morane: well, it's a start

Stim Morane: almost anything could get us going in a useful direction, over time.

Stim Morane: So thanks!

Stim Morane: Others?

Stim Morane: First, regarding the precepts against lying, the main issue is not just that ordinary matters of fact be passed on accurately. Any machine like a computer can do that. So for instance someone could "tell the truth" in an ordinary sense all their lives, and still not benefit much. I really mean this --- it might have negligible benefit of the sort that would matter to a contemplative.

Scathach Rhiadra: I found making the commitment everyday made me more aware of what I was saying throughout the day

Stim Morane: The useful and exciting part comes in when taking up and refreshing the precept to tell the truth provides the background for us to become much more aware of what truth is, of why it's important to us (to our integrity and development), and also what is revealed by lapses.

Stim Morane: We promise to keep the commitment, but when we fail (as is very likely), we can notice that more quickly and clearly and can investigate what exactly happened.

Marion Diabolito: For what it's worth I was very faithful

Stim Morane: Does this sound similar to something any of you have noticed?

Gaya Ethaniel nods...

Stim Morane: :)

Marion Diabolito: not even any half-truths or exaggerations

Marion Diabolito: and no problem with new people

Marion Diabolito: but people who knew me were immediately asking about a lot of contradictions

Gaya Ethaniel: My lapses normally occurred when I try not to hurt others feelings - not saying/holding back

Stim Morane: Say more, Gaya?

Stim Morane: Are you saying you "gloss" a bit to make things more comfortable?

Gaya Ethaniel: A friend asked me for a feedback and I didn't think it important to do what she asked...

sophia Placebo: an old saying a friend told me about lying is : if a lie would save you , the truth should give you a better exite and better safety . i tried to find that in daily life practice of avoiding lying but i ended up with half truths which are sometimes worse than lying

Gaya Ethaniel: So initially I thought of making up an excuse but I ended up saying, I haven't got around to it yet rather than telling her what I really thought - a delay tactic >.<

Stim Morane: Well, I'm certainly not suggesting that we hurt other people with a kind of robot-like "truth-telling".

Stim Morane: This latter point is the entry into real contemplation. Many of the great contemplatives of the past did no formal meditation practice in the sense that people ordinarily understand such things. No sitting, no chanting, no rituals, etc. Rather, their practice was centered around a few simple

precepts of conduct, with an extremely vigorous and insightful investigation into any lapses on various levels.

Stim Morane: An aside: I'm sorry for the formatting problem. I'm using a new computer and can't find what's causing it.

Pila Mulligan: it's not a problem Stim :)

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes it is kind of 'glossing over' I did Stim

Mickorod Renard: all is ok stim

Stim Morane: Re the truth, the issue is I want you to have new opportunities to see what is happening with the ordinary mind and sense of self.

Gaya Ethaniel: I read fine Stim

Stim Morane: So Gaya, glossing isn't so bad ... maybe it's even necessary.

Gaya Ethaniel: ok :)

Stim Morane: The main thing is to know what's happening.

Storm Nordwind: As in upaya?

Stim Morane: We can refer to ourselves, know ourselves well, etc in ordinary ways, and never really see much of the subtlety of why we distort reality.

Stim Morane: A commitment to the truth may or may not help with this.

Stim Morane: But if done with a contemplative emphasis, it could.

Stim Morane: This approach may actually be sufficient by itself to realize very high levels of the reality important to "spiritual" contemplative traditions.

But of course, this is only possible when someone puts a lot into it

Stim Morane: Why is all this necessary in the first place? One reason that I briefly mentioned last week is that formal sitting meditation is rather isolated and insulated affair, and may not provide the occasion for us to notice some of our bad habits and mistakes and false views.

Stim Morane: We're just sitting there on our own, perhaps feeling stressed out or perhaps feeling quite comfy and cozy, but either way the world is not directly pushing our buttons in ways that might be revealing.

Stim Morane: Do any of you find this to be the case?

Wester Kiranov: very much so

arabella Ella: don't other people push our 'buttons' Stim?

Stim Morane: It would be better to spend the majority of your meditation time in a more applied, life-centered way.

Marion Diabolito: I was in a 4th way/gurdjieff group for years and taht's how sucyh groups understand meditation etc.

Stim Morane: Yes, that's my point arabella. They do, and that's why working with these ethics commitments in real life can be more revealing.

Gaya Ethaniel: Sittings tend to feel 'detached' in a way for me, if that makes sense.

sophia Placebo: i find courage very helpfull , not in the physical sense but the courage to not fool yourself and not to lie to it , if something is discomfoting you say you are discomfoted and say why and to do that you need to know what is discomfoting you really cuz that discomfot can arise from yourself not from that praticular thing

Stim Morane: Yes, sitting is quite detached.

Stim Morane: courage and truth are inseparable.

Stim Morane: But I would add, sophia, that we can't practice either without more awareness.

Eliza Madrigal: I wouldn't have the courage to be truthful without the sittings personally

Stim Morane: And that's really the point of this group.

arabella Ella: i think lying comes about as part of an attempt towards self-preservation or not to hurt others

Stim Morane: Yes, sitting practice is also important, Eliza.

Stim Morane: We need both.

Stim Morane: Yin and yang, literally.

Pila Mulligan: Gandhi once said if you cannot be non-violent, at least don't be a coward

Gaya Ethaniel: But adding 'View' you mentioned helped me move forward a lot Stim :)

Stim Morane: Yes, the view issue is always crucial. How did it help, Gaya?

aurel Miles: i agree with sophia

sophia Placebo: more awarness of self yes sure stim

Gaya Ethaniel: I got stuck again and started to feel 'flat' which got better since thinking about View and how to apply in my practice.

Stim Morane: Good.

Gaya Ethaniel: :) ty

Stim Morane: The view that guides our work here is to value the lapses. Not the robotic version of truth.

aurel Miles: if i may - i made the committment to no lying nearly 10 years ago and it has changed how i have to think about everything including the things that i choose not to reveal.

Stim Morane: Yes, I can imagine.

aurel Miles: i don't talk about my age because it can be a professional liability

Marion Diabolito: It's good to say none of your business more

aurel Miles: but i had to tell people i would never tell them the truth about that

Marion Diabolito: but i have no firm commitment not to lie, i just avoid it mostly

aurel Miles: and that was hard

Stim Morane: I suppose there are many such issues that have to be handled carefully.

aurel Miles: no

aurel Miles: that's been the only one

Stim Morane: interesting

aurel Miles: it's amazing how much you can open yourself up

aurel Miles: and even more amazing what good comes of it

Stim Morane: Yes

sophia Placebo: and more awarness of self the more acceptance of others , the more you accept yourself and others the more truthfull you are and the more confidance you have in your self being trying to be just the more courage you are < sorry for the disturb thinking

Stim Morane: it leads to a "straight mind"

aurel Miles: but that one - i have chosen not to reveal

aurel Miles: and that one has caused problems

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: well, this too can be instructive.

Stim Morane: Anyway ...

aurel Miles: more than i could have imagined

Stim Morane: Beyond my comment about the value of button-pushing real-life practice, there is the very large issue emphasized particularly in Buddhist contemplation concerning subtle features of our notions and views about ourselves, and subtle patterns and tendencies of the mind. But as it is actually more interested in becoming aware of things already in play in us, than it is in having some sort of new experience. But this emphasis is usually quite difficult for people to hold or use.

Stim Morane: The reason for this difficulty is that we "look away" from what we are really up to and from what matters most in a spiritual sense. The Buddha described this tendency as viparyasa, topsy-turvy-ness, backwards ... our head is on backwards in a sense, and we need to learn to turn our attention around so that we can see where all the really important action is happening.

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Stim Morane: We cannot correct this "backward" orientation by becoming narcissistic or preoccupied with introspection. This is a common mistake made by Western practitioners of meditation. Nor will thinking a lot in the ordinary way about ourselves helped very much.

Stim Morane: Does this comment make sense to you all?

aurel Miles: here's something i wonder about - it does but

aurel Miles: what about what happens when your practice

arabella Ella: how do you think it could be corrected Stim?

aurel Miles: creates a conflict with a member of your family?

Stim Morane: More on that momentarily, arabella

arabella Ella: ty

aurel Miles: sorry - never mind - i wondered about other people's lies

aurel Miles: respecting them

aurel Miles: is hard

Stim Morane: ah. An interesting question, aurel.

Stim Morane: Does anyone have any thoughts about this?

Mickorod Renard: I think everyone should have a chance to start a new day,,in respect to this

Gaya Ethaniel: Sorry Stim, I am still on introspection & practice...

sophia Placebo: i think of respecting other poeple's lie as a lie if you knoe for sure it is a lie

Stim Morane: sure, go ahead gaya

Stim Morane: so would you call them on it, sophia?

aurel Miles: (also known as "secrets")

Gaya Ethaniel: Well sounds contradictory - introspection is needed for watching minds etc... but you have said this to be 'backward'

Stim Morane: ah, I see, Gaya.

Gaya Ethaniel: Do you mean there needs to be a balance or... >.<

Marion Diabolito: I don't think a lot of secrets are healthy, but I also shun perfectionism

arabella Ella nods ... yes Gaya that sounds like an issue for me too

Stim Morane: OK, well I'll respond to Gaya's comment while others are fleshing out their ideas on other points.

aurel Miles: but it is not for me to decide

Marion Diabolito: when i'm doing science i avoid lying completely, tho

Marion Diabolito: :)

sophia Placebo: well dealing with every one indivisually , respect is one thing , how would you show that is another thing and so goes for disrespect

aurel Miles: and yet - if i live my life from truth then i risk betraying secrets

Stim Morane: introspection can and usually is just a further use of ordinary notions and habits we have that don't really let in any new "truth"

Stim Morane: It could, of course, be something better than that. But often it's just a habit.

aurel Miles: i agree completely Stim

Stim Morane: You will know.

Stim Morane: Meditation is not introspection.

Stim Morane: Meditation is directed by a view from some inspired source that helps us see in new ways, look in new ways.

Stim Morane: Introspection is usually rather routinized.

Stim Morane: This is precisely why I say that breaking the precept to be truthful may be helpful in the context of our View here.

Stim Morane: If we are primed to notice what happened there, we may see things we usually gloss over, even hidden from "introspection"

Gaya Ethaniel: Is this related to what you said about engaging last week Stim?

Stim Morane: Yes, exactly

Gaya Ethaniel: ok I think I begin to understand more :)

Stim Morane: Working with the precepts of conduct can help us do this. Telling the truth on an ordinary level may be too blithe and simple, too passive, to really help. But there is the potential for us to learn to notice what usually goes unnoticed for an entire lifetime:

Stim Morane: all the subtle structures of the ordinary mind and sense of self, all the gross and subtle assumptions about what is true with respect to reality at various levels. These are the things that we need to learn to see. And the best way to do that is to see when we make a mistake, and then investigate what myopia was involved.

Stim Morane: Buddhist practice is not concerned with the notion of "sin". It's concerned with recognizing our mistakes, and the ignorance (the unawakeness to reality) that lies behind them.

Stim Morane: Usually, our habits just redirect us away from dealing with this sort of "untruthfulness"

Stim Morane: This is the whole point of what I'm suggesting here in this little workshop.

Stim Morane: But perhaps "lying" isn't the best starting point for some of us.

aurel Miles: i like it

aurel Miles: i mean

Mickorod Renard: sounds better than whipping myself

Stim Morane: Would you prefer "no intoxication"? :)

sophia Placebo: what kind of intoxication?

arabella Ella: mistakes and errors of judgement perhaps too?

aurel Miles: since i decided not to do it - the feelings i used to get from lying come up when i am asked questions about other peoplke

Stim Morane: indeed, there are many kinds, sophia.

aurel Miles: which leads to the idea of no gossip

aurel Miles: or how to keep secrets

aurel Miles: when i'm asked about myself in relation to others

aurel Miles: how do you stay honest/truthful

aurel Miles: and stay compassionatre?

Stim Morane: no ara, I wouldn't worry about mistakes of that sort as bearing on an ethical lapse or disconnect from reality.

Stim Morane: They could be, but perhaps we would give ourselves the benefit of the doubt.

arabella Ella: yes i see

Wester Kiranov: I feel we are just starting with ""no lies

Stim Morane: Yes, hardly even starting.

Eliza Madrigal nods

Stim Morane: But my concern is "what way of practicing works best for you here in SL?"

Stim Morane: I'd like to just get your thoughts and

feedback. Is this approach suited to SL? Why or why not? Should it be modified in some way to be more effective and useful for you? How?

aurel Miles: no lying is really hard here because so many people want to keep their identities secret.

Gaya Ethaniel: No lying is good I think, especially in SL because I think it is easier to lie in SL.

aurel Miles: it's much easier to just spend time alone but that defeats the purpose

Stim Morane: well of course all I mean is I want to give you a practice to do in rl and discuss here in SL

Marion Diabolito: I think it's nuts

Eliza Madrigal: People should be allowed their fictions...it is our own fictions we should watch :)

Marion Diabolito: until the world is way less unequal in terms of power

aurel Miles: right

Marion Diabolito: lying is a necessity

Marion Diabolito: or at least deception and concealment

aurel Miles: but what happens when your truth and their fiction collide?

aurel Miles: or comingle

Stim Morane: this is an interesting point. How many of you think deception is crucial to living effectively?

Marion Diabolito: plus, of course, who gets to decide what lying is?

Eliza Madrigal: You perhaps deal with it with them..find a balance? Hard, I'm sure

Marion Diabolito: which is another power issue.

sophia Placebo: i lie everytime one asked me about my age in sl , a very big lie that no one would believe 98 :))

Stim Morane: Your own awareness should determine that, Marion.

Marion Diabolito: Every time I see the TV news, I believe virtually every word is a lie, really.

Marion Diabolito: but it's a consensus reality.

Stim Morane: that could well be, Marion.

Stim Morane: But I'm concerned with emphasizing another aspect of life ...

Eliza Madrigal: :) Sophia I added two years onto my age online for years...in the end was just silliness

Marion Diabolito: one of my exes said that sort of "lie" is a perhaps more polite but not sure way of saying none of your business.

aurel Miles: i know people in sl who are transparent like me - and some are partnered to people who remain anonymous

Gaya Ethaniel: But for me any of the precepts is fine Stim though some I am unlikely break.

aurel Miles: that is a balancing act, even in conversation

Stim Morane: If you let your life be what the newspaper says, there's definitely a problem.

aurel Miles: i have so many friends here who do not want me to reveal their alts

aurel Miles: and that is a balancing act

Stim Morane: Let's turn this around. I think we're starting at too ordinary a level, perhaps.

Mickorod Renard: that wud be gossip Aurel

Stim Morane: The point of contemplative traditions is that what we are most truly is something profound, something not usually appreciated.

aurel Miles: not always Mick

sophia Placebo: exactly eliza silliness , are jokes lies?

aurel Miles: but to say more would be risking others

Stim Morane: It is precisely our lack of access to this profound dimension that may be addressed by working with the "truth" issue I'm raising here.

aurel Miles: what is the truth in sl?

Stim Morane: we are using sl now.

Stim Morane: Are we not discussing a commitment to truth?

Stim Morane: But that in turn is a beginning, an aid to appreciating the truth in life and in what is beyond ordinary notions of life

Stim Morane: anyway, I value your comments.

Stim Morane: I hope I can find a way to give you a practice angle that supports your own growing appreciation of what is most precious about your existence and nature.

Stim Morane: We should probably start wrapping up ...

Eliza Madrigal: Thank you Stim. I find this all very helpful.

Stim Morane: Well, unfortunately I am too much of a novice here to know how we should proceed.

Stim Morane: But I will try to keep learning.

Mickorod Renard: thanks Stim

Stim Morane: Time to go ...

Gaya Ethaniel: I'd be happy just listening to you Stim whatever the topic. Thank you!

Stim Morane: Bye everyone!

arabella Ella: thanks Stim this is all very interesting!

Eliza Madrigal agrees with Gaya

Marion Diabolito: a beginner's mind, stim?

Scathach Rhiadra: bye Stim, thank you

Marion Diabolito: ;)

Wester Kiranov: bye stim, thank you

Stim Morane: Thanks!

Marion Diabolito: thanks stim :)

Gaya Ethaniel: Good night all

Mickorod Renard: bye everyone,,nameste

Wester Kiranov: bye all

arabella Ella: bye everyone

Scathach Rhiadra: good night all, Namasté

Pema Pera: bye everybody!