

The following is a transcript of the workshop for June 11th 2009.

Monty Tigerfish: Hello Scathach
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello monty
Monty Tigerfish: Hello Stim
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Stim
Stim Morane: Hi Scathach, Monty
Scathach Rhiadra: How are you both today?
Monty Tigerfish: Good, and you?
Stim Morane: Fine, thanks!
Scathach Rhiadra: fine
Pila Mulligan: hi everyone
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Pila
Monty Tigerfish: Hi Pila
Stim Morane: Hi Pila
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello everyone :)
Stim Morane: Hi Gaya
Monty Tigerfish: Hello Gaya
Pila Mulligan: hi Gaya
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Gaya, Wester
Pila Mulligan: 'lo Wester
Monty Tigerfish: Hi Wester
Stim Morane: Hi Wester
Wester Kiranov: hi stim, hi all
Pila Mulligan: hi Mick
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Micko :)
Monty Tigerfish: Hello Mick
Stim Morane: Hi Mick
Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Mick
Mickorod Renard: Hiya Pila Stim Gaya Monty
Mickorod Renard: hey websey
Wester Kiranov: hi mickey
Gaya Ethaniel: :)
Stim Morane: Well ... it's a small group today, but perhaps we should get going anyhow.
Mickorod Renard: hiya scath
Mickorod Renard: I know three others are on route
Stim Morane: Fefonz?
Mickorod Renard: traffic
Mickorod Renard: yes
Stim Morane: OK, we can wait then
Stim Morane: :)
Wester Kiranov: there was no e-mail ionvitation, so people might have forgotten
Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Fefonz :)
Monty Tigerfish: I-70 is slow
Wester Kiranov: brb

Fefonz Quan: Hey All

Monty Tigerfish: Hi Fefonz

Mickorod Renard: yea

Stim Morane: Oh, that's interesting.

Stim Morane: I'll have to check on that.

Scathach Rhiadra: Hello Fefonz

Pila Mulligan: hi Fefonz

Stim Morane: Hi Fefonz

Wester Kiranov: back

Stim Morane: So we've started discussing various traditional teachings regarding "codependent arising" and how they might help our own contemplative practice and life in general.

Stim Morane: We will also consider similar-seeming features of scientific theory ... later in this workshop series.

Stim Morane: As always, my preference is to connect view teachings with actual practice, and vice versa. So I suggested we tie the presentation of codependent arising to our previous work on holding ethical precepts in ordinary life as a form of contemplation.

Stim Morane: Let's start today with an update on how our first volunteers are doing. Gaya and Mick, do you have anything further to report about your experiments?

Mickorod Renard: after you gaya

Fefonz Quan: Mick is such a gentleman :)

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: On alcohol intoxication right ... I did 'drinking meditation' and well got really drunk (my body) than last time for reasons unknown to me. My body says 'enough' for a while ...

Mickorod Renard: grin

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: do you see anything new?

Gaya Ethaniel: I don't have to force 'no' in a way ... I don't feel I need to avoid having wine around home anymore, well not as much as I felt before.

Stim Morane: OK, fair enough.

Mickorod Renard: shall I start?

Gaya Ethaniel: mhm :)

Mickorod Renard: well, as you all know,,I dont smoke much

Mickorod Renard: but, i find what i do smoke is an addiction

Mickorod Renard: and it frustrates me so much,,seeing it has a hold on me

Mickorod Renard: and I make excuses to myself

Mickorod Renard: like,,if everyone took away the problems i wud feel calm and could give up

Mickorod Renard: silly i know

Mickorod Renard: but there is something deep goin on

Mickorod Renard: and I dont like it,,it is an alien inside of me..if u know what I mean

Mickorod Renard: ok,,done for the mom

Stim Morane: so you're saying if life were not so stressful, you wouldn't be so drawn to the smoking?

Mickorod Renard: yes

Mickorod Renard: I am not sure i believe it

Stim Morane: what have you tried so far, re dropping the cigar routine?

Mickorod Renard: I try resisting in the morning

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: how do you "resist"?

Mickorod Renard: so I only can smoke when get home after work

Mickorod Renard: the resistance is like,,not looking

Mickorod Renard: knowing its there,,but trying to dismiss the craving

Stim Morane: OK

Mickorod Renard: like as if u think u can see something bad,,and u will it to not appear

Stim Morane: We'll come back to that.

Mickorod Renard: ok

Stim Morane: Yes

Stim Morane: I've introduced some traditional teaching framed as a series of links. The idea is to break the chain of enslavement to samsara. But that doesn't mean "not smoking", it means "not suffering".

Stim Morane: Could you just "enjoy the cigar"?

Mickorod Renard: yes

Mickorod Renard: but that sounds too simple

Stim Morane: No

Stim Morane: Please try that and report back

Mickorod Renard: ok,,

Stim Morane: really, the issue here is not repression, but dealing with the mind of samsara

Stim Morane: don't let it beat you up so much

Monty Tigerfish: If you can just enjoy the cigar, can you also just enjoy not smoking?

Stim Morane: Yes, that might come later. I'm being sneaky.

Monty Tigerfish: ok

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Wester Kiranov: :D

Mickorod Renard: sounds much better already

Stim Morane: Of course the cigar has addictive ingredients, but I'm not going to worry about that for now.

Stim Morane: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: Stim I have a question, about avoiding, repression and so on ...

Stim Morane: L

Stim Morane: ?

Gaya Ethaniel: This way of dealing with things can become a habit ... I think. What do you say?

Stim Morane: Explain more, Gaya?

Gaya Ethaniel: Well last week, you said avoidance doesn't work and I've been thinking a lot of this ... how avoiding is a kind of habit I employ sometimes unconsciously to deal with various situations.

Gaya Ethaniel: Like Mick said, dismiss the urge, I sometimes push my feelings aside not to feel bad for example.

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: pushing feelings aside could itself mean several things

Gaya Ethaniel: Mostly, just not thinking about them really I meant by it.

Stim Morane: if you can see an attachment, or incitement to a habit you'd like to drop, and see it so clearly that it releases its hold, that's one thing.

Stim Morane: Yes, I see

Gaya Ethaniel: ok

Stim Morane: But ducking things is different ... it may work up to a point, but we can do more

Stim Morane: so yes, habits of avoidance are part of the pattern, not a way of releasing the pattern

Stim Morane: let's really enjoy life, and be free!

Gaya Ethaniel: ok :)

Stim Morane: this doesn't mean being free of everything life has to offer, it means truly appreciating things, with awareness

Monty Tigerfish: I like that idea

Stim Morane: I mean, food is bad for you too.

Stim Morane: Are we going to stop eating?

Stim Morane: etc etc

Mickorod Renard: sounds great,,

Stim Morane: Mick, you have agreed to work with "enjoying the cigar". That means you have to really give it a go ... see what you can do along those lines, and with what consequences (immediate and subsequent), how is your sense of self affected, esteem issues, etc?

Monty Tigerfish: Are you giving us permission, Stim?

Stim Morane: I'm giving you a homework assignment, Monty

Stim Morane: a nice one, but tricky

Stim Morane: So will you report back, Mick?

Mickorod Renard: ok Stim,,I am likely to enjoy this bit

Monty Tigerfish: <--foot in mouth, lol

Mickorod Renard: yes,,certainly Stim

Stim Morane: no, good question, Monty

Stim Morane: thanks

Stim Morane: and you, Gaya? What will you try next?

Stim Morane: up to you ...

Gaya Ethaniel: I did lying and killing this week but will continue with alcohol and whatever else comes up but I do hope to ask questions next week too :)

Stim Morane: OK, good. Thanks.

Stim Morane: Our more recent volunteers, Scathach and Wester, may also have comments about their own investigations.

Wester, would you like to begin?

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you :)

Wester Kiranov: It's in the wiki http://ways-of-knowing.wik.is/3Reports/Wester_Kiranov/Report_16

Stim Morane: uh oh, sorry!

Mickorod Renard: we cud try swapping next week Gaya

Gaya Ethaniel: You want me to take up smoking again? >.< I'm really afraid of it Mick.

Gaya Ethaniel: Afraid of getting hooked again ...

Gaya Ethaniel: So don't ask pls :)

Mickorod Renard: sorry, i was joking,,but its a funny thought

Gaya Ethaniel: It is :)

Stim Morane: thanks, Wester. A nice report.

Wester Kiranov: Thank you

Stim Morane: Last week, toward the end, I was redefining "will power"

Stim Morane: I don't know if my comments seem meaningful, but perhaps as we go they will acquire some application

Stim Morane: the basic point was that "will power" comes from more appreciation of what you really are

Stim Morane: it's a natural thing, not a struggle

Stim Morane: the nature asserts its own character and preference

Stim Morane: does that make sense?

arabella Ella nods

Wester Kiranov: very much

Stim Morane: homework?

Fefonz Quan: that will need further explanation

Gaya Ethaniel nods.

Monty Tigerfish nods

Stim Morane: I can add comments, but really it's something that has to be tried via practice

Stim Morane: the main point is that you are not a "self" in the sense most commonly understood.

Fefonz Quan: do you say that will power is a natural behavior?

Stim Morane: you are a living being!

Mickorod Renard: yes,,feeling appreciation of oneself is likely to make ones confidence build up and desire to look after ones body and soul more

Stim Morane: will power is a natural expression of what you are, beyond the "self"

Stim Morane: yes, Mick

Stim Morane: so Fefonz, I'm not talking about a self gaining more will power.

arabella Ella: do you mean weakness of will gives rise to the chain of bad habits?

Stim Morane: I'm talking about your living nature expressing itself more

Stim Morane: weakness of will = no connection to what you really are

arabella Ella nods

Monty Tigerfish: comforting

Stim Morane: we don't need stronger wills in the ordinary sense, we need to be more truly and fully what we are.

Mickorod Renard: I bet its something like whats leading what?,,like the horse or the man?

Stim Morane: that is very strong

Stim Morane: could be, Mick

Stim Morane: right now, we've got strong identifications with a self that we are not, really ... in any important sense.

Stim Morane: that is a weak position

Mickorod Renard: maybe when I started cigars,,they had a well being image..now i think of them as dirty

Stim Morane: and it is precisely what feeds notions of giving up things, feeling bad about failures, etc

Stim Morane: Mick, part of you may feel that way.

Mickorod Renard: yes

Fefonz Quan: it sounds comforting, though the hidden variable remain 'what we really are'

Stim Morane: But nothing will change until there's a more integrated perception

Stim Morane: Fefonz, start with what you think you are.

Stim Morane: Look into that

arabella Ella: is there any way Stim in which we can help each other in finding out 'who we think we

are'?

Stim Morane: Can you find ways to expand or grow into yourself that aren't just feeding the ordinary notion, the story, of who you are?

Stim Morane: good idea, arabella

Stim Morane: perhaps you will all come up with answers. Community is important in this regard.

arabella Ella: yes

Stim Morane: We human beings are social, through and through

Fefonz Quan: it is hard to go beyond the story.

Stim Morane: yes, Fefonz.

Stim Morane: But no "contemplative spirituality" is forthcoming otherwise

Stim Morane: it's not skippable

Mickorod Renard: are we not just the story we create?

Stim Morane: That's for you to decide, Mick

Fefonz Quan: and some direction of going beyond it are quite megalomaniac

Stim Morane: I would say "no", but that's not helpful

Stim Morane: yes, true, Fefonz.

Stim Morane: Perhaps there is a natural alternative

Mickorod Renard: ?

Stim Morane: we don't need to become impressive, or oddly strong-willed, just to relax and enjoy what life is

arabella Ella: a natural alternative?

Stim Morane: we are the natural alternative

arabella Ella: i get an image Stim

Gaya Ethaniel: There are times for me that I feel freer ... I notice my posture getting better in those times normally.

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: yes

arabella Ella: of us filling up a new 'skin' or image of our true self

arabella Ella: as a whole human being

Stim Morane: the ordinary self imposes a posture on us

Stim Morane: yes, ara

Fefonz Quan: and the breathing gets deeper

Stim Morane: great image

arabella Ella: like a balloon

Stim Morane: uh oh

Stim Morane: that might be risky

Stim Morane: :)

Mickorod Renard: I guess we project our story in front of our now,,this is the ever repeting trap

Monty Tigerfish: I like the metaphor

Stim Morane: anyway ... Scathach, do you have some things to report?

Scathach Rhiadra: yes the report is on the wiki

arabella Ella: i dont mean a baloon as arrogance ... far from that ... more like a baloon in the form of our true inner self

Scathach Rhiadra: http://ways-of-knowing.wik.is/3Reports/Sc%c3%a1thach_Rhiadra/Report_16

Stim Morane: oh, interesting case

Stim Morane: very challenging
 Fefonz Quan nods
 Stim Morane: ideas, anyone?
 Pila Mulligan: Scath, maybe you could make a little moat around the anthill, with an opening directed away from your clothesline :) ?
 Fefonz Quan: kill the musquito before it bites you? :)
 Scathach Rhiadra: report was a bit sparse, not used to writing like that:)
 Stim Morane: good to be concise
 Scathach Rhiadra: it is a concrete yard
 Pila
 Stim Morane: so why are they there?
 Mickorod Renard: kill them,,it is a test..he he
 Scathach Rhiadra: there are a lot of cracks, they come through them
 Stim Morane: now now ...
 Gaya Ethaniel: puha
 Stim Morane: so you're not feeding them in any way?
 Gaya Ethaniel: Mick, have a cigar and relax :)
 Monty Tigerfish: trash can?
 arabella Ella: could you sweep them away with a broom out of the yard elsewhere and give them food there to breed outside?
 Fefonz Quan: lol Gaya
 Mickorod Renard: when I was a child I loved ants,,they were so facinating
 Scathach Rhiadra: no, I don't think so
 Wester Kiranov: borrow an anteater?
 Stim Morane: that's a big problem then.
 Mickorod Renard: and I would be the king of the army of ants in the garden etc
 Stim Morane: and they bite you?
 arabella Ella: get some lizards or frogs in the yard too
 Scathach Rhiadra: funnily enough the idea of borrowing an anteater did occur to me:)
 Stim Morane: :)
 Gaya Ethaniel: :)
 Stim Morane: good luck
 Stim Morane: well, that's hard.
 Scathach Rhiadra: yes they bite!
 Monty Tigerfish: anteaters 'R Us
 Mickorod Renard: isnt that like killing them?
 arabella Ella: food chain?
 Scathach Rhiadra: or interfering with nature maybe?
 Stim Morane: all I can say quickly is that you can at least work with your own mind.
 Stim Morane: the rest sounds tricky
 Scathach Rhiadra: anteaters are not natural here
 Stim Morane: you're in Scotland?
 Scathach Rhiadra: Ireland
 Stim Morane: yes, sorry
 Fefonz Quan: if you cook them the food chain remains
 Stim Morane: I didn't realize ants were so aggressive thee

Stim Morane: *there

Mickorod Renard: you cud pull all there legs off,,that way u havnt killed them but they stop annoyingyou

Gaya Ethaniel: People eat ants in Israel?

Stim Morane: :)

Wester Kiranov: I hear frying them is tastier ;)

Scathach Rhiadra: yes I am not the only person in the neighbourhood who has the problem

Fefonz Quan: nope, was just trying to cheat the sstem :)

Stim Morane: what a bad group of people

Stim Morane: i'm shocked

Stim Morane:)

Gaya Ethaniel: -_- sorry

Stim Morane: :)

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

arabella Ella: could you not patch up the cracks in the concrete yard?

Stim Morane: well ... this is at least worth reading up about, or consulting some local help

Scathach Rhiadra: um, without killing them?

arabella Ella: they will find another way out

Mickorod Renard: but still a test Scath

Stim Morane: meanwhile, see what happens to your mind and emotions, and work on those levels

Scathach Rhiadra: ok:)

Fefonz Quan: but humor aside, this is a real issue stim, with other bugs too.

arabella Ella: sweep them with a broom on to a newspaper and drive out to a field to leave them there

Stim Morane: sometimes there is no simple answer on the external level

Stim Morane: :)

Stim Morane: ants are hard to move en masse

Stim Morane: it's a collective entity

arabella Ella: i only suggested thhat cos i have done it in the past myself with ants in my kitchen

Stim Morane: yes, you can do it with the scrounger ants

arabella Ella: or spiders too

Pila Mulligan: I use a human mouse trap and have found I need to take the little buggers quite some distance to release them or else they return

Pila Mulligan: humane*

Stim Morane: but the whole colony would be tough to move

Pila Mulligan: = non-lethal

Stim Morane: yes, that's been so forever, Pila

arabella Ella: he he i was wondering what a human mouse trap would look like

Stim Morane: there are a lot of stories about that in Tibet

Pila Mulligan: :)

Stim Morane: well ... perhaps we should move on.

Pila Mulligan: they almost knock on the door when they get back

Fefonz Quan: A big cheese inside Ara :)

arabella Ella giggles

Stim Morane: I'm sorry I don't have a neater comment or solution re this last issue

arabella Ella: a chameleon would feed on ants too i think

Gaya Ethaniel: Sometimes maybe, something needs to die ...

Fefonze Quan: killing but with a clear mind and no hate?

arabella Ella: well there is also sometimes the problem with roaches

Monty Tigerfish: things die every day

Mickorod Renard: I think the degree of the problem is the degree it effects you in the mind

Scathach Rhiadra: well I can see how you mean work on the mind, the internal

Stim Morane: my main concern is to raise the possibility that you can all find ways to apply the traditional formula of 12 links, and other, more subtle teachings, to your own lives.

Stim Morane: A famous ancient Theravadin teacher named Buddhaghosa offered a simple (sad) story to illustrate the traditional cycle of 12 links:

Stim Morane: 1. the blind person does not see what's in front of him; 2. he stumbles; 3. he falls; 4. he develops an abscess; 5. it gets worse & stuff accumulates in it; 6. which presses on it, and 7. hurts; 8. he longs for a cure. 9. has recourse to the wrong doctor; 10. uses the wrong ointment; 11. so the abscess swells up; and 12. bursts.

Stim Morane: Ick.

Gaya Ethaniel: ouch#

Stim Morane: The idea Buddhaghosa's story offers is that once we move in the wrong direction, the very things we use as remedies actually make our problem worse, etc etc.

arabella Ella: yes

Stim Morane: It would be comical if it weren't so tragic. Tragicomical, I guess.

Mickorod Renard: yes

Fefonze Quan: hmm, interesting

Stim Morane: Have you seen this tragicomedy play out in your own lives?

arabella Ella: like a downward spiral

Mickorod Renard: I have made observations like that in my rl

Stim Morane: yes

Stim Morane: So contemplatives using the traditional teaching try to see how the 12 links scheme applies re where they are at a given moment ... then they run the scheme forward and back, getting more acquainted with their situation in these terms. The 12 links can be used to cover how we get into trouble, and also how we get out (see what the cause was, see the result, etc., learn to not set up the cause, be free of the result, etc).

Gaya Ethaniel: When I can laugh about them, maybe I can talk about them >.<

Stim Morane: But again, please concentrate on seeing your situation more clearly, before you worry about breaking the chain, getting off the train.

Stim Morane: yes, Gaya

Stim Morane: And don't confuse already being very familiar with what tends to happen with real seeing ... traditional teaching is supposed to give you views, focusing agents, that are closer to what useful seeing would be like. Our ordinary perceptions, thoughts and judgments are not "seeing". OK?

Gaya Ethaniel: How can I deal with fear better Stim? Seeing more will naturally help with that?

Mickorod Renard: hold on Stim,,I need to understand that

arabella Ella: yes stim could you expand on that a bit more please?

Stim Morane: So what should I try to clarify?

Gaya Ethaniel: My question can wait :)

Stim Morane: OK, thank, Gaya

Fefonze Quan: "Our ordinary perceptions, thoughts and judgments are not "seeing". OK?" for now that

is what we have

Mickorod Renard: ok,,but dont we all run multi universes through our minds all the time?

Stim Morane: we use our ordinary perceptions and judgments to recognize and focus in on our "problems"

Stim Morane: but these are themselves part of the problem

Stim Morane: so we can't just rely on those ways of learning about an issue

Mickorod Renard: I see

Stim Morane: this is why there are traditional teachings ... they are meant to replace our ordinary perspectives

Stim Morane: OK?

Mickorod Renard: our own perceptions may be „not correct?

Pila Mulligan: like seeing something in a different light?

Monty Tigerfish: That's a hard lesson to learn, STim

Stim Morane: Yes

Mickorod Renard: yea

Stim Morane: It's difficult, but otherwise we're trying TO SOLVE THE WRONG PROBLEM, USING THE WRONG REMEDY

arabella Ella: but ... if we manage to develop communal learning amongst ourselves ... do you think we could also help each other to change our perceptions Stim?

Mickorod Renard: this is why we need some „like commandments

Stim Morane: great point, ara

Monty Tigerfish: I've been looking for that too, Mick

Stim Morane: yes, that is, I hope, part of what we can accomplish here

Stim Morane: and there are ways to do even more along those lines

Stim Morane: but commandments, no ...

arabella Ella: good ... only ... as i was discussing at PaB, if we help each other out there I would prefer it not to be chat logged

Monty Tigerfish: The wrong path.....

arabella Ella: signposts perhaps?

Gaya Ethaniel: I just question my perceptions whenever I can ... this helps. Is this kind of practice you mean Stim?

arabella Ella: showing us the path?

Stim Morane: I see, ara

Stim Morane: well, I'm not sure what we should try to work into our little meetings, then, vs elsewhere in SL

Stim Morane: we'll have to consider thi

Stim Morane: this

Mickorod Renard: learning from mistakes is ok to a degree,,if u are old like me

Stim Morane: Gaya, we can start from that point ... but what do you do once you've questioned a perception?

Monty Tigerfish: and me

Stim Morane: :)

arabella Ella: what i meant stim was that if certain discussions become too revealing, the idea that our chat is being logged may be an inhibitor

Stim Morane: yes, I understand, ara

Gaya Ethaniel: Just examine why I felt/thought that and so on and really check if I'm sure that is the case.

Stim Morane: it's up to the group, I guess

Stim Morane: OK, Gaya.

Mickorod Renard: yes,,we may get arrested

Wester Kiranov: as i understand, you can always ask parts of the chat not to be looged on PaB

Gaya Ethaniel: I'm at that stage ... Stim.

Wester Kiranov: *logged

Stim Morane: Well perhaps something we introduce here can help with that "checking", Gaya

Scathach Rhiadra: and we could make the wiki private

Gaya Ethaniel: yes?

Gaya Ethaniel: Another focusing agent??

Stim Morane: unfortunately, we're out of time

Stim Morane: Gaya, the teaching itself is intended to be our focusing agent

Gaya Ethaniel: ahhhhh

Mickorod Renard: I nearly wanted to swear when u said that Stim

Stim Morane: but that only works based on trial and error, iterative attempts

Stim Morane: which, Mick?

Mickorod Renard: about time up

Stim Morane: Which, Mick?

Stim Morane: oh, sorry

Pila Mulligan: thanks, Stim, and as usual it was a most interesting hour

Scathach Rhiadra: :)

Wester Kiranov: have to go, sorry, rl

Wester Kiranov: bye

Gaya Ethaniel: ok :)

arabella Ella: bye wester

Mickorod Renard: yes,,thankyou Stim,,very nice

Scathach Rhiadra: bye Wester

Stim Morane: OK, bye Wester!

Gaya Ethaniel: Thank you Stim and everyone :)

Monty Tigerfish: Thanks again, Stim

arabella Ella: thank you Stim

Fefonze Quan: quite a cliffhanger we got today :)

Mickorod Renard: bye wester

Fefonze Quan: bye wester

Stim Morane: remember, Mick ... try to enjoy, and see what happens!

Scathach Rhiadra: thank you Stim, good night

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Mickorod Renard: ok,,I need enjoy

Stim Morane: good night!

Stim Morane: bye everyone

arabella Ella: nite

Fefonze Quan: night Stim

Mickorod Renard: nite Stim

Gaya Ethaniel: Smoking meditation :)
Scathach Rhiadra: good night all, Namaste
Fefonz Quan: Bye Scath
Mickorod Renard: bye Scath