

alrighty then hello and welcome to

question and answer number

126 I am your host poo basa and this is
my

beverage and this is the emergency

backup beverage just in case furthermore

this is the jar of sacred Sav and this

is the Cajun seasoning so I'm ready for
anything

except for maybe few of the questions

that I'm going to attempt to

answer so I'll just ceremonially remove
the little paper

umbrella from the

beverage take the preliminary Sip and

I'll just uh wade into this in a state

of being unwashed and

unkempt cuz I didn't bathe today I bath

twice yesterday so so man I just twisted

my tongue trying to say

that so without any further

Ado I'm going to answer questions here

or at least try to answer questions the

first one is one of the more difficult

subtle kind of question from Master Poe

which is what you would expect from

Master Poe and Master Po says if one

enters Nirvana or enters

n if one enters Nirvana can one also

exit

Nirvana and who is it that achieves

Nirvana or anything for that matter

being no self in

Buddhism

well it all depends on how you look at it I guess for example if you look at it from the point of view of Orthodox terraa before you become fully enlightened and according to Orthodox terava even a fully enlightened being when they're alive anyway they enter Nirvana so to speak for like a trillionth of a second like an Arun can do it at will do he wants to enter Nirvana for a trillionth of a second he just goes right ahead and does that and then you go into a kind of very brief coma and then you just regain normal Consciousness

again which is not very convincing to me
I really have a little difficulty in
swallowing that
information

so I mean really there's no entering of
Nirvana there's nobody that enters
Nirvana the whole thing is a paradox and
I say it over and over again and people
don't like not having things
resolved

so I really don't know what to tell you
like in in Mahayana they play up the
Paradox you know they point out out
there is Enlightenment but there's
nobody that becomes enlightened you know
there's no real state that you can point
at it's just kind of paradoxical because

it is off the scale the intellect cannot
understand it you can't

intuitively understand it with your
feelings

even but some people they're just not
satisfied with this they want to grasp
nervon and what it's all about and so
they'll just keep asking until finally
some somebody possibly a charlatan will
give them this smooth tonged glib answer
that is emotionally satisfying and there
you go but the problem is any kind of
emotionally satisfying explanation of
what Nirvana is is going to be just as
invalid as an emotionally unsatisfying
explanation of what Nirvana is is or

like the whole mechanism of
Enlightenment like for example the the
second part of Master Po question is who
is it that achieves
Nirvana nobody there never was
anybody so in a way what Nirvana is is
you've got this
delusion that's like a flame it's it's
not the same from one moment to the next
there's no abiding self Essence to this
delusion that you can point
at and then when that dies down then the
Nirvana the the reality that was there
all the time shines
through
so who is it that achieves Nirvana there
nobody achieves it there is there was

nobody to begin with it's not like in Buddhism you annihilate yourself because there was no real self to annihilate anyway if you annihilate anything it's the delusion of self so it's just the delusion fades out maybe temporarily the Nirvana shines through and then the delusion comes back again at least in someone who isn't fully enlightened in my opinion someone who is like a as fully enlightened as a person can possibly be then they're in Nirvana all the time and all the mental states are no longer delusion they might still be kind of superficial illusion they're just not believed in

anymore they become

irrelevant

so I don't think there's any

real satisfying way of explaining

Nirvana

so I'll probably keep trying though

because people will keep asking the

question and some people are just too

lazy or too to inconsiderate or whatever

to watch all

125 of the previous q&as just to find

out if the question they're curious

about has already been answered and it

often has just about every Q&A though I

will get like a unique answer or

question that I've never been asked

before so anyways let's just kind of do

a little synopsis of this if one enters Nirvana can one also exit Nirvana well I mean there's no entering or exiting but I mean from the Orthodox terraa point of you when when you're alive you experience Nirvana even if you're a fully enlightened being you're only going to experience it for this brief flash a momentary flash because terraa Terra philosophy tried to integrate their explanation of reality into a a single piece it's all of a piece supposedly but they wound up with like this two-dimensional plane and it does not explain reality very well because you've got different levels of reality

that are all trying to be explained at
the same level of reality for example by
Abid dama and the commentarial tradition
which is
orthodox

so it's more Nirvana is more more of at
first maybe a fading out of delusion
until finally it just gets to the point
where the it's like these
perceptions that used to be believed in
are no longer believing in themselves
because there's no self to believe in
them it's just sort of a
self-referential kind of a thing and
then they just become sort of denatured
and irrelevant so that a fully
enlightened being can be in a state of

Nirvana while same time walking around
and talking and making noise and
stuff so I'm just going to move on to
master Poe second question
though which is kind of a followup from
a previous answer that I gave on a
previous Q&A if some actors might go to
hell couldn't the same be said of
fiction authors entertainers in general
so there is uh like an Infamous
notorious suta in the poly text in which
the Buddha does say that actors go to
hell and sort of the ancient Indian
ethical explanation for that is that
actors are encouraging delusion by
manufacturing fake realities that people

believe in while they're watching the play and I think it's rather extreme I think a lot of ancient Indian aesthetic ethics are a bit on the extreme side even though do is supposed to be the middle path between extremes still it is to some degree a product of ancient Indian culture which was fairly rigorous in its denunciation of worldliness of a worldly life of sensuality and so actors in addition to being sensual people as a general rule show business people are notorious and always have been as long as as long as there's been Show Business still that's really not the uh

the Buddhist the ancient Indian
explanation of why actors go to hell
it's not like they're moral degenerates
which is the way most cultures
traditionally have looked upon show
business people it's it's a whole
different reason in in terraa Buddhist
ethics and so anyways Master Poe is
asking if actors can go to hell for
creating full realities that people
believe in at least temporarily couldn't
that be this a similar case with fiction
authors and personally I do think that
it's the ethics
of some
artist like writing a screenplay writing

a a play writing um or just acting in a
play acting in a movie writing a novel a
short story whatever it's it's should be
judged on a person byerson basis because
some authors and even some
actors they may be acting in the case of
the actor in a spiritually uplifting
sort of movie know some people find
certain movies profound and
helpful

so I think it should it could be judged
on a a like a case by casee basis
fiction authors I think

I don't know it's it depends on what
kind of fiction they're writing you know
some some fiction writers are writing
uplifting stuff like what Richard Bach

for example I think that's his name he wrote Jonathan Livingston Seagull and Illusions and so forth which are profound

so yeah I some can go to hell just like some you know bus drivers can go to hell it's just uh depends on their what they're doing and their attitudes with regard to what they're doing what their motivations are what their will is with regard to

it it Sugg justs that from a an orthodox Terra Buddhist point of view uh creating false realities like I mean they didn't have fiction writers in the Buddhist time they probably had something like an

ancient Indian equivalent of a Bard you
know people who would recite ancient
legends and so forth
who from the strict ancient
Indian Buddhist point of view were
probably like a bit on the immoral side
but I mean just about anything you do in
Buddhism is immoral to some degree just
putting salt and pepper on your food to
make it taste better is wallowing in
sensuality to listen to music on the
radio as you drive your car is wallowing
in
sensuality so
yeah I mean it's possible and it depends
in my opinion on the individual and what
their motives are and that sort of thing

so I'm just going to move on to master
Po's third question which is is there
the word ego in any of the poly sutas
texts or its equivalents well it depends
on what you mean by ego like for example
in the Freudian sense no because I mean
Freudian psychology did not exist in
Ancient India I mean it's it's sort of
like a a modern Western Innovation is
the idea of the
ego but ego in Latin means I am and
there's a lot of references to I am in
the texts like let's see AAR which is
like I making which is something that's
not good and you could call that like
the ego it's like the part of your mind

that identifies with itself in a
sense like the self identity the
conscious sentient self identity I guess
or just the personality the outward
personality something like that um with
Asam Mana the conceit I am so I mean
there's a lot of talk about that in in
the poly texts you know just the concept
of a self or I am which is I'm pretty
sure what ego literally means in Latin
is I am I could be wrong I'm no Latin
scholar but I mean you have sort of
rough crude equivalents to an ego um
especially with regard to self view just
believing that I am you know it's like
personality view there's a lot of talk
about that in different words in poly in

the poly

texts but as a Freudian term

um yeah it just doesn't exist because

the whole the whole idea of you know the

ego the ID the super ego you know the

edus complex and all this that's

Freudian psychology which didn't really

exist and even you know like a early

19th century English speaker wouldn't

know what you were talking about

probably if you start talking about the

ego or like especially like the ID and

super ego and that kind of thing it may

be that Freud just borrowed a term that

was already existent in the English

language I really am unfamiliar with the

evolution of the word ego in English so yeah with regard to self view you know aami Mana or aamar words like that like Sakaya DT you know there's a lot of terms that are like related to the idea of believing in ones self's like ultimately real existence but ego in the Freudian sense is uh a refinement of the term at least that is is alien to ancient Buddhist philosophy so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from TIG and this could theoretically be the last question I get from TIG because he has been booted from the Discord server and I mean those of you who are

familiar with his questions know that his questions usually have nothing to do with dhama sometimes they're just sort of like trolling joke questions and that's pretty much why he got ejected from the server because of just like chronic irre irreverent trolling you know just sort of like cynical sarcasm that kind of stuff and just bragging about how drunk he got the night before and and recommending certain brands of whiskey and and so forth on a Buddhism like themed server yeah he he received warnings and he was he was ejected he chose to disregard the

warnings so anyways his question is do you play loud music when driving the forklift and technically it is against the rules to listen to music while driving a forklift at least at the place where I work anyone at least people are warned that if they're caught with headphones or earbuds on while they're working they'll get suspended just because you have to be very alert and aware of your surroundings and when you cannot hear somebody yelling or blowing their horn at you that kind of thing then that is an unsafe situation and although other unsafe situations apparently are allowed that particular unsafe situation is not allowed so I

probably even if it were allowed like
the the two previous places where I
worked it was it was allowed to listen
to music but you could only have like
one earbud in you always had to have at
least one ear unob
unobscured by something stuck into
it so yeah I think I answered that
question I'm moving on to the next
question this is from Arin and Arin says
what is the best Brahma vihara resource
s and the Brahma weh haras have never
really been particularly interesting to
me it's the the four Brahma we haras
there's a lot of um a lot of discussion
about them a lot of teaching with regard

to them um in Burma and also in the west
maybe a little more in the west than in
Burma and it's the four Brahma wehar are
the Divine

abiding are meta or

generally loving kindness mudita or like
sympathetic Joy being happy at another
person's

happiness um no that was the third one

karuna is the second one which is

compassion and the fourth one is UPA or

equinity and there are a number of books

written just on the Brahma viharas and

because I was never particularly

interested in the in the subject I

haven't read any of them but I do know

that they exist and um I'm sure that you

could do a little research you know just ask somebody that knows more about the subject than I do what is the best book about the four Brahma weara and it may be that aan tanero has written something or beu B or or

somebody but I'm sure that there are several at least books just on the four prah

Horas but again I was never never particularly interested in that it's like when when you study Buddhism generally you you sort of resonate with certain teachings and gravitate in that direction other teachings just like the four elements also for me I have a minor

in chemistry from the
University it's like air water Wind and
Fire trying to understand matter through
interpreting everything as combinations
of earth water Wind and Fire and the
Buddhist interpretation is a little
more subtle than maybe most ancient
Greek interpretations but still it just
it's like a dud it just doesn't work for
me and so um I've had kind of a similar
attitude towards trying to cultivate the
Brahma viharas like love loving kindness
meta which is the most famous by far
like if you're if you're going to
practice any Brahma weara meditation
like at a meditation group like a
meditation hall or something it's almost

always Mata I've never heard of any kind
of guided equinity

meditation of you know within the the
context of the four Brahma viharas or
sympathetic Joy meditation I've never
never come across that but meta

meditation it's

everywhere and I forgot where I was even
going with that why did I even start
with

that oh man yeah I I got so lost in in
in exp explaining my terms that I forgot
the whole point of starting the
sentence which does happen

sometimes yeah yeah I completely lost it
but I mean the four Brown We hars There

are books on the subject you can do a little research and find a good one you know read the reviews on Amazon or something and then you'll know but yeah oh uh I was just saying that it came back to me that it just never really resonated with me like meta is trying to like develop a switch for meta or a knob that you turn it it's it's it has to be spontaneous for me I can spontaneously gush meta at times but I'm not going to sit there systematically like you read the the text you're like some in in some ways of doing meta meditation you're like beaming it in One Direction and then you're beaming it to all beings in this other direction then this other

direction and then you might do it by
category you know beaming loving
kindness towards all male beings and all
female beings and all human beings all
subhuman beings all superhuman beings
and just going through this like a
laundry list of these different
categories of beings that you're sending
meta to and it just it just never work
for me at
all but it works for some people some
people are really into that uh some
people are just more touchy feely than I
am I'm more of a head oriented person
but a more heart oriented person might
really get a lot of benefit from the

four Brahma with harass and I'm not trying to bash it at all and I'm just moving on to the next question so what I'm doing this is from covac and sead zida and seac and CAD zida he'll ask a number of questions on the same theme sort of like a a yabut kind of followup to the previous question and so we're we're on like number three of questions from covac c z not regarding the karma of becoming

unconscious so coaction CAD Z says since you say that you could have Karma to make your unconscious as you don't feel the passage of time then why do you think the same can't apply to people who had been doing a meditation

of going unconscious and then ending up
in an unconscious rebirth as a non-
prient Brahma being and I think he just
absolutely does not get my answer it's
like when you are unconscious you are
unconscious there's no mentality going
on consequently there's no Karma
reaching fruition you're not burning off
Karma while you're completely
unconscious maybe if you're asleep and
merely appear to be unconscious but
there's still some mentality going like
like you're having dreams and so forth
there could be some relatively subtle
like karmic um I don't know what you
call

it EB and flow you know you're creating Karma and expanding Karma to some degree in a dream state presumably but the thing is like I said the last time it's like if you were going to go completely unconscious like you're in a coma the only Karma that you're going to have is like a sudden shift in scene a sudden shift in circumstance so it's you've got this weird Karma of just maybe you don't have any karma for the years 2005 and 2010 it's like for some reason you just got to skip that so you just your mind just shuts off in 2005 and then you wake back up in 2010 nothing has happened subjectively in between it's just a

sudden shift in scene and maybe you have
a karma for a sudden shift in scene you
have the karma to all of a sudden your
body is 5 years

older something like that but still

you're not going to be expending any

karma when you are totally

unconscious so I mean getting back to

the the brahmas the perceptionist

brahmas I've got a little popup window

here trying to sell me

something perceptionist brahmas

supposedly

they occupy a heaven realm that is far

above the human realm according to the

31 PLS of existence scheme of Orthodox

terraa Buddhism there's this one plane
this Heaven Realm of the perceptionist
brahmas where they are like statues they
have no mentality going on because
according to Abid dama according to
Orthodox

terraa if you're going to be conscious
you have to have perceptions so they're
not conscious they're like statues they
cannot possibly expend any Karma there's
no change in their karma the whole time
that they are in suspended
animation it may be that their karma is
that they're just going to skip a few
zillion years but I don't know why they
would do that it it wouldn't even
necessarily be an like unnoticeable

elapse of time really I mean it might as well be 10 years as 10 trillion years with with a human being that that like goes into a a coma for five or 10 or 20 years then I mean there's going to be a more obvious change and it's going to be sort of calibrated I mean you you all of a sudden you need to have a body that's 20 years older due to some weird karmic glitch maybe then you just become unconscious and you wake up again you're 20 years older but when you're in the coma if there's no mentality going on then there is no there's no Karma

being made or or

expended no generation or

fruition Unless somehow your mind is

just off in some other realm but the

implication with regard to the 31 plans

of existence is that these perceptionist

brahmas don't just have a a body that's

frozen like a statue here while their

mind is off doing something else that's

not what they're

saying so again if you are going to

become completely unconscious for one

second or one World

Cycle then I mean really it's all the

same because there's no karma that's

actually being expended it's just that

you have this Karma to suddenly skip to

a sudden change of scene and that's it that's all it amounts to or there might be other ramifications of it but nothing is happening subjectively with regard to your karma if your mind is completely not working at all so I'm just going to move on to section and CAD Z's next question and he says this is a question I asked to you as a biologist rather than a Buddhist as I know that is also your specialty what are your thoughts on parent Gene editing future your children personally I see it as a moral good as you would probably agree that much of

the important things in life IQ
discipline looks morality are highly
dependent on genetics and not just a
product of the environment as well and
thus worth the risks of potential side
effects of removing the seemingly bad
genes in your kids they might have some
evolutionary reason to exist but the
pros seem to outweigh the cons in our
current niche

well um I've I've answered this question
before and like I I said

before I think any kind of like genetic
manipulation like genetic

engineering is going is going to be a
mistake because humans are only human
they're going to be improving one thing

and overlooking something else it's sort of like breeding a particular breed of dog I mean in a less extreme case than genetic engineering still certain breeds of dog they're way more susceptible to certain kinds of diseases or or tumors and all kinds of strange things so um human scientists if they're going to try to engineer they're going to play God and create the Genome of some child with a an IQ of 300 uh an expected lifespan of 300 years they're going to look perfect they're going to you know be 2 m tall and all this then they're inevitably going to overlook certain things because they're not omniscient

and you're going to wind up with
drawbacks you're going to wind up with
the Dark Side of all
that but I think a better method would
be if you could
screen like you know the the the husband
the Father the prospective father
donates a semen sample and then you got
like these technicians that are
screening out the the spermatozoa that
are carrying like lethal genes or or
certain like disease genes that kind of
thing then if you just screen them so
that you're getting the the the
healthiest ones then I think that would
be much less of a case of playing with
fire than you've got like technicians

that are actively genetically
manipulating

the Genome of some child to be born that
that's going to have its own moral
problems from a Buddhist point of view
and also just like difficulties from a
biological point of view because
inevitably humans are going to overlook
something and create some kind of
monster so I guess I answer that one and
so I move on to seov action CAD Z's
third question which is how long is Tig
banned for and yeah I'm I'm thinking
indefinitely I'm not going to say I'm
not going to just vow in public just
swear on a stack of Bibles or something

that he'll never come back he'll never
be allowed to come back but it's not
going to be anytime soon maybe after he
matures a bit because I mean the reason
why he got kicked off is just for being
a a cynical trolling smartass who had
just devoid of reverence it seems like
and even after a fair warning within
minutes of receiving a fair warning
because he posted some kind of orgasm
music in the music channel the music
channel itself was not a particularly
good idea in my opinion from a Buddhist
point of view it's wallowing in
sensuality is it's
adharmic so anyways I warned him and
then within minutes he's actually

inviting someone to watch porn with him
and it was just a joke but it was just
the standard TIG trolling kind of a joke
that got him

ejected so I'm just going to move on to
next question this is from mraa Buddha
but I will come back it's in a a Discord
server that is dedicated primarily
towards Dharma and Dharma adjacent
issues for the most

part that I mean there really does have
to be some minimum standard of allowable
conduct I mean certain things have been
not allowed from the beginning like
Angry name calling and other members
that kind of thing abusive speech you

know we should use right speech but
still there has to be a certain kind of
bare minimum of like
morals and a certain reverence for dharm
not necessarily reverence for me
although I mean if it gets just flat out
abusive that's not good either
but yeah definitely I mean this is a
like a uniquely Western kind of a
problem in a Buddhist country this kind
of thing is rare but in America just
irreverent like cynical trolling people
participating in dhamma forums and so
forth is is really not all that
uncommon so anyways I'm just going to
move on next question this is from mraa
Buddha who says what are your thoughts

on jidu Krishna

myty and I have to admit I like Krishna

myty I mean generally if I just say

Krishna mty I'm referring to Jay or jidu

Krishna mury and if I'm referring to ug

Krishna mury which is an entirely

different Krishna mty than I would

specify ug Krishna mty um but if I just

say Krishna myy and I'm not already

talking about ug I generally mean J

and I mean he had an interesting life I

never really read his biography or

anything but it's my understanding that

there was like a a school of

theosophists I can't remember their name

that discovered him and were grooming

him to become a kind of world

Messiah and he had some kind of

spiritual breakthrough some kind of

Awakening experience and then he just

said no I'm not going to be your world

Messiah and just took off and went his

own way

and there's a certain amount of Scandal

associated with Krishna mty and I mean

on the one hand he's declared to be I

don't know if he declared himself to be

but he he was certainly declared to be

fully enlightened and the people that

were grooming him to be the world

Messiah apparently considered him to be

close enough to full Enlightenment for

their

purposes um but at the same time he has
a
very oh kind of an anarchistic
interpretation of what enlightenment is
all about from a terraa Buddhist point
of view he couldn't possibly be fully
enlightened but I'm not completely
Orthodox in that regard I am a little
more open-minded and I'm not just a pure
dogmatist with regard to Orthodox terraa
Buddhism so he notoriously was having an
affair with his personal secretary's
wife so I mean there's that and what
might be even more scandalous I was told
that in his later years he actually wore
a toupe and it's it's it's hard for me

to imagine a fully enlightened being
wearing a

wig I mean unless it's for like some
sort of ceremonial purpose but just for
like cosmetic purposes to look better

is it's kind of he's it's kind of a
paradoxical case I would be more

inclined to have I'm more inclined to be
open-minded

with regard to Krishna M's Enlightenment
than say osho's Enlightenment I was
asked about Osho in the previous

Q&A um so again he he apparently had
attained some higher level of

Consciousness his books are profound

I've got a couple of books by chrishna

mury on the bookcase back there and what

he's what he's saying though I mean one of his main teachings is that one of the main sicknesses of the human mind is setting the the real versus the ideal you know you've got reality here but you don't like that reality you prefer this ideal and you try to live up to this ideal and I should have I should have like included at least one of his juicy quotes on the subject but there's he he says you've got this ideal on what kind of a person you should be how you should act how you should speak and you fail to live up to that ideal which inevitably results in hypocrisy and a dishonest life you know he he just hammers away at

this this dichotomy of real
versus ideal it's like whatever reality
is that's it I mean don't fight against
reality because you're going to
lose so I mean if you're just an
of a person don't struggle against your
assholery you know you should be mindful
of it and try to understand it and
ideally if it is intended to be it
will Fade Out the better you understand
it because assholery is often the result
of ignorance

anyway so when I was still a monk living
in Burma I had a certain friend who was
a Hermit who lived inside of a big
hollow tree and he was familiar with
Krishna mury and I told him about this

Scandal that at the time I had just heard about about how he was messing around with the wife of his personal secretary and this hermit who lived in the tree just said so it's not in contradiction to what he's teaching you know it's like it's completely in accordance with what he was saying so that that caused me some thought it's like well yeah you're right so I am rather open-minded on the idea of enlightened Rascals like neem karoli Baba up there up there on the altar he was an enlightened Rascal too there's I I'm don't think there's any scandals

regarding him like messing around with
women other than maybe just like
touching them in certain
ways but I mean
like committing adultery that kind of
thing I've never I've never heard any
any rumors of
that so there's a kind of spectrum with
regard to understanding what
enlightenment is all about what an
enlightened being is like at one extreme
you've got Terra of Buddhism I mean
that's one of the most extreme
interpretations of an enlightened being
and that an enlightened being has to
have absolutely pure morals you have to
purify your morals before you can purify

your mind you have to be an absolute
Saint before you can become an absolute
Sage whereas on the other hand you've
got not just Jay Krishan M you got both
Krishna mes also you got other people
like Paul L maybe some Rascal Zen
Masters who are saying that when you're
fully Enlighten I mean you're not really
bound to
rules it's like you know terraa it's
like a fully enlightened being can't do
this and he can't do that he can't tell
a lie he can't steal anything you know
that sort of thing um but I mean it if
you assume that it's motivated by
unenlightened motives then

sure but just to say that he can't say
what isn't

true um I mean why maybe there's some
enlightened reason for on some occasion
saying what happens not to be strictly
factual

so um with regard to Krishna

mury yeah it's hard to say I mean he

he'd just be a question mark in my my

opinion neim cley Baba would have his

disciples go and listen to Krishna mury

when Krishna mury was in India giving

talks he send his disciples to go listen

to Rah morti he called him because um

maharaji n babo is more into Rah than in

Krishna so Krishna mty I mean he's well

worth reading and even if you're a

devout terava Buddhist it's good to have
your views

challenged and a lot of what he said
really really does make sense like the
whole pitting the ideal against reality
you know the ideal versus the real I
mean that really is like what is it the
third patriarch of Chinese Zen um San
says you know to set up what you like
against what you dislike is the disease
of the mind it's kind of a similar sort
of

statement so Krishna mury definitely was
at a higher level of Consciousness than
the average person just like Osho
probably was also but that doesn't

necessarily mean that he was fully enlightened Aran in the Buddhist sense of the word and I'm just going to move on the next question this is from xenoid and and xenoid says let's say that out of nowhere with no explanation whatsoever the sun disappeared from our solar system how long do you give the human race to survive well that would depend on a lot of factors for example if the sun suddenly disappeared then the gravitational force keeping the Earth in its orbit would disappear and the Earth would just spin off into outer space and let's just assume that it avoids collisions with like Jupiter and so forth it doesn't get pulled into

Jupiter's gravitational field and and
get sucked into Jupiter that kind of
thing so let's just say the Earth just
goes off into space like the moon does
in the old TV show space

1999 well how long will the human race
survive it could be indefinitely but it
would be in very small numbers you know
they there' probably be like um like
what do you call it Fallout shelters you
know like the sort of thing that was
being discussed at the end of Doctor
Strange Love the movie Doctor Strange
Love where probably numerous governments
have just underground bunkers with like
nuclear reactor keeping the energy going

you know they got Hydroponics tanks you know they got a large enough population that you know they people won't become too

inbred and presumably you know they could set something up and and survive for hundreds of years at least but it wouldn't be very many people you know the surface of the Earth for the most part would just be frozen solid and dead for the most part I mean there'd be still life Frozen in the water but it would be frozen it would not be metabolizing or anything but there would be small numbers of of powerful Elites who would have access to these survival bunkers

that are a mile underground or
whatever so I'm just going to move on to
Zeno's next

question which is do you believe it is
possible for advanced civilizations to
arise on planets that are entirely
covered in water and I actually read a
book by Isaac Asimov I think it was
called extraterrestrial civilizations
where he actually discusses this that
he was he was talking about how you've
got like an intelligent species living
in water and they could become very
intelligent just like an octopus is
relatively intelligent dolphins and
sperm whales are relatively very

intelligent but they would be very limited with regard to any technology like they couldn't build fire human technology is largely based on fire at least it started off that way you know cooking and metallurgy that kind of stuff you needed fire and Aquatic beings even no matter how intelligent they are they're going to have difficulty getting a fire started also some intelligent aquatic beings like dolphins they they don't have fingers they don't have manipulative appendages they don't even have a tongue that they can use very much their tongue is pretty much just like stuck to their lower jaw they can't move it around

much so there's that

too so I think you could have an

advanced civilization of intelligent

beings in water but it would not be

technological advancement probably it

would just be they would be wise beings

maybe much wiser more intelligent than

us it's just that they would still be

living in like an enlightened Stone Age

kind of a

situation unless they figure out how to

get advanced technology underwater with

no fire

so I'm just going to move on to zen

void's third question which is have you

ever experienced fear of large inanimate

spaces that hold many things like the
ocean space

Etc and I think it was the previous Q&A

I mentioned probably the closest I ever

got to that was I was on this tiny raft

that was made out of two inner tubes

with like a little bamboo frame over the

top of it and a wooden plank seat across

that and I was going down the chindwin

River at the beginning of the the

monsoon season when the chindwin river

was flooded and the weather was rainy

and stormy and I'm out in the middle of

this big river on this tiny raft just

feeling like a speck in the midst of the

universe feeling like some tiny Beetle

like in the middle of a concrete parking

lot you know just a harsh Barren hostile environment or not really hostile so much is just utterly indifferent to whether you survive or not so yeah at that time I really did feel like a speck or some kind of tiny insect and I was a little bit worried about the the storm clouds that were building behind me as I was riding this little raft down stream and it wasn't going very fast for a long time I was trying to hug the shore trying to stay close to the shore until I realized that when the river bends on the inside of the bend the water can actually be coming the other way

so that's about it I mean I I really liked being on ships in the ocean I I never had any fear of that in fact uh I was on a Japanese ship in the Bearing Sea and the wind was blowing 50 or 60 knots you know like 60 miles an hour for two days straight so and so that the Japanese had to shut down their fishing operations so when the Japanese stop working you know it's serious and and I went up on the bridge and it was just glorious I mean it was just the the waves were like these moving Hills and the ship would just go up the side of one of these waves and then just come crashing down and just water spraying everywhere and then the the the bow of

the ship would just be like shuddering
and vibrating as it comes up again and
then smash back down again and the
officers on the bridge they were very
serious you know they were looking a
little whiter than usual like just like
pale you know they were just very
serious this is a dangerous situation
but I was just grinning like an ape it
was just glorious it was
magnificent so uh I think that there is
a good chance assuming that
reincarnation
so-called uh does occur that I've been a
sailor more than once in my life and so
um the ocean really i' I've loved the

ocean you know I I majored in Marine
Biology partly because the ocean's kind
of calls to me and now I'm living in
upstate South Carolina which is quite a
distance away from the
ocean so getting back to the question
though have you ever
experienced fear of large inanimate
spaces that hold many things um not
really like I said the closest I came
was being on a a tiny raft in the middle
of the chindwin river at the beginning
of the the monsoon season in Burma back
around the year
2000 so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from
nodding and nodding says according to

the first Noble Truth everything except for Nirvana is Dukkha that then makes Buddhism itself dukka whenever I read the suttas I end up perceiving logical dilemmas which is frustrating and makes me suspect that all religious doctrines Buddhist or otherwise are inherently unsatisfying and yes dharma also is Dukkha the thing is that dharma is is sort of like skillful means it's like reduce Dukkha that leads to further reduction but so long as you've got something conditioned including Buddhist teachings they're not going to be fully satisfying and they're going to cause a certain amount of

unhappiness

dissatisfaction

unease so I mean just trying to live

according to to D you're G to get a lot

of dooka let's say you really take the

tech seriously and you just become a

homeless Wanderer wearing Rags sleeping

under trees I mean just like two weeks

after the last rain you're sitting under

a tree you don't have a mosquito net you

just just get eaten alive by by

mosquitoes and you're not even allowed

to slap

them so there's a lot of dooka involved

it's just just that it's kind of dooka

that's geared towards like gradual

reduction of

dooka you know it's it's you're sort of tapering off you're weaning yourself off of Misery by practicing dhama but the misery is still there it just becomes more and more attenuated until finally you get to a certain point where your suffering and delusion become rarified enough that you can just sort of see through it and transcend

it but I mean even according to the like the the text themselves the simile of the raft for example Buddhism is is just a raft made out of rubbish it's made out of sticks and Vines and grass and this kind of stuff that you use to get across the flood and then once youve crossed

the flood you just cast it aside you
don't need it

[Music]

anymore so I think I'm just going to
move on to noddings second

question which is as follows I'm also
curious what you think of ramam

maharshi's teachings on God and whether
or not they are compatible with Buddhist
philosophy his descriptions make God

seem like a conditional manifestation of
ignorance which percept which perhaps

would be compatible with picha Samu here
are some of his comments quote ishara

the person personal God the Supreme
creator of the universe really does

exist but this is only true from the

relative standpoint of those who have not realize the truth those people who believe in the reality of individual Souls from the absolute standpoint the sage cannot accept any other existence than the impersonal self one and formless ishara God the Creator the personal God is the last of the unreal forms to go only the absolute being is real hence not only the world not only the ego but also the personal God are of unreality unquote that was Ramen maharshi saying that not me and then uh nodding continues in general he would state that God only arises when the ego arises sounds like

dependent core Rising well it seems to me that what he's talking about is the personal God as opposed to like an impersonal absolute God like in Hinduism setting aside the ishara You' got Brahma who is a personification of Ultimate Reality with the Ultimate Reality itself being Brahman in the in the neutral gender the neuter gender so there's like two different ways of dealing with a like a capital G monotheistic God you've got like the personality God who's like do doing stuff and preferring good over evil and you know rewarding good people and punishing bad people or smiting bad people you know this s setting down

rules and laws this is like most of the western

monotheistic conception of God is it's like a giant

man and then you've got the more

abstract God like Brahman or really even

if you read like some of the more

advanced Roman Catholic theology

probably Greek Orthodox would be similar

where it's no longer a he no longer has any

preferences you know he no longer lays

down any Commandments anything like that

it's just Ultimate

Reality but before you get to that point

you personify the absolute you don't

just reify it you personify it and I think that's mainly what ramanam Mahari is talking about is a kind of personification of of the absolute but this personification of the absolute is sort of responsible for this the 10,000 things of this world just sort of good and bad and ugly and beautiful and you know all this different stuff in a way you can say that God generates it and in a way that kind of takes the place of picha sop so you could say sort of there's like an overlap they they serve the same purpose in certain respects in that you know this multiplicity of the world that we are living and with all its causes and

effects it's perceived causes and
effects from the Buddhist point of view
it's just impersonal dependent core
Rising nature taking its course whereas
in a more theistic religious system then
I mean God just kind of steps in
automatically and you apply all of that
to
God or you apply a lot of it to God
anyhow
so I think mainly his description is you
know the absolute God or or Brahman
which is a more advanced conception than
the personified
Brahma you know the the the god that
actually cares about answers prayers and

that kind of stuff and you start off
with a
more a more

Elementary kind of understanding of God
and then eventually you just get to the
point where it's just Ultimate
Reality

so yeah I think there is a certain
amount of of overlap with regard to um a
personalized personified God and
dependent core Rising but the
personified God goes beyond just
dependent core Rising with regard to the
attributes that are attributed to the
personified capital G God
but I mean they kind of both take care
of sort of regulating the the phenomenal

universe so I guess there is there's
quite a bit of
overlap and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
quor and quator says if there is no self
does that mean that there is the
experience and an observer but no
experiencer or perhaps The Experience
itself requires a witness for it to
exist
and the identification to that
experience is what creates self so this
is kind of a complicated
self-referential sort of question maybe
I should uh kind of try to ignore the
second half of it at least for the time

being so if there is no self does that mean there is the experience and an observer but no experiencer no there's no Observer there's no experiencer because there's no self and in fact I mean depending on what school of Buddhism or how you interpret things there is I mean from the Terra point of view you can say there is the experience but from like some Mahayana schools we'll even go beyond that it's like now even the experience isn't ultimately real and I would tend to go along with the Mahayana Buddhists on that one so I would say that there really there's no experience there's no

Observer there's no

experiencer that

again I mean i' I've explained this many

times you know it's getting back to like

the uncarved block of marble the

uncarved block of marble is the reality

and you've got an infinite number of

possible statues contained inside that

block of marble they're really in there

they're already there all you got to do

is just disregard the extraneous Rock

they're right there every single

molecules already in the exact correct

place they're really in there but

it's just like potentially or virtually

or

conditionally so these experiences and
observers and experiencers are potential
conditional virtual but not ultimately
real the only reality is just the rock
itself and when you got nothing to
compare That Rock with then even that
becomes

meaningless

so let's see quor says or perhap per APS

The Experience itself requires a witness
for it to exist and the identification
to that experience is what creates uh no
it's like the experience does not
require a

witness that is um a misunderstanding

because like you've got a

perception let's say you've got this

perception the perception itself is
conscious so I mean you don't need some
conscious being to have the perception
because the perception is already
conscious ious and then that perception
is forming sort of a web with all these
other perceptions that create the
illusion of a of a conscious
personality but there is no
consciousness that has these perceptions
I mean you can say that the underlying
essence of the perception is
consciousness but still that's not
saying that there is this this overall
Consciousness that's having that
perception it doesn't work that way the

conscious

the perception itself is perhaps is you

can say that it's substance is

consciousness and that's I mean it's

conscious the the thought itself is

conscious it doesn't need any kind of

like Observer or any such

thing so I guess instead of spending

another five

minutes wallowing in that my attempts to

explain I mean some of this stuff is

really hard to explain because human

languages is not designed the human

brain is not

designed to to know this

stuff so anyways quor second

question you mention that once you

achieve a level of subtlety that you can
bail out sideways when at the stage of
daily spontaneous first jna which
develops into fourth J letting go until
there's no detectable clinging and body
is no longer felt but face is still
felt I don't understand that face part
at that point is there another
realization to be had or is it a matter
of letting go of the desire for nibana
and just remain dwelling in non-reactive
and thoughtless Stillness until boredom
comes and then observe boredom and
return to Stillness again or will the
process of getting to subtler and
subtler realities and the fading of

feeling on body come to a stage that
body is not felt it at all and then it's
just

nibbana well no it doesn't work that
your mind just Fades out into nibana I
mean you can it fades out to a point
where you you're become more susceptible
to having an Insight like a liberating
insight and experiencing

nibana but then I mean the mental States
come back and a fully enlightened being
is still in the bana presumably this may
not be orth orox this is how I see it
that it just becomes all this the
perception becomes irrelevant I mean I I
keep saying this stuff over and over and
over and over and over and over

again and it's just hard to understand
people just won't understand it and I'll
just keep saying it over and over and
over and over maybe I'm just not
explaining it well enough but I don't
think there is a perfect way of
explaining this because it just can't be
explained so possibly my best example of
how it can happen is *auta* in the *Maj*
Naya I've mentioned this before it's the
small discourse on
voidness where a monk goes out into a
forest that's his first move towards
voidness you know he gets away from all
the commotion of the village out into
the relative voidness or emptiness of a

forest and then he starts meditating and
in the text I think he's meditating on
Earth elements just as an example and
then that gets more and more subtle till
he gets into first Jan then second Janna
third Jon fourth jna and then he attains
something according to the Sut that's
even higher than fourth Jan which is
let's

see gosh I don't remember what it's
called now the formless concentration of
Mind Animo Sam the formless
concentration of mind so
even that is not Enlightenment so what
happens is that after he attains that he
comes back out of it and then he
realizes he has this Insight that arises

after he's come out of this deep
meditative state that that is as deep as
meditation gets you cannot attain
anything higher than that and still
that's not nibana still that has a
beginning and an end it is conditioned
by all the efforts required to produce
it all all the circumstances that had to
like align in order for that state to
have Arisen in the first place is still
a conditioned State it's not nibana and
so you have this Insight where finally
something just clicks it's like nothing
that you can
attain is going to be it because
anything that you generate anything that

you

create I mean it's just going to be
conditioned it's not going to be a
Nirvana and you can't make Nirvana you
can't make yourself be enlightened and
so it's like finally it just Dawns on
this meditator it's like he reached the
highest possible level of meditation and
even that's not it and so it's like
finally it's like this this belief that
you can attain it it just collapses and
it's already

there it's all this belief and striving
and and struggling and all that is
obscuring what has been there from the
beginning so even getting into really
subtle meditative States that's not good

enough and a lot of Hindus you know
they're they're masters of these really
subtle meditative States and still they
don't become fully inline I'm not saying
none of them become fully inlight but a
lot of them are just like swamis they're
masters of these really subtle
meditative states and still they're not
enlightened because they're chasing
after the wrong
thing they think that they're going to
get there by cultivating these more and
more subtle mental
States but even that's not the
point I mean it can help if you have the
right attitude like in the case of the

monk in the the small discourse on
voidness you know he he attains these
really subtle meal mental states and and
then the the weasa arises this Insight
arises that he has attained the highest
possible meditative State and still
that's not it still that is it's
conditional and then it's just like
something snaps and he just kind of
gives up in a way and then there it
is because Enlightenment has to be
effortless even though you may have to
work your ass off to get to the point
where it becomes
effortless so I'm just going to move on
to qu TOS third
question which is if a sodana

experiences a glimpse of nibana does
this refer to the cessation of
perception and feeling or is that state
considered to have no awareness and thus
wouldn't give any meaningful insight
into nibana that would result in the
dropping of the first three feds thank
you for sharing your Insight and
knowledge and may you have a happy New
Year well same to
you

although um people people just
obstinately continue asking me questions
about like the four stages of ARA Hood
in early Buddhist philosophy terava
Buddhist philosophy and I keep saying

that I'm pretty sure that's an
anachronism I don't think the Buddha
really taught these four stages of
sainthood and so it's pretty much
academic what the text say about
them

so if a sodon I experience is a glimpse
of nibana I don't think originally
soapas were superhuman beings I just
don't I think originally a soda or
stream enterer was someone who had just
entered upon a spiritual life who had
begun interpreting their existence in
spiritual terms they would be sort of
like the Buddhist equivalent of a born
again Christian like a genuine born
again Christian not some famous

entertainer who just announces that
they're a born- again Christian and then
three years later they're wallowing
depravity

again so if aapon experiences a glimpse
of nibana does this refer to the
sensation of perception and feeling well
nibana is not the same as the sensation
of perception and feeling the sensation
of perception and feeling it's another
one of these

anachronistic States in my opinion I
mean you start off with four janas and
that's not good enough because the
ancient Indian philosophical mind was
always trying to one up the absolute

whatever is the highest you got some philosophical School saying this is the highest inevitably you're going to have some other philosophical school oning no that's the highest you can get to but we got to one higher than that and then and then some other schools say oh yeah you think one Higher is good enough we got two higher than that you know they're just trying to one up each other these different philosophical schools or schools just within the same tradition even so you start off with four janas then four more Jas get added the formless Jas get added after that also Abid dama divides up second JRE into

like second a and second

B and then you get the these extra

States like the the signless

concentration of mind that I mentioned

with regard to the small discourse on

voidness or this this sensation of

perception and feeling which is pretty

similar to signless perception of mind

you know they're just trying to one up

the upanishad are kind of the same way

you know you got Braman and then you've

got like this state that's above Brahman

it's like OA Brahman or

something so probably the Buddha

himself he he taught you know there's

enlightened beings and there's

unenlightened beings you know there's no
four stages there's four janas not five
not eight there's I mean fourth Janna is
practically by definition as high as you
can get until these philosophers it's
mainly philosophers I think and not
actual meditators are adding extra extra
levels above what supposedly the highest
level so where am I here he mainly he's
asking if the glimpse of nibana is the
same as the sensation of perception and
feeling and technically going with
Orthodoxy a soda can't even experience
the sensation of perception and feeling
as if anybody can really
experience a s a sensation of perception
and feeling I think some of this stuff

might be Throwbacks to pre- Orthodox
times when you could still be conscious
without perceiving anything and then the
Abid Scholars and whoever else came
along saying no if you can't have
Consciousness unless it's consciousness
of an object and you can't have any kind
of mentality without perception and
volition and all this which um it sort
of standardized the philosophy but it
may have standardized it away from what
the Buddha was originally teaching to
some
degree so it's not the same I
mean just assume for the sake of
argument that esap does experience a

glimpse of nibana upon attaining his
fruition of the sort of no the path path
and fruition of being a sopana let's say
for sure that a sopana sees the glimpse
of nibana and also let's just say for
sure there is such a state as the
sensation of perception and feeling but
I think you have to be at least an
anagami

to get to the level of the sensation of
perception and

feeling so yeah it's it's orth from
Orthodox point of view it's not the same
and from my personal best guess of the
situation my understanding of the
situation it's all academic you're just
talking about artifacts of of later

early Buddhist Indian

philosophy so I'm just going to move on

the next question here this is from

nmit and nmit says do you think the

bagavat Gita could be written to counter

Buddhism and this is kind of strange

because I answered a question about the

Bhagavad Gita in the previous Q&A in

which I was saying exactly this so it's

it may be that he's just kind of like

wait a minute did I hear you correctly

when you said the babad Gita could be

written to counter

Buddhism you know it could be like wait

a minute can you say that again because

I already I'm already answered this one

in the previous Q&A and it may be that
he heard that and then he asked this in
response to me saying that the bagavat
Gita indeed

was written in part

plausibly um as a kind of argument

against

Buddhism and to some degree I mean it is

it does make sense I have read that you

know the babad Gita was written you know

in Buddhist times you know was it was

written after the the time of the Buddha

and it was teaching some pretty

obviously non Buddhist things like like

Krishna persuading Arjuna to fight on a

battlefield against his own

relatives you know that would be just a

complete no no from a a Buddhist point of view and so I don't think that the babad Gita was I mean its main purpose wasn't to contradict Buddhism just like um I've read that the general Epistle of James in the New Testament was written in part to counter the teaching of St Paul also I've read that the The Gospel according to John in the New Testament was written at least in part to counter certain heresies that had Arisen in the early 2 Century of the Christian era but I don't think that the general Epistle of James and the the The Gospel according to John were written just to counter these other views I mean they

they've got their own Merit you know
they they also have like positive POS
teachings in addition to this sort of
negative like refutations of other
systems

so I do think it is possible it is
plausible that some of the Bhagavad Gita
is sort of like backhanded Jabs at
Buddhism or maybe that's not a very
polite way of putting it but attempted
refutations or contradictions sort of
like saying implying that Buddhism
doesn't have it completely
correct which kind of makes sense from a
like a a Hindu point of view I don't
know if you could call them Hindus by
the time that they started following the

babad G instead of just doing vadic
sacrifices and so
forth

so yeah so in answer to the question

here do I think the babad Gita could be
written to counter Buddhism I think that
certain parts of it may have had

Buddhism in mind when like Krishna is
telling Arjuna why it's okay to kill his
own relatives it's like in in the Gita
one of the main teachings is you follow
your Dharma which is like your duty and
you just offer up the results the fruits
of that to God you know you're a soldier
it's your duty to kill so you kill but
you're not interested in in Rewards or

punishments anything any like the results of your actions you just dedicate to God which according to Buddhism doesn't work but in a way it's it's kind of a a Hindu way of transcending uhu you know it's almost like a tantric attitude really you know you can kill people and then you just just dedicate the fruits of that to God because God's telling you to do it anyway

so I think I'll just move on to the next question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says in the internet era is there any advantage to roughing it out in caves in Burma and such like you did as a monk in terms of practicing

meditation and learning dhama is my method of practicing on my own and distance learning from home a copout that can limit my spiritual advancement in any way do you think you would have roughed it out like you did in your younger years if the internet was a widely was widely available when you decided to become a monk so I just noticed that there's three question marks here so that technically this is three questions so I'm going to divide these up and answer them in turn so I'm I'm dividing them up right now you can't see me doing it just take my word for it okay first question in

the internet era is is there any
advantage to roughing it out in caves in
Burma and such like you did as a monk in
terms of practicing meditation and
learning D well of course definitely
that I mean learning on the Internet is
just intellectual learning and and
that's not what dhama is all about just
having beliefs in your head about dhama
I mean that's you're still that's like a
crude Elementary level of dhama practice
of just trying to figure stuff out
intellectually when I mean you might
still have all these defilements all
these underlying Tendencies and so forth
and so I mean you've got to walk the
walk it's not all Theory you've got to

practice it and practicing dhama at a radical level where like I've said before you're wandering around homeless sleeping under trees you're not even allowed to swat the mosquitoes begging for your food in the street having no family ties no friends maybe you know just go alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros that I mean that is really the that's how you learn dhama I mean it's like learning DH on the Internet or from reading books is sort of like studying a map but I mean doesn't matter how much you study the map it's not going to get you where you want to

go I mean it'll help you I mean you'll
know how to get there but I mean you can
study the map till you're blue in the
face and you haven't taken a step
yet
so yeah I mean you you have to
like observe your own
defilements and just sort of observe
them without reacting so that they just
kind of run their course you know you
observe them mindfully and you just note
it and let it go note it and let it go
and it's much more likely to come up if
you're wandering around homeless instead
of living in a in a comfy
house surfing the internet all
day I mean you can learn theory that way

but the actual practice it can take some
real doings it can take some Herculean
effort so I think I'll just move on to
Romeo's second part of this
question which is is my method of
practicing on my own and distance
learning from a home a
copout that can limit my spiritual
advancement in any way well in
addition to not really practicing the
austerity of an ancient Indian Monk on
again it's like people have such a short
attention span now mainly due to the
internet and like social media like
anything that takes more than like 20
seconds a lot of people just tune it out

because their mind is becoming flabby
and and just doing what is easy makes
you soft and weak and flabby you have to
do what is difficult to make yourself
strong I mean that's any athlete can
tell you that I mean athletes don't get
Olympic gold medals by reading articles
on how best to throw
javelins or put the shot or pole vault
that kind of thing I mean you can study
how to do that on the internet you can
learn some valuable pointers but you got
to go out there and actually do
it and just sitting in meditation it's
you might have the same it might have
the same drawbacks as being a monk
nowadays where they're just sitting in

comfy like

monasteries and they don't really face any challenges you know it's like all these lat and tendencies just remain latent because there's no opportunity for them to arise because they're not being challenged

so yeah I mean definitely you go out and wander around homeless in a you know like a a tropical Asian Forest it's going to be a very different experience very different learning experience than studying articles and texts on a computer screen in the comfort of your own

home I mean you you don't really have

much opportunity to put the Tica waga
into practice by
just studying theoretical stuff at home
on a computer screen so I think I'm just
going to move on to the third part of
this question which is do you think you
would have roughed it out like you did
in your younger years if the internet
was widely available when you decided to
become a monk if if I didn't it would be
because the internet had weakened me to
the point that I was UN unable to muster
the spine to actually go out and become
an aesthetic living in tropical Asia so
um if I if somehow available internet
prevented me from becoming a monk it
would be it would be a bad thing instead

of a good thing it wouldn't save me all
this unnecessary trouble of all this
trials and tribulations of living in
Burma it would just be I would be just
become so much of a couch potato that I
just couldn't bring myself to do it
anymore so yeah the internet really does
not create Heroes it creates sort of
like spiritual

Unix just kind of weak flabby
people that I mean they just don't see
any point in getting off their chair or
off their couch you know just shutting
down the computer and doing something
you know substantial
so if available internet uh did cause me

not to be ordained it would not have
been for my benefit it would just be
that I had just become so much of a what
a dopamine junkie and and just a couch
potato that I couldn't bring myself to
do what the Buddha says a person ought
to

do so I'm just going to move on the next
question this is from tash is and tash
is says let's say that somewhere in some
forest or just plain basement with
internet access Pacha Buddhas or just
normal awakened people exist today they
don't want girlfriends money social
interactions they eat just because
they're hungry and there is nothing they
have to do could you agree that for

modern society they would be seen as extreme autistic and in need of some therapy not insulting any awakened or autistic people in some cases maybe not in all cases and then in some cases it would depend on the the government system you know it's like if everyone is required to participate let's say it's some sort of communist Society where everyone has to you know do their fair share in order to get you know equal results you know that somebody who's just not motivated no ambition who's just willing to to get by on the bare minimum and is fine with that that yeah they might be sent to a like a thought

reform camp or

something

um let's

see yeah I mean it depends on the

society it depends on the individual

person it depends on who in the society

what kind of authority figures this

enlightened being come across like the

wisdom of the social worker let's say

someone gets referred to a social worker

you know it's like they're they're

underachieving at work and then their

boss is sympathetic because enlightened

beings tend to be good people that

people like so he's gonna I'm going to

give you a chance you go and talk to

this motivational therapist you know and

then if the motivational therapist is just a complete worldly minded shallow Normie they might say yeah he's got problems but if the same uh like social worker is a wiser person who can really like acknowledge appreciate even perceive have an idea of a w what a wise person is like that they might see that there's no problem at all so it just depends on all the different circumstances and the karma of the people involved in some cases maybe yes and in other cases no so I'm just going to move on to trascas is a second question which is do you think that it

is possible to compress all major teachings of the Buddha into just one volume one book and disregard all repetitions similar sutas jotras poetic Stuff Etc um theoretically it's possible although really the main problem is knowing for sure what the Buddha did and did not

teach so I mean if you're just going to go with philosophical schools like the most influential teachings then yeah you could even use AI to help you compile it and just come up with this volume of you know 100 Pages or 300 Pages or 10 pages or whatever you know you just it's possible but when you want to know for sure what the historical gab

Buddha really taught you can't know for sure it's it's largely detective work and guess work and I mean there's no way to be 100%

certain but it's been tried before for I mean you can find like Buddhism in a nutshell or what the Buddha taught by W po rahula there's all these books that are like a little synopsis like a summary of the main teachings of Buddhism but whether the historical Buddha really taught this stuff or or not is questionable in some cases so I think I probably answered that one yeah so I'm just going to move on to Chas as this his third question

which is what is your favorite milk
drink or milkshake flavor mine is banana
so that's trasa is is saying that his
his favorite kind of milkshake is banana
and when I was a kid banana was my
favorite kind of milkshake but it had to
have real banana that artificial banana
flavoring which incidentally just
happens to be the attack pheromone of
bees Believe It or Not artificial banana
flavoring is the same same chemical that
causes bees to swarm and sting
people but uh lately my favorite flavor
of milkshake is peach I like Peach
milkshakes and here in the south in the
in South Carolina that uh peach
milkshakes really are not hard to come

by so yeah banana milkshakes are good
too I have to
admit anyways and but with with to milk
drink he has milk drink in quotes
then milk with coffee with milk in it
which is what I'm drinking
now so anyways next question is from
Gordon and this is kind of a long
complicated question it's kind of a
trick a trick of asking a whole bunch of
questions as one question I think but
anyways Gordon says let's say a
scientist sets up an experiment ment he
finds eight people four that have
expressed an interest in in killing
another human being and four that won't

he puts each of them in a sealed Booth
with a monitor and a button on the
screen is a prisoner in a Cell
convincingly real and half of them are
told that pressing the button will kill
him and half are told that pressing the
button frees him according to the
desires they expressed when signing up
for the study they all press the button
but only half of them see the expected
result the other half see the opposite
of what they intended happen on screen
now there's another layer there is one
real man in the cell for each of them
but for half of them the screen is
playing a false but convincing result
and the real result is actually the

opposite of what they saw and for the other half the screen shows what actually happened so please describe the karma earned for each of the eight participants one wanted to kill believes that he killed and has actually killed two wanted to kill believes he is killed has not actually killed three wanted to kill believes he has not killed has actually killed four wanted to killed believed he believes he has not killed has not actually killed five not wanted to kill believes he is killed has actually killed six not wanted to kill believes he is killed has not actually killed Etc I think you I think you get

it

so describe the karma earned for each of the participants and it's going to differ from one person to the next there is no

cookbook system for if person A does ACT

B it's going to result in karmic result

C it doesn't work that way two people

can do the exact same thing even with

the same motives but because the

circumstances of like their past Karma

and everything are different their their

feelings afterwards are different maybe

they're going to have different Karma

because of that so the people that want

to kill they're already getting bad

karma because of their desire to kill

but it's going to depend on like what kind of desire to kill do they have are they just a sociopath that's just bored it's like yeah I'll kill somebody or is it like I hate everybody I want to kill this

so I mean even this the desire to kill two people can have a desire to kill somebody and for one of them it might

be like just at least kind of a cold ruthless kind of a motivation well the other one is just based on just rage and hatred so I mean just the quality of these two people both wanting to kill somebody just even setting aside like

the father whose daughter has been
molested by this who's just
smirking and and joking and say says
he's going to do it
again that I mean to set aside the
indignant father you know that kind of
scenario just you just got a bad person
who's just wants to kill somebody and
still there's going to be a spectrum of
different kinds of attitudes with regard
to somebody wanting to kill somebody
somebody that they don't even
know

so I think part of what I was talking
about in a previous Q&A is is going to
apply here in
that whether thinking you killed

somebody and really having killed
somebody let's say you know you got the
two two people one of them wants to kill
and kills the other one wants to kill
and thinks that he killed but didn't so
the only difference between those would
be if there's like a
subconscious like telepathy or empathy
where at a deep level you actually know
whether you killed them or not if that
level exists if that had that level
exists and has any influence over your
conscious mind or over your karma then
there's going to be a difference in
those two states otherwise
there may not like you try to kill

somebody and you succeed or you try to kill somebody and you fail but you think you succeeded then the only ethical difference between the the karma of those two states those two people would be if there is like a deeper underlying awareness of you know through telepathy or just like tuning into some Universal omniscience or something at a very deep level if you know for sure that you did or did not kill that person that might have an effect on your karma so the person who you don't want to kill them and then you know that you killed them or at least you believe that you killed them then that is just going to be completely a broad spectrum I mean

from one extreme is you don't get any
bad karma at all let's say the the
scientist says you push this button
you're going to let that person free you
push the button thinking that you you're
letting them free and then it it kills
them well you didn't do it on purpose I
mean ethically from a buddist point of
view you are not guilty of killing that
person you are not a murderer the person
who tricked you into it might be a
murderer but you are not so I mean at
one extreme youve got like the the
enlightened philosopher who's who just
says
well I was I didn't know he told me it

was that I was going to let him go why
why should I die him so I mean it was
just that's it but then there's other
kinds of people that are just going to
be eaten up with remorse for the rest of
their life you know at the thought of
accidentally killing someone and there's
a lot of people like this who you know
they did something completely innocuous
you know they had no way of knowing that
by you know borrowing their brother's
car that day he was going to get on a
bicycle and get hit and killed on on a
bicycle it's like why did I have to
drive the car that day and for the rest
of their life they feel guilt and
remorse because they just decided to

drive their brother's car they figured
he wouldn't mind then he has to go
somewhere gets on a bicycle and gets
killed in a in a bike wreck
so in a case like that then it's not the
karma of the The Killing that's going to
be messing them up in life it's the the
remorse and regret that they keep
experiencing for years afterwards maybe
so I mean it can completely destroy
their life it could be worse than the
Cara of somebody who really did kill
somebody
so yeah I mean it's there's all these
subtleties all these different
complications that uh that would have to

be taken into
consideration so I mean wanting to kill
is certainly worse than not wanting to
kill that's I mean that's not wanting to
kill is is morally neutral at
worst wanting to kill is always like
morally negative then if you really did
kill or not the only difference um would
be like at a very subconscious level
maybe and then if you kill on purpose or
accidentally then the accidentally one I
mean that can mess up your life even
even worse than someone who actually did
kill somebody or it could have like in
the case of an enlightened being it
would have no
effect ideally theoretically at least in

some

cases so God I hope I answer that

question it's a long

one and so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from scolin or

schuline and this is another kind of

long well this next question isn't but

the one after that from scho ofine is a

long one so this one is the Resurgence

of Flat Earth a Zionist scop and I've

never seen any evidence suggesting this

I've never I've never heard any

theories um until maybe now that there's

a Zionist scop to get lots of people to

believe that the Earth is flat really I

have no idea why it is that more and

more people are believing the Flat Earth
other than I think possibly one of the
main reasons is just the Resurgence of
the internet or not the Resurgence just
the arising of the internet whereas
where now people can be exposed to just
about any kind of theory just anything
you can find support for or against damn
near anything on the internet and how
how people started believing that the
Earth is flat again I have no idea
there's probably people watching this
video right now who think the Earth is
flat and
it's I mean it's obviously not flat so
that's the even weirder part just I mean
going with like mathematics and so forth

the very fact that the higher up you go
above the surface of the Earth the
farther you can see indicates that the
Earth is

curved I mean if the Earth really was
completely flat then you'd be able to
see a million miles you know just
assuming that atmospheric like like fog
or something didn't block The View but I
mean you wouldn't be able to see farther
the higher up you

go so I mean whether all this belief in
the Flat

Earth and uh you know the faked moon
landing and all that whether this kind
of stuff is Zionist Sops I don't know

what benefit they would get from it
other than just like promoting a certain
amount of like soft headedness in
certain people I don't know I don't see
what the point of it would be but who
knows I'm really not an authority on
Zionist

scops so anyways I'm just going to move
on to scadden's next question which is
kind of a similar one I get this
suspicion he says would you kindly
anthropologically critique the fenis
rules of acquisition and the fangi are
an alien race on later later versions of
Star Trek they weren't on the original
Star Trek they were on like the Next
Generation and they're just kind of a

caricature of some creepy little
alien anyways he's got a list of some of
their rules of acquisition one once you
have their money never give it back
three never spend more for an
acquisition than you have to eight small
print leads to large risks 10 breed is
eternal 16 a deal is a deal 17 a
contract is a contract is a contract but
only between fangi 18 a fangi without a
profile is no fangi at all no a fangi
without a profit is no fangi at all 21
never Place friendship above profit 23
nothing is more important than your
health except for your money 34 war is
good for business 35 peace is good for

business 47 don't trust a man wearing a
better suit than your own 48 the larger
the smile the larger the knife 91 your
boss is only worth what he pays you 94
females and finances don't mix 109

dignity and an empty sack is worth the
sack and 190 here all trust nothing so
I'm supposed to

give scroll up here a little my kind
anthropolog iCal critique and personally
I think that this is sort of like a a
backdoor uh

like it seems like it's sort of like
underhandedly referring to a certain
stereotype of a certain human ethnicity
that is not a space
alien a stereotype of like a superficial

money grubbing worldly minded

materialist

and I mean there are people that that

live at this level it's it's they

consider themselves to be superior to

anyone else just because everyone else

is too stupid to make as much money as

possible and I don't know it's it's just

best to avoid such people if if possible

or have as little to do with them as

possible and if you do have to do

something just be polite and you

know but uh yeah this is pretty pretty

extreme stereotype of just like the

absolute greedy money grubbing

materialist and there are people like

that in this world fortunately I don't
have much to do with
them and I'm not even making any
innuendos about any human ethnicities or
any such
thing so I'm just going to move on to
scolin or scad's third third question
and this I I think he's he's on some
kind of a I don't know some kind of
a something he's saying is Palestine
secondary State don't know if the
algorithm picks up that I word majority
Kazarian so he's wanting to know if the
population of Israel is
genetically like a majority of Kazar
ancestry and I've I've discussed this
Kazar theory that modern Ash Jews are

descended from the kazars who were like
a turkic race like back in like late
ancient times Well into medieval times
you had wave after wave of these nomadic
barbarians generally related to the
Turks speaking a more or less of a
turkic language usually sometimes no
they were Mongols there were also like
uh oh like the magars who didn't I don't
think the magar speech speak a turkic
language but this wave after wave of
these warlike nomadic barbarians the
kazars were one of these waves that
settled in Eastern Europe and they
converted to
Judaism and so there's this Theory

nowadays that most ashkanazi Jews are descended from these kazars and not really from

Hebrews but I'm pretty sure there have been genetic studies that show that actual Kazar ancestry is minimal in modern ashkanazi Jews modern ashkanazi Jews are predominantly European and they do have some Hebrew ancestry I'm pretty confident but I do think that the majority of their ancestry at this point is like Eastern

European but they do have some Hebrew in them so that I think there are some people who do not like Hebrews who are trying to play up this Kazar Theory just to deprive the Hebrews of their Holy

Land considering that the kazars didn't
come from
there

so let's see oh he's also he also has
this the bullet point his bullet point
commentary to this question is I read
once that during the Cold War there was
an immigration treaty with the S Union I
think it explains why most 83% are
far-left and atheist I think he's
referring to Israelis or like Jewish
people in Israel and I don't think that
uh it's going to be 83% farle in Israel
anymore it may have been that way at one
time but the the leftist political
parties in Israel have pretty much

collapsed the Israel is pretty much
right-wing now at least

politically um

so yeah I think I think the main answer
to this question would be to refer to
genetic studies of the ancestry of
ashkanazi Jews and I do not think that
there is very much Kazar ancestry I
assume that there's

some but I don't think that it's really
one of the main

ingredients and so I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from dhama

river and dhama river says have you
heard of the sasana raka Buddhist
sanctuary in Malaysia someone

recommended it as a good place to
practice meditation and receive training
to ordain as a monk have you ever heard
of it have you ever visited this place
or lived there what is your general
opinion of Buddhism in Malaysia okay now
I don't think I've ever heard of sasana
rqa Buddhist sanctuary in Malaysia I at
first I was thinking it might be I think
it's the

II let's see International

oh

boy I was I was thinking of it just
earlier it's it's the aidas it's a
mahasi place in Malaysia but I think
that's I

I let's see iic BCM or something like
that it's like the
international Insight
Meditation Center or something like that
in Malaysia which is following uh upa's
version of the mahasi method and I've
heard good things about that place I'm
not sure about SAS AQA Buddhist
Sanctuary just based on the name it's
Terra Buddhist um so it may be that it's
a good place to go and and meditate um
Malaysia is kind of a funny place with
regard to Buddhism in that it is illegal
for a like a native Malaysian someone of
Malaysian ancestry to not be Muslim that
you they can go to prison for that and a
Buddhist teacher can go to prison for

teaching Buddhism to a
Malaysian so the fact that you've got
Buddhist centers in Malaysia is kind of
strange like even books i' I've had
somebody send me a book that was printed
in Malaysia for it was a Buddhist book
and on the cover it says not for Malay
or I think it's not for Muslims I think
it

says and you have to put that on the
book it wasn't that the the Buddhists
were being up and saying no this isn't
for Fior Muslims or anything no it
wasn't that way at all it was the law
that they had to put like a warning like
on a cigarette pack this is not for

Muslims and you read this stuff you can go to prison for it if you are a Malaysian Muslim if you are a Malay so it's it's mostly ethnic Chinese people who live in Malaysia that are practicing Buddhism because you can't an ethnic Malaysian is prohibited by law from not being a Muslim so I don't know how arms round would work they I don't think you might not get much food in your bowl if if a monk wanders around like a a Malaysian Village unless it's a like a Buddhist Chinese Malaysian Village so I mean I have met some some good monks that came from Malaysia Chinese Malaysian monks are fairly

common in Burma I mean not like super
common but I have met several of
them

so yeah I mean it could be a good place
but I really don't know that much about
it but the whole situation of Buddhism
in Malaysia is kind of a strange

situation and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from

PSA and PSA says it sucks that even if
we have a solid theoretical

understanding of the Dharma we are still
bombarded with all kinds of feelings and
cravings and addictions and habits

that are so strong and it makes you feel
like all our theoretical understanding

of the dhama is so weak in comparison my question to you is what can we do to reduce the strength of Body Sensations that enslave us and dictate so many of our actions well this is why the Buddha set up the sa of monks to renounce the world see this is why he did it that living a lay life in a house where you are are bombarded with sensory stimuli it's it's not really the most conducive way of practicing dhama the best way is you go out into a Wilderness or you move into a cave you stare at blank walls and watch the sensation of air as it touches your nostrils for hours every day which very much reduces the amount of stimulation you're

receiving and just the opportunities for
these feelings and cravings and
addictions and habits still you're going
to have habits and latent Tendencies and
so

forth but when you're living in a very
like stripped down very simplified quiet
kind of a life like living alone in a
forest that that very much reduces the
amount of distractions and stimuli and
it makes it easier for you to be mindful
of what does arise especially if that's
like your full-time job is being mindful
of what arises and observing it and
letting it
go so what can we do to reduce the

strength of Body Sensations that enslave
us and dictate so many of our actions
well renounce the world for starters
really I mean it used to be that
Buddhism step one the first thing you do
before you become a Buddhist or right
after you become a Buddhist is renounce
the
world so what can we do to reduce the
strength of Body Sensations yes simplify
and slow down your
existence and
uh yeah and just practice mindfulness as
fulltime as you possibly can
but this is really it's it's it's a
common predicament like somebody in the
west who you know they're very

interested in Buddhism and they study the texts and everything but they still live a worldly life you know they refuse to take step one and then they think oh it's so difficult how are we supposed to do this this isn't unrealistic and they don't realize that they have just refuse to take step one and they're skipping over that and trying to do the more advanced stuff without covering the basics and I have to admit it's not for everybody it's not everybody can renounce the world and wander around like some vagrant some vagrant penniless beggar but I mean you have to be realistic if you're going to be living

in a an environment when you're
bombarded by stimuli that that is going
to make it more difficult to be mindful
of whatever
arises

so I mean at the very least you know you
can try to practice some let's see what
is it

Nama which is renunciation it's the
third param first is Donna Sila then n
of the 10 pames according to Terra
Buddhist tradition that's renunciation
so that's towards the beginning that's
one of the more Elementary things to do
you know one of the that's one of the
basics and it's just people in the west
I mean the addictions prevent them from

from not being addicted they just
they're too addicted to not want to be
addicted I guess some people
anyway and I'm I'm resorting to the
emergency backup beverage
now so I mean the best thing do I mean
even just sitting alone in a room isn't
ideal because these addictions and
habits may not have an opportunity to
arise in a situation like that then it's
just it becomes anusia it's just an
underlying tendency and it can just like
hibernate for years or decades even and
then you go back out and start wallowing
in sensuality again they just come right
back again just like you were doing the

same stuff yesterday I can tell you that
from experience experience there's a lot
of old habits that pretty much just were
invisible most of the time that I was a
monk and then I come back and start
hanging out with lay people in America
again they just come right back
again so Eternal vigilance is the price
of

Freedom so to

speak so what can we do to reduce the
strength of Body Sensations that enslave

I mean you've got to

just remove yourself from

distractions so that you can have more

you can slow things down simplify things

to some degree and then just be mindful

of whatever

arises and I mean it's not going to work

perfectly but at least it's going to

reduce the amount of

distraction this next question is from

Kevin and I have no idea

where Kevin comes from why why he was

moved to ask this question but as a

general rule I do answer questions

unless they're just

flagrantly just on you know just like

abusive or something anyways Kevin says

I know you liked a drink as a monk did

you have any Drunken Monkey kung fu

skills when you disr did you have to

give up the Kung Fu or are you you're

still a bit handy and then he says

hiya

well Kevin is delusional if he says he knows that I liked a drink as a monk in my 30 years as a monk I drank a total of one beer and that was when I was in America hanging out with Americans I thought what the hell I'll have one beer and that was it I had accidentally would take a sip of like medicine that turned out that had alcohol in it a few times I would take a sip of some kind of fruit juice or sugar cane juice that had started to ferment in the tropical hot weather in Burma you know it starts tasting like wine a little bit so you have to confess the

offense so how Kevin comes up with this idea that I like to drink as a monk unless he's just talking about water which I don't think he did because he's asking ni did you have any Drunken Monkey kung fu skills which indicates just an ignorance of Terra Buddhism in general it's like his knowledge of Buddhism comes from the old TV show kung fu apparently which is a radically different School of Buddhism and I even think I think even the Shaolin Monks didn't drink alcohol although there were there were some monks in uh in like early medieval

Burma the Maha Ari sect of Buddhism that was predominant in Burma before the burmes converted to terraa where the monks would drink alcohol and they they practice some kind of martial arts some some kind of boxing I

think um but speaking of the old TV show kung fu there was a a generous um supporter and and viewer of this show uh sent me for Christmas a box set of the entire Kung Fu series including some like extra documentary stuff which I haven't watched yet but I I certainly will God willing

inshah but as for Kevin I have no idea where he comes up with his stuff maybe he's just trying to be a smart alec or

something so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
ruie and ruie says how would you
approach or relate the Notions of forth
adna and Christian
limbo that's just kind of a that's a
strange one Christian limbo I don't
really know much about it I mean it's
supposed to be where unbaptized babies
go if they die before they get the
opportunity to be
baptized that they go to this limbo and
also I think virtuous pagans in some
versions of Roman Catholic tradition go
to limbo although of course Dante's
Inferno had like the top ring of Hell

being the the circle of virtuous
pagans so how would I approach or relate
the Notions of fourth Jonna and
Christian limbo um yeah it's just coming
from two entirely different Traditions
two entirely different intentions for a
state that is just kind of a a
nebulous uh State without any
content I don't know I guess you can
call forth Jon and nebulus certainly
it's it's almost it's it's as devoid of
perceptual content as
possible and Christian limbo I mean I'm
No Authority on Christian limbo where
unbaptized babies go I think I mean what
would be in the mind of an unap
unbaptized baby even before they go to

limbo I mean there probably wouldn't be
a whole heck of a lot of of thinking
going on you know a newborn baby
is um yeah it's I don't think that
they're thinking very
much so I think that they're very
unrelated there might just incidentally
be some sort of
indirect overlap between the
two but again I'm No Authority on
Christian limbo so I think I'm just
going to move on to the next
question and this is from Fred and Fred
says could we say nibana is
vibrationless well we could say that but
anything you say about nibana is going

to be

invalid so you can say nibana is

vibrationless you can say that vibration

is just utterly irrelevant to nibana

you can say nibana is without

curves or you can say that curves are

just totally irrelevant to nibana

depends on how you look at it and no

matter how you look at it um if you're

looking at it from a perceptual

perspective it's going to be ultimately

invalid so I think when Fred says could

we say nibana is vibrational it's

talking he's talking about like

different vibration rates for like

different levels of reality or something

and I would just say that yeah the

vibration rate is just
irrelevant it doesn't really
apply so I'm just going to move on to
this question this is from
arpad and rpad says how often would you
get sick from the food you received as a
monk in Burma well if the Raging trots
in the middle of the night doesn't count
as sickness then it was almost
never but if if like sudden emergency
trips to the ouse in the middle of the
night count as being sick it was fairly
common in fact it was pretty much of a
daily occurrence for my first four
months or so in Burma and there certain
foods I've said it before danger foods

like shrimp or already peeled pineapple
things like that that I mean it was
really you were playing Russian roulette
with your own sphincter in a case like
that

because with tropical heat and no
Refrigeration some kinds of food go bad
really fast

and then you wind up making emergency
trips to the out house um aside from
that the only thing I can really think
of is I I had some kind of hepatitis
once when I was in Burma and I got three
different interpretations of it from
three different doctors the first doctor
said it was a complication of malaria
which I hadn't had malaria in a while I

was skeptical of that one the second doctor said it's probably just something I ate or drank and I think he might be right and then the Third Doctor Who was in ranon said that it was Amic hepatitis caused by dentary amibas invading my liver so I mean if the second doctor was right and I think there's a good chance that he was then I guess that would me being getting sick from something I ate or drank um I mean I caught cold sometimes just from I mean burus villagers have very little concept of hygiene and so I mean anyone who watched The Road Warrior

you remember the feral child from The Road Warrior there there are Burmese versions of that feral child in Burmese Villages today and sometimes their mama will send them out with some food to put in the Monk's bowl and he'll be like like sneezing directly into the bowl of food or coughing into it with just black rimmed fingernails unwashed hands he'll just put the food into the bowl um I mean I've had people with Leprosy put food in my bowl I remember one time this nice lady in the village blew her nose with her hand and just kind of flung the snot off and then use that same hand to put food in my bowl and a monk is not supposed to even raise an eyebrow you're

supposed to just keep a poker face and respectfully accept whatever's put in there and if you protect dhama DH protects you your dhma protects you as a general rule although I did C catch cold sometimes pretty much at first I caught every cold that came came around you know it was like the viruses the strains of cold virus were different in Burma than they were in America when I lived in America for many years you know it's like I was exposed to most of the major strains so I had a certain amount of resistance to them but in Burma there were like these strains that I hadn't been exposed to before so I had

very little resistance and so all it takes is one grubby little kid to sneeze into the food before he puts it into my bowl and then I eat it and I get a cold so but with regard to like getting really sick from eating the food aside from just the the the midnight trots and and an occasional Cold plus maybe one case of

hepatitis that uh generally I didn't have much problem with that and so I'm just going to move on to arad's next question which is did you ever need to get treated for parasitic

infection and you get worms a lot mostly pin worms living in Burma and in fact it was it was so common in in tropical Asia

that somewhere in the text there's a theory that when a b when a person dies that like the maggots that start appearing like on the on the corpse are really just the intestinal worms that are like percolating up to the surface can't remember I read that but it was in some poly text but um yeah I had a doctor advise me just every six months take a dewormer just just in case because it really is just endemic especially pin worms but you can get worse kinds of parasitic worms like hookworms and stuff especially when you go around Barefoot you get hookworms fairly easily because they burrow up

through the soles of your feet to get
into

you so did I ever need to get treated I
mean I would have survived probably
without taking the Dormer pills but I
kind of like there was a certain Dormer
pill that came from India that it said
even on the rapper at War can cause
strange dreams and it really did you you
get these really weird surreal dreams
when you take the dewormer
pills so yeah that's about it parasitic
infection see yeah that's pretty much it
oh I mean there was like bed bugs and so
forth but that's not really an infection
that's more of an
infestation but I'll I'll spare you the

the horror stories about bed bugs and I'll just move on to the next question which is the last question after a little over two hours so yeah I haven't been digressing much and I've been fairly succinct in answering some of these questions if not

Kurt so the the result is that we're way below three hours this time and so Joe asks the last question and that is do you believe Mara exists and for those of you who are innocent of Buddhism but somehow managed to get all the way to the end of this video that Mara is more or less the equivalent of Satan in

Buddhism he's the Buddhist devil except there are certain differences like I was discussing in the previous Q&A that Mara is not chained up in the pits of hell he is up in the the the highest Heaven Realm of the sensual sphere with his three voluptuous daughters enjoying the creations of others he's in the the heaven of the the devas who enjoy the creations of others and Mara he's not so much evil he's samsaric he's like the god of samsara and if he can't get you to be bad he'll get you to be good because if you're good you go to heaven which is still in samsara you're still within his realm so so what he really doesn't want

is anyone becoming enlightened and
escaping from his
realm so do I believe that Mara
exists in in my Theory of Everything the
uncarved block of marble the mara statue
is in there so in that sense he exists
ultimately Mara doesn't exist just as
ultimately I don't exist you don't exist
nobody exists so it's kind of a trick
question

but personally Mara is redundant I don't
think there's any need for Mara even
assuming that in an infinite Universe
anything that possibly can happen does
happen unless it's just sort of like an
anichi and repetition of the same world

over and over again which I don't think is the case so Somewhere Out There Mara exists in a relative conventional sense just as we exist in a relative conventional sense but I don't think that there's any real need for a cosmic bad guy that humans really don't want to be enlightened anyway we mess up our own lives plenty well enough Mara can't do anything to us that is not in agreement with our own Karma you know Mara can mess with us only if our karma is such that it allows Mara to mess with us that Mara ought to mess with us so he does something like that but another thing that makes me a

little skeptical of this Cosmic bad guy
is I mean to have certain
positions that that have to be filled
you know like Saka king of Gods or Mara
the tempter that after one being ceases
you know you got Saka king of Gods I
mean gods in in Buddhist cosmology do
not live forever so after one Saka king
of Gods Fades out and is reborn
somewhere else he gets replaced by a new
Saka king of Gods same goes with Mara so
after one Mara dies or ceases to exist
as Mara a new Mara is reborn to take his
place and it's just like this job
title
and I don't know I'm just it just seems

like a very much of a an artifact of
premodern myth logical Tendencies more
than an empirical observation of the way
things

are so I'm I have little doubt that
there are like wrathful and malevolent
superhuman beings out there that can
mess with people sometimes I've watched
enough ghost shows to see evidence for
that

but I really am skeptical that it works
the way the texts say it works like even
Satan I mean Satan really got invented
by the Jews during the Babylonian
captivity based on their observation of
the zoroastrian Persians who had two
Gods a good God and an evil God and then

as the Jews were gradually becoming more
civilized becoming less barbarous they
were seeing that it's really not so good
to have their God be just this cruel
bloodthirsty

Tyrant so it was sort of made them feel
better to put a lot of the evil worse
stuff under somebody
else

and now people think that I mean Satan
is an obvious fact you'll have Catholic
like uh exorcists who have had tussles
with Satan numerous times who was it uh
Martin Luther through the pot at Satan
saw him right there in his
room so I mean there's going to be

people who are just as sure that Mara really exists and just exactly the way he's described in the text and all that um there is an interesting suta in which uh Maham molana rebukes Mara and there's a story in there about Ki being a relative of Mara so kie was still like a demonist back in those days um I think collie never really started being considered a benevolent goddess even though she's like a harsh benevolent goddess uh until like early modern times but I'm digressing all over the place it's like the later it gets into these the

the worse the digressions get but
getting back to the this very short
succinct question do you believe Mara
exist exists I would say in a
conventional relative sense he's out
there somewhere possibly an infinite
number of versions of Mara because it's
an infinite Universe you know infinite
number of statues in that uncarved block
but he's redundant and we don't really
need Mara to mess us up because we do a
plenty good job of messing ourselves
up and you can't do anything to us that
is that is not our Karma to have done to
us anyway so his his powers are very
limited even if he does really

exist and I guess I'm
done so getting back to Mara though that
uh yeah I mean he's not really part of
my equation I really do not take Mara
into consideration when with regard to
my understanding of ethics for example
or how I should live my life I don't
think Mara is going to get me anymore
than I think Krampus is going to get
me so that's it I at least tried to
answer all the questions I hope I
answered at least some of them to your
satisfaction and if you have any
questions like I always should say at
the beginning and almost never do you
think I can answer a question feel free
to ask in the comments below and smash

the like button don't just press it

smash the son of a and subscribe

if you haven't

already and be happy and I'm going to

push this here button here

okay then hello and welcome to question
and answer number

127 so we're getting up into high
numbers I mean even with my towering
intellect I can hardly count up to
127 so we're getting up there and I'm
sitting before you looking
very

Shaggy because my beloved Barber of the
opinion that in the winter time I should
have as much facial hair as possible to
insulate my face against the bitter cold
which includes the bitter cold of this
house which also explains why I am
dressed like a

Scandinavian my beloved sweetheart bless

her heart second

here bless her heart is allergic to

artificial heat and artificial air

conditioning I don't understand how it's

even

possible so we have to have our house in

the winter time no warmer than about 65°

fahit because if it gets higher than

that she gets a killer sinus headache or

in the summer time if you have the the

air conditioning set too low again

killer sinus headache but if the the

weather just naturally goes up and down

she seems to be okay it's just that if

you use artificial heat or artificial

air conditioning to raise or lower the

temperature then she's wiped out by it I

don't understand how it's possible if anyone can give advice on how to better deal with the situation like for example to be able to turn the heat up to a civilized level of of temperature without wiping out my my sweetheart with a sinus headache feel free to leave a comment in the comments

below so this is going to be a long one we got lots of questions so I shouldn't be digressing too much and I probably should have more than one emergency backup beverage because I think I may need it so I'm just going to wallow in this just going to dive head first right into this and the first question is from

philes and Philthy says thoughts on IQ
and

Enlightenment and I don't think that
there really is necessarily A
statistically significant correlation
between IQ and and the likelihood of one
becoming

enlightened so I do think that I some
towering intellectuals are just so
addicted to thought so addicted to their
own intellect they're so vehemently
identified with their thoughts that they
become a hopeless case whereas some
people that are not particularly
intellectual can become enlightened more
easily than some intellectuals so there
may be a certain amount of overlap I

mean if you're just too stupid there
just be may be like some some basic
things that everyone needs to understand
that you just can't get there yet maybe
but then again eart TOA says that almost
all animals are enlightened so if a frog
or a worm can be
enlightened all bets are off on that
score it could be that IQ is like the
main obstacle to
Enlightenment nevertheless there is
definitely a difference between
intelligence and wisdom that some very
intelligent people are fools and some
relatively unintelligent people are
sages the founder of the the system of

Terra in which I was ordained Tong Pulu
Cato was just a relatively simple I mean
not stupid but like a simple-hearted
sort of Village person who really was
not an
intellectual and he was spiritually
Advanced much more so than the average
person
so I think IQ can be useful if you also
have spiritual talent but the spiritual
Talent is more important than the IQ
with regard to the cultivation of
wisdom and I shouldn't spend too much
time answering each question much less
digressing because we got lots of
questions so I'm just going to move on
to Phil's second question which is

thoughts on G and
uspensky and those of you who are
unfamiliar with gerf and uspensky
gerf was a Russian philosopher who was
influenced by Eastern
spirituality and
taught a kind of Western philosophy that
was pretty much a western version of
Eastern philosophy and had sort of an
ashram and taught the importance of
mindfulness and so forth um I haven't
read any of his books I haven't listened
to any of the special music that he had
composed for his disciples to help them
cultivate wisdom I mean I've read about
girf um and some of it I mean he really

considered it to be important for everyone to have to face their demons in they have to get like get triggered they have to get stuff happen in their lives that they don't want to happen just because if you just keep it at Bay and you never learn to deal with it so I think it was possibly the previous Q&A a recent Q&A anyway where I mentioned that girf had at his ashram or whatever it was that he called it uh a certain Russian Aristocrat type guy who was very difficult to get along with and one time his disciples played some practical joke on him like they they stole his dentures and rolled it and cow it and then put it back where he had it

something like that and the guy left in a rage and gerf actually went after him hunted him down and bribed him to come back just because he felt like his disciples should have someone really difficult to get along with um just staying there and they just had to be forced to deal with it also gerf had this idea that you shouldn't write books that are easy to read that that something like philosophy especially gf's philosophy which is very valuable I mean you should have to work at it in order to really understand it and I think that may have backfired to some degree

because philosophy abstract
philosophical Concepts in
general um they're they're relatively
hard to
understand and if you make it any harder
on purpose then you're just putting a
wall between like the idea and the
person you want to learn the idea which
is not necessarily a good
idea but I really don't have a whole lot
to say about girf uh I don't have
anything bad to say about
girf um I'm unaware of any like sex
scandals or anything like that uh
associated with the biography of
gerf but I really am no Authority on the
man and so I'll just move on to uspensky

and I have actually read a book by
uspensky it was the terium
organum and the terium organum is a
very kind of an arrogant title for this
book because I mean the first organum
was Aristotle's logic you know it was
like the first system of formal thought
imposed upon Western civiliz
pretty much and then the second organum
was I think it was s Francis Bacon with
his his like invention of scientific
method you know so that was the the
second organum was like this second
formal system of thought imposed upon
Western Civilization which is
essentially science and so then uspensky

came up with the tertium organum the
third organum which um yeah I don't
think it really ranked it's it's true
that some people hold uspensky and his
Turan Morgan in very high regard like
the Disciples of um Edgar casy had the
tertium organum by uspensky as like
required reading for their classes that
they had to attend that sort of thing
I've heard uspensky referred to as a
towering intellectual but I really was
not much impressed by his book I think
to some degree you get to a certain
level of abstraction
and just sort of strangeness of ideas
and people just really can't start
differentiating between like good ideas

and bad ideas just because it's so
ethereal so up there that they really
don't have much of a frame of reference
to separate the sheep from the goat so
to

speaking and so really uspensky is T moram
is full of weird ideas it's just that he
wasn't able to to really
establish any foundation for these ideas
in my

opinion but I mean one of the one of the
main thoughts of uspensky Trish morgam
is that the universe is more than just
four dimensions you know three
dimensions of space plus time he's
talking about a fourth dimension of

space imagining four-dimensional shapes
which it may have been what inspired me
to start trying to imagine
four-dimensional shapes as a living in a
cave in Burma which is where I read his
book but I really was not impressed by
uspensky I think that people who are not
very good at abstract thought considered
him to be just this
genius just because these people that
had such a high opinion of him really
could not tell the difference between
good ideas and bad ideas when you get to
the level of like 4D
philosophy that sort of thing
what a what a three-dimensional world
would look like to a 4D being that kind

of

thing yeah so uspensky I I I wouldn't

exactly recommend reading uspensky I

think gerf probably was a wiser man

but I think uspensky eventually did

break with gerf over some philosophical

idea but that's really about all I know

about the two and so I'm just going to

move on to Phil's third question which

is thoughts on eugi Krishna

mty and I read a book called goner who

was which was written by like a personal

attendant on eug Krishna mty and eug

Krishna mty was like more radical even

than Jay Krishna myty he apparently had

some kind of Spiritual Awakening and in

eug Krishna M's case that even caused him to revert to like pre ENT body type you know they didn't describe it in detail but apparently his genitalia kind of like shrank or something you know he became essentially asexual and he was really he just he just pushed it I mean he just would do the most unreligious adic stuff as just a way way of really just upsetting the whole apple cart of people's beliefs about what is sacred and what is wise and so forth I I read one I think it was in the book goner that uh eug Krishna murty actually sent a picture to the dolly llama of some porn star like an Indian porn star

having sex with an elephant or something

I mean it was like a photoshopped picture

I mean it wasn't like she was actually

doing this and and it was he did it in

such a way that um it was clear that he

was trying to portray the Buddha's

mother who according to Legend had this

dream of a white elephant you know and

then and then she got pregnant probably

without having to you know it's like

practically a virgin birth at least an

asexual pregnancy that kind of a thing

and eug Krishna mury I mean he he would

like hit people and stuff but maharaji

did that

too so um I do have a book by eug

Krishna mury that I haven't read yet so that's that's of no help in this case so basically most of what I know about eug Krishan mty is what I learned from this book gor from one of his disciples

and and it's it's a matter of what are your criteria for an enlightened being and we've been discussing this a few times recently where you know you got this spectrum of the ideas of what an enlightened being can be like and at one extreme you've got something like Terra which insists that in order to become fully enlightened you have to be an AB like an absolutely perfected Saint you have to have pure morals before you can

have pure

concentration before you can have

Enlightenment you have to purify your

morals before you can purify your mind

and then you have to purify your mind

before you can become fully enlightened

and at the other end of the ex The Other

Extreme from that you got someone like

eug Krishna mury or even Jay Krishna

mury that I mean it's like outward

morals become utterly

irrelevant so from a terab Buddhist

point of view obviously someone like eug

chrishan mury couldn't possibly be fully

enlightened but I'm not strictly

Orthodox in my terraa

Buddhism and so I have to keep an open mind that it is possible to have a fully enlightened

Rascal and if eug Krishna mty was fully enlightened then he was indeed a fully enlightened Rascal he was called like a spiritual

terrorist that he would just deliberately attack any idea that was considered sacred partly you know ostensibly because any attack attachment to sacredness is going to be an obstacle to Enlightenment any attachment at all is going to be an obstacle to Enlightenment but um with regard to eug chrish mury again I'm No Authority on what he taught but he would be one of

those examples of uh an alleged
enlightened being who
nevertheless is not a
saint but nevertheless he he had
profound

ideas he taught profound things and so
at the very least he did have some kind
of experience that caused him to be
operating at a higher level of
Consciousness than the average
human but beyond that I would not
venture to make any

assertions so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from covac
and Cad

zida and seov action CAD zida says what

is your personal opinion on why there is something rather than nothing and I'm not exactly sure where he got the idea that I I'm of the opinion that there is something rather than nothing I've said more than once that about the only teaching of Hegel that I really can take seriously is how he began his dialectic in his logic and he starts with absolute being pure being that's the first thesis then the antithesis which negates the first thesis is pure nothing and pure nothing is the antithesis to Pure being you pure pure non-being is the antithesis to Pure being because as Hegel points out neither one of them has any discernible content you know they

they just merge into the same thing and
so Hegel starts off with this idea that
pure being and pure non-being are the
same totally

indistinguishable that they are
essentially synonyms and in his logic
after that he just assumes that just
everything and nothing are the same so
then the the

synthesis based on this first thesis of
pure being and the the antithesis of
pure non-being is a kind of contrast
that in order for anything to exist
there has to be some sort of perceived
contrast between being and not
being so I really am not of the opinion

that there is something rather than
nothing because something is just sort
of a like a subsection of everything or
of pure being and pure being and pure
non-being are the
same so that's how the God created the
universe out of nothing is that all the
the positives and negatives have to
balance out to zero
so I mean that's that's my opinion of
why there's appears to be something
rather than nothing is that this
universe is absolutely infinite it
contains all possibilities it is pure
being which at the same time is
indistinguishable from Pure
non-being and then you have to

paradoxically divide up the pure being
artificially in order to create the
seeming

of something rather than nothing or this
something as opposed to nothing because
you can't have something without a
nothing to compare it

with so I guess I answered that one well
enough I'm going to move on to se of
action CAD Z's next question which is
how did you cope with the death of your
parents

well I was in Burma when both of my
parents died one time I was living in a
cave in like Northwestern Burma and I
had just heard when I was going for MMS

round this somebody gave me the news
that my teacher venerable PKU seatt had
died Tulu chelen doya

Seattle had passed

away so I asked one of my supporters to
call um one of Tom Pulu the Tom Pulu
tradition's main supporters he was like
the president of the tong Pulu like
support

organization who lived in rangon to call
him and find out when the cremation was
going to be because I would like to
attend my teachers funeral so back in
those days this was like the late
90s or was it the late
2000s

yeah yeah I don't remember exactly when

it was it was quite a while ago it was
no it's like less than 10 years ago so
it'd be yeah it'd be in the 21st century
early 21st century she has to back in
those days in order to make a phone call
you had to get on a boat and cross the
chindwin river to a village on the other
side of the river where there was a Pham
so she gets the boat she crosses the
river and then she comes back and she
comes to visit me and she said in this
super soft gentle voice voice I have
some bad news to tell you do you want to
hear it and just right then I knew my
father probably had died and it turned
out yes indeed not only did my teacher

venerable pooku SEO die my father died
around the same time or a little bit
earlier by the time I found out about it
he hadd already been passed away for at
least a

week so I mean he my father didn't even
want a funeral there wasn't a funeral
and so I'm I was pretty much stuck in a
cave in Burma

anyway um and really I never cried when
either of my parents died I just felt
like this there was like this hollow
feeling in my chest that lasted for
maybe 10 days to two weeks that I
experienced when my I found out that my
father had died and in his honor I read
a story from a book that I pilfered from

his Library Library you know that he
allowed me to piler not exactly steal it
but it was a book that he had had of
short stories then he had had it since
before I was born I still have it on the
bookcase back there and there's a story
by Jack London called to build a fire
about a man who freezes to death in the
Arctic because his hands are too numb
for him to build a
fire and I just sort of read that in my
father's honor and then I set up like on
the Shrine in my cave there was this big
Buddha Shrine and so I set up a picture
of my father and put little flowers in
front of it for a week or so and I

sincerely missed him I was sorry that I'd never see him again not in this life anyway but I mean that's really all I could do and I mean as a Buddhist you're supposed to reflect on the inevitability of death that sort of thing so I mean that was it and then with my mother I was in rangon at the time and I get get this distraught email from my brother saying that my mother had died and to this day all I know about how she died was she was getting old her reflexes weren't so good anymore she lost her balance she fell down in a parking lot like a public parking lot outside of a store or something hit her head on the pavement and that was it and so with

regard to my mother dying in a way I was thankful that she had died so quickly and mercifully because she was afraid of death my father was not afraid of death he used to say he was curious about what was going to happen after he died he firmly believed in reincarnation he claimed to believe some of his past lives or to remember some of his past lives you know he was he was cool I didn't have any worries about him but my mother you know as a monk I couldn't really be a good son to her you know I'm thinking about you know what happens if she needs somebody to be taking care of her wiping her behind after she goes to

the bathroom you know feed eating or
this kind of stuff and I was kind of
bracing myself for well even though I'm
a monk you know it is my duty I haven't
been a very good son because I've been
living in a cave in Burma for the last
20

years but you know I should do what I
can and then all of a sudden boom she
just falls down hits her head and and
she is moved on to whatever comes next
and like I wasn't exactly I wasn't happy
about it but still in a way I was
relieved at the idea that this person
that I loved who was afraid of death
didn't really have to face it you know
she didn't have some long lingering

illness anything like that it was just boom and the other thing that really bothered me was why am I not more bothered with regard to my mother and my father I had a much closer connection with my father that he considered me to be a Reincarnation of his own father that we had like Karma going back into previous lives with my mother I mean we we lived on different planets since I was about 12 or 13 years old I kind of outgrew her she was like spiritually speaking still kind of a toddler you know she was not spiritually Advanced at all and so in her case you know I felt like the duty of a son that kind of a

thing but with my father it was more a
matter of losing one of my best
friends

so again I couldn't go to my mother's
funeral I was a monk with no money stuck
in Burma at the

time so really there wasn't a whole heck
of a lot I could do other than try to
console my my grieving

brother and so now I am an

orphan and I'm just going to move on to

covac and CAD Zena's third question

which is thoughts and then he's got the

link to some article from science

alert.com entitled

hmpv what to know about the respiratory

virus outbreak in China so apparently

there's some new respiratory virus going making the rounds in China and according to the article it was discovered in the Netherlands in 2001 although they have located antibodies to this same virus that go back at least as far as the 1950s so this virus has been around for a while and it's not particularly dangerous it's sort of like a common cold um and it's just this relatively newly discovered virus I guess that is people are catching in in China and really I mean I don't have many thoughts on it it doesn't surprise me at all that there's these obscure

cold like viruses that are out there and every once in a while some of them will become more well known because some people are catching it but uh really I don't have a whole lot to say about it because you know it's just like another cold virus you know like a new strain of common cold discovered in Peru it's like so

what what else is new there just just add that to the list of things that a person inclined to worry can worry about so I mean if I ever catch it it might seem more important but right now it's just sort of like a new strain of cold virus that is making the rounds in China so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from
Raphael and rafhael says what was your
impression of Padma samb Baba's
biography after reading it and it is
true that many years ago I did read a
biography of Padma sambava who's
considered to be like the second Buddha
to Tibetan Buddhists that he is
considered to be like one of the
founding fathers of Tibetan Buddhism of
vajana and again padas samb Baba was
sort of like Yugi Krishna mty in a way
that he was
tantric um it's been many years since I
read the biography I vaguely remember
there was uh a part where he and a woman

were living in a cemetery and if not feeding on actual corpses at least they were feeding on food offered to the dead at this cemetery and of course this monk living alone with a woman in a cave that kind of stuff is just sort of flouting traditional Buddhist ethics and then there's the the case that I mentioned not long ago maybe in the previous Q&A about Padma sambava dancing on a flat roof in a town monks dancing again not approved of in early Buddhism and he just sort of haphazardly kicks a rock off the roof which flies off the roof falls down below and hits a guy in the head who's walking down past the

building and kills him instantly and so Padma sambava just denied that he killed anyone cuz really I mean it was just sort of like this act of God or act of karma where you know he wasn't trying to kill anyone he just happened to kick a rock while dancing and it kills somebody and pmas samb Baba experienced no regret or remorse um you know he freely admitted to what he did but he was supposedly already enlightened at the time so you know what can you do and so I think a lot of his biography is probably just made of Legends as is the case with a lot of premodern biographies

um but I mean he made enough of an impression on Tibetan Buddhism that he probably was in real life relatively wise whether he was fully enlightened or not I have no way of knowing but I mean it was one of those things that you can read that challenges your beliefs about what wisdom is all about what enlightenment is all about what Buddhism is all about so for that reason I could recommend it um the the addition that I was reading was it was in one of those there was a series of Buddhist translations with commentary by Evans Wentz was the last the last name of the person and he would have heavy

hitter Western philosophy ERS doing the
intros like Carl Young did did intros it
was the Tibetan book of the great
Liberation was part of this series The
tietan Book of the Dead was part of this
series and also the the songs of milera
was part of this series I think it might
have been in the songs of millera where
there was uh the bio autobiography of
millera and also I think possibly the
biography of PMA sambava although now
that I think of it it may have been in
the Tibetan book of the great liberation
because padas samb Baba is considered to
be the author of the Tibetan book of the
great Liberation whether he really was

or not I have no way of knowing there
are a lot of texts that become popular
are just attributed to
famous sages of the past as a way of
lending authority to them you know like
Mahayana Buddhist texts as a general
rule are you know sort of forgeries that
are put into the mouth of goab Buddha or
some other some other Great mahayan
Sage

so with regard to Bas samb Baba's
biography yeah I mean it's if you like
to have your beliefs challenged which is
good I I like having my beliefs
challenged to some
degree um yeah I mean it's it's worth
reading just if if only for the sake of

being more literate in Buddhism knowing
who bodhi sambava was for example
and I'm just going to move on the next
question also from

Raphael he says your thoughts on the
interpretation of pure Land by venerable
Master

Hua and he just has this quote here

Master huah says quote fundamentally
there is no heaven and there is no pure
land people believe a heaven and a
heaven exists they imagine the existence
of a pure land and a pure land exists
the pure land dhad door was spoken by
the Buddha in order to teach you to do
away with your false thoughts it is

intended to lead you to a realization of
the pure inherently wonderful true
suchness nature at the ultimate point
when you have no false thoughts or
confused ideas you arrive at the pure
land whoever can do away with their
false thoughts can reach the land of
ultimate Bliss whoever cannot do this is
still in the evil world of the five
turbidities so heaven is is the same we
imagine how fine and wonderful Heaven
Must Be but only on the basis of what we
have heard we also Imagine the pure land
to be as the Buddha said it was we
haven't yet seen it ourselves except in
our imaginations as I see it the pure
land dador is taught only for the sake

of causing you to purify your mind that
is the pure land if your mind has no
confused ideas that is heaven if you
look for it elsewhere you show only your
greed

well he seems to be confusing heaven
with Nirvana In this case it seems to
me his description of Heaven seems to be
more more applicable to Buddhist idea of
Nirvana than Buddhist ideas of Heaven
which are still some soric Realms just
higher than this one that we are in
right now also I would disagree that he
says the pure land dator was spoken by
the Buddha I don't think that the
historical gmma Buddha taught anything

about pure land Buddhism that that was made up hundreds of years later after the time of the Buddha and it says here the pure land dador was spoken by the Buddha in order to teach you to do away with your false thoughts but in my opinion belief in the pure land is a false thought so it'd be sort of fighting fire with fire at best but a lot of Mahayana Buddhism is of the opinion that Dharma is like fighting fire with fire it's fighting delusional ideas with other delusional ideas that are just less delusional you know it's sort of like there's a text the removal of distracting thoughts I think maybe it's in the

majaya where

um a a carpenter will knock a big Peg
out of a piece of wood with a smaller
narrower Peg and it's it's kind of like
that you're driving like this gross
diluted thought out of your mind with a
somewhat less diluted thought but still
you got to get rid of both

pegs and let's see here first yeah first
of all I would disagree that with Master
Hua that the Buddha actually taught pure
land Buddhism I really do not think goab
Buddha the historical goab Buddha taught
pure land

Buddhism let's see

Also let's

see at the ultimate point when you have no false thoughts or confused ideas you arrive at the pure land well I mean he seems to be like equating heaven and pure land with

Nirvana because if you have no false thoughts or confused ideas you're essentially

enlightened I mean you're you're even beyond heaven at that

point so it's just it's a way of

rationalizing the existence of a

teaching of Buddha that wasn't really

taught by the Buddha but Mahayana

Buddhists as a general rule are not

willing to admit that Mahayana Buddhism

wasn't really taught by the Buddha and

so they come up with these rationalizations that have to stretch and twist things a bit where he is like redefining pure land Buddhism essentially just to kind of make it make more sense from a classical Buddhist philosophical point of view and I don't think he does a very good job of it so I'm just going to move on to Raphael's third question which is as follows despite their often simple way of thinking I value the humility of deeply religious people more than the arrogance of some intellectual atheists who believe they know everything better is this also your

conclusion after becoming familiar with
the Western world and the Burmese people
who have a traditional
middle-age yeah it's like medieval
religious
mindset yeah I can appreciate religious
people
especially people who are not extremely
wise do well to just commit
themselves to a pre-established
spiritual Dogma that the average person
is not going to come up with their own
independent thoughts that are wiser or
better as a general rule than the the
religion in the the culture of which
they live so it would take it takes kind
of a a person with somewhat unus usual

talents or somewhat unusual
intelligence to really break away from
the mainstream of like Orthodox dogma of
whatever whatever religion it is that
they're in and try to make better sense
of

stuff so yeah I I wrote an article it's
in one of my books I think it's in my
book philosophical Dharma about
comparing religion to poetry how back in
the day poems like in the English
language especially not only had meter
but they rhymed there was like this
structure it was very limiting structure
you know you have to you whatever you're
going to say it has to fit this this

rhythm

of and also if you're if you're into

rhyming it's got a

rhyme and some poets got so good like

for example Coleridge with his poem 'Kubla L' con

it just occurred to him spontaneously he

wasn't trying to work out what rhymes

with what it just appeared in his mind

while he was on

drugs as it turns out but I mean once

like a talented poet back in pre-

postmodern times you know somebody like

Shelley I mean you just get so used to

working within the framework of meter

and rhyme that you just can

spontaneously start creating this

beautiful inspired poetry with meter and

rhyme without having to like work out
exactly what words going to fit in there
and this sort of thing it just happens
spontaneously and following a
traditional religion is kind of like
that you know it's sort of like you know
you're bound by these limitations of
meter and rhyme so to speak but I mean
what happened after poetry stopped
having meter and rhyme I mean I think
Walt whitmann was one of the main
perpetrators of that in in English
literature anyway he just started
writing poetry that had no meter and no
rhyme and that just opens the door just
flings the door wide open to untalented

pseudo poets writing bad poetry and I mean they don't they don't even have to make it fit anything and and that's kind of the way Western religion is becoming where there's just no no structure no rules pretty much and I think a good poet with meter and rhyme is going to be better than a good poet without meter in rhyme and a good like a religious person with this traditional framework is in a most cases I think going to be better than a spiritual person who just has no use for for Frameworks like eug Krishna mury for example I mean eug Krishna mury he can get away with that stuff Picasso could get away with paintings that didn't look

like

anything Whitman could get away with
poetry that didn't have meter or rhyme
and so eug chrishna murty is kind of
like that he can he can get away with
spirituality with no

rules but I do think that you know the
Poetry that is the most beautiful has
meter and rhyme and also like the
religion that is most beautiful has this
framework that adds structure and
stability and like balance and so forth
which for most people is best it's going
to be outliers who are going to do
better than the the pre-established
structure by just going out on their

own so let's see what is the
question is this also my conclusion that
uh see despite their and simple way of
thinking I value the humility of deep
deeply religious people more than the
arrogance of some intellectual yeah the
people of Burma were some of the most
virtuous like the people around my
Monastery of one bow Forest Monastery on
the chindwin river about 16 miles up
River from chin from Mona the city of
Mona in Burma they were the most
virtuous people I'd ever dealt with my
life and their life had a certain simple
beauty to it that I really admire and
respect and you come back to America
where people say that they're Buddhist

and don't keep five precepts and don't meditate very much and still call themselves sa and all this and yeah I I'd have more respect for the Burmese approach despite its limitations because you can get so locked into a Dogma you just have this medieval mindset you can't question anything that you are taught it's just all has to be gospel truth literally

that I mean it didn't work for me because I just am not that way I'm not that way in religion not that way in politics I can't just follow a religion or a party and just accept everything it just doesn't work I've got to think for

myself I've got to follow my own
conscience my own best judgment that
sort of
thing but still I do have a lot of
respect for deeper religious people in
Burma and also deeply religious people
in South Carolina who for the most part
are are Baptist Christians rather than
terraa Buddhists but still it's
like they carry their religion around
with them all the time you know it's
just inside them that they're kind of
living their life more or less in
religious terms at least there's a
religious tinge to their everyday
experience just their humbleness their
their honesty that kind of thing that I

have I have to respect that even though
I'm not a
Christian I'm not really all that great
of a terot of Buddhist either for that
matter even when I was a strict monk
still I was a
heretic just because I did not believe
everything in the texts like the entire
third ptica for
example so anyways I'm just going to
move on next question I can't really
spend a lot of time on each question
just because there's lots of questions
and we want to keep this to less than
three and a half hours if
possible so next question is from

Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam and occasionally still known as Libra lamb and he says how long do you suppose that the most scholasticism obsessed scholar monks spend studying on the average day in Burma well I would say the most scholasticism obsessed scholar monks they're pretty much spending all day probably even when they're eating like there is a phenomenon in Burma called the titica D the bearer of the titica which is monks who have memorized by heart the entire 40 volume poly toptica in the Burmese Edition and you know they'll even be eaten and they'll just be like reciting over and over in their head just trying

to keep it all memorize and memorize new stuff if they haven't memorized it all yet there's a monastery that specializes in pranking out titica D I think at the time I was in Burma there were like six of them that six monks who had memorized the entire to ptica I think one of them actually was protesting against the government at one point and got thrown in prison I think he may have been forced to dis robe somehow but I have met at least one of these titica D and really it's like they're like chanting in there at least internally like under their breath pretty much all

the time just so that they don't forget
the 40 volumes that they have memorized
or they're still memorizing it you know
they're they're doing it even more
probably with regard to the ones that
aren't just memorizing uh still I mean
it's it's going to be like most of the
day like a hard it'd be like sort of
what a um

like what do you an intensive Meditation
Retreat where you're meditating most of
the day these these monks these scholar
monks in Burma are like in intensive
scholasticism Retreat pretty much all
the time and they're just like studying
it and they do have this medieval
attitude that it's all gospel truth it

was all taught by the Buddha it's the highest truth they can't question any of it like I mean sometimes it just results in these weird kind of cognitive dissonance experiences like the most famous titica da in Burma was mingun TOA daaro who was the qu no he was the reciter at the the burm 6 Council in 1956 he recited the toptica at the the Burmese six Council and he knew that the Buddha was not really considered to be extremely tall in the texts you know there are many cases people see the Buddha they think he's an ordinary monk the the Buddha exchanges robes with mahak kasapa that sort of thing and but

at the same time the Buddha was
considered to be 27 feet tall in the
commentaries the commentaries say the
Buddha was 27 feet tall so
ming who is no idiot I mean the man was
brilliant just a phenomenal scholar like
many burmes seatt are just phenomenal
Scholars they memorize so much of this
stuff they can just recite chapter and
verse just
spontaneously he had to have this theory
he could not doubt
what the commentary said even that the
Buddha was 27 feet tall but he knew all
the evidence from the text that the
Buddha really he may have been tall but
he wasn't

like tall taller than a giraffe tall as
a tree so he had to come up with this
theory that in in the Buddhist time
people were more virtuous than now even
though they were like Mass murderers and
sociopathic Kings and so forth people
were more virtuous than than now and so
so the weather Gods loved people more
than they do now and so they brought
more seasonal rains more Clement weather
which caused the crops to grow better
they were more nutritious and so
everybody was you know 12 to 15 feet in
height at
least and he could not question even
like really obvious stuff that can't be

true I mean he just despite his
Brilliance he was in the Guinness Book
of World Record or so I've been told for
memorizing the entire 40 volume poly
topica including extra stuff like
commentarial stuff poly grammars I mean
he had like a photographic
memory but he was limited by his Dogma
to he had to believe stuff that I mean
even a 10-year-old child couldn't
believe in the west just because we have
different cultural
conditioning but I'm I'm deviated from
the question here and I would just say
you know several hours a day most of the
day they would be
studying phenomenal scholars in Burma

although they are dogmatic phenomenal
Scholars and I'm just going to move on
to Stellar Supreme formerly known as
Liam's next

question which is do you suppose that
non prient beings would have some
ordinary scale of experience in terms of
temporality on on the grounds that there
is in an inter to separate moments of
hypostatic banga in the form of feelings
with their impulsion that goes beyond
non precipi

space Libra Lam is like this he writes
stuff that's even harder to understand
in the Discord

server so do I suppose that non precipi

beings would have some ordinary scale of
experience in terms of temporality on
the grounds that there is
inters to separate moments of hypostatic
banga

well hypo banga is like the subconscious
mind the closest thing

that um Orthodox terraa has to a

subconscious mind like in a Freudian

sense would be bonga which is just it's

like your last conscious memory in your

previous existence which comes over into

this existence as a kind of test pattern

like if you're sound asleep you're not

thinking anything you just have this

image in your mind that's Banga

Banga every thought moment begins and

ends with

banga which may be the the image of your family looking at down at you on your deathbed in your previous life just before you die something like that but you don't remember that

so the thing is I think one of the one of the things Liber Lam or Stellar

Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam is suggesting here is that you would notice a passage of time even though you're supposedly unconscious simply because these bongas are happening one after another and there're so it's like one bonga it's like one image another the same image another the same but they're

at least repeating and so You' notice
the
repetition but you're not aware of any
gaps because the gaps there's no mind in
between the
gaps so you wouldn't be aware of the
gaps that it all just converge into one
bonga and if nothing is
changing then there's no passage of time
it could be there'd be like some kind of
fluctuation although Abid dama doesn't
say
this and still
you wouldn't be able to perceive the
banga see that's that's part of the
problem is in order to perceive anything
it takes 17 mind moments of all these

different processes just to perceive one
image just even one pixel of one image
and there's none of that if all you've
got is

banga so you there's this bonga it's UNP
in a way it's kind of it's not even
really a perception

you know your mind doesn't advert to it
it's just sort of this background filler
for when you're

unconscious or as unconscious as you can
possibly be without being an inanimate
object so let's see here in the form of
feelings with their impul well there
wouldn't be any feelings because waya
isn't arising when all you've got his

bonga if wait arises perception also has
to arise chadera also has to arise in
accordance with Abid

dama but if it's a non- precipi being
there's going to be no awareness of the
passage of time because the passage of
time is itself perceptual you have to
compare two events in time and like
perceive a distance between those events
in time in order to have a concept of
time so I don't suppose that and I'm
just going to move on to the next
question which is from no IC rocker and
Gnostic rocker says I have heard you
speak about magical otherworldly
experiences from your youth have you or
any of the monastics you have spent time

with over the decades experienced any of
these transformative otherworldly
Perceptions in adult life I understand
it is against vinya for monastics to
boast of these to lay people but hope
you'll be able to discuss it now that
you are a Layman well I've had mystical
experiences I mean I mean the first
mystical experiences I had probably as a
child you know just the seeing the whole
world as a child sees it is kind of
mystical to begin with because you
haven't like locked in everything with
names and categories and everything so
you're just kind of seeing it all for
the first time in a sense then as I was

got I was getting older in my teens and
early 20s it could mystical experiences
were generally triggered by psychedelic
especially

LSD and then as became when I became a
monk and started meditating intensively
after several years I got good enough at
meditation that I started having

mystical experiences in meditation

also um but it's I don't know how really
to describe it I mean it's you can't
really describe it very well it's just
your mind is clear like glass in the
meditative

sense and you're just wide awake you're
more conscious than you normally
are but how do you describe that I'm not

sure I mean you just have no doubt that
this is more real than the ordinary
waking State of
Consciousness

um see maybe I should just go over this
question a little better here I've heard
you speak about magical otherworldly
experiences from your youth have you or
any of the monastics you have spent time
with over the decades experienced any of
these transformative otherworldly

Perceptions in adult life yeah I've I
mean most monks they're not really going
into details and most monks probably
don't experience much in in a mystical
sense especially Asian monks who are you

know they're just doing their cultural
Thing by being a monk most of them
really do not have a spiritual calling
in my

opinion

um transformative otherw worldly

perceptions so that wouldn't include

just paranormal stuff I assume that

seems to be talking about like expanded

Consciousness higher levels you know

higher Realms kind of stuff and with

regard to Burmese monks I haven't really

talked about that sort of Stu that kind

of stuff much and generally yeah I

haven't really spoken with people that

have described me in detail at least I

don't remember

it but I'm sure that I'm not the only one that there are plenty of Western monks out there who must be at least as good of meditators as I was that there are a lot of very saintly Burmese monks even though the majority may not be saintly there are some it's like in medieval Europe where most Catholic monks and Priests were not particularly spiritual but still you had some genuine Saints walking the Earth you know people who just could not doubt their religion and in in the Catholic you know medieval Catholic idea it's like you only get one chance at heaven and if you blow it you're GNA burn in hell forever and ever

so they had that kind of pushing them
towards saintliness in a way that
Buddhist Buddhists don't have that and
so I'm I mean yeah how can I how can I
let's see how can I discuss it
though yeah I mean you can't really at
least in my experience mystical
experiences it's just like an
expansive hyperconscious State and it
doesn't go into words very
well

so yeah I'm rather than spend another
five 10 minutes just kind of stumbling
over my words trying to explain what
ultimately is unexplainable I guess I'm
just going to move on to Gnostic
rocker's next

question which is over the years I have noticed that what people are in their lay life is frequently what they carry over into their ordained life thus we have many different kinds of dhama depending on what prism the lay person brought with them to the temple thus if a Layman was heavily into young and new Agy stuff that's the kind of Dharma he teaches if someone was a badass disciplinarian severe military type in Lay life that's the kind of dhama he teaches as a monk if someone had a strickly d auster Protestant upbringing that's the kind of dhama he teaches if someone has was a bit of a what's your

angle StreetWise Hustler that's his dumb
etc etc is there any way around this is
it inevitable and does it even matter
well it's not inevitable because
sometimes it's like you'll sort
of you know you'll be this sort of
person and then you'll have some
lifechanging insight that will cause you
to just shift at least in certain
respects like you know like heavily into
young and new age type of person who
then is inspired to become a monk they
might just leave behind the new AG Yung
stuff and just become like very dogmatic
with regard to Terra I mean that does
happen you've got some people that are
dedicated to one thing and then they

become disillusioned with that and then they change over to Terra and it may be that that personality type of just like wholly committing to this system remains intact it's just that the system changed so like certain aspects of their personality can change I mean there's a lot of cases of people who are just like very angry you know getting into fights kind of stuff and then they have some sort of Awakening experience that inspires them to be more religious or spiritual and they can just leave that behind sometimes it happens but it takes like a crisis you know it takes like something

to just slam you out of a rut

and then in most cases you just find a

new

run so I mean it is true that you care I

mean you're stuck being who you are as a

general rule so if you're a cynical

smartass before you become a monk good

chance you're going to be a a cynical

smartass

monk you're going to be I mean whatever

it is your personality pretty much

Remains the Same and like your C

cultural conditioning you can't just

leave that behind I learned that through

experience that I could not become an

ancient Indian monk no matter how

closely I would try to follow the

ancient Indian texts on how an ancient
Indian monk is supposed to live and and
conduct his life and his his behavior
and everything still I was born and
raised in the United States of America
in the 20th century

mostly so you're just stuck with that
and so for the most part it's true and I
mean whether it matters or not is kind
of irrelevant because it's just the way
it

is and I mean just most of it is
inevitable except for in some cases
someone will just hit this totally
disillusioning crisis that will cause
them to let go of whatever it is they

were clinging to and you know in most cases they just start clinging to something else in this case to Terri lot of Buddhist monasticism and a certain amount of dogmatism and so forth like I knew this Australian monk that I mean he was just this Rascal he was he was living in Thailand just kind of living this sort of like a degenerate kind of existence just making money scoring with thae girls you know drinking every day this kind of thing and I'm not exactly sure what it is that happened but he had some kind of Crisis and he became a monk to save himself from himself and just became this very humble very devout very serious monk

instead of just the this debauched party
animal that he was

before so I mean even though it usually
happens that you just take your

personality before you were a monk and

you just are the same personality after

you become a monk except you just you

know switch jobs essentially I mean

that's usually the case but not

absolutely always is and there's really

not a whole hell of a lot you can do

about it you just make the best of what

you

can and so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is also from

Gnostic

rocker and he says I'll keep the following as brief as possible because I don't want to project my own views or project papancha what's your view of westerners and obsessive ritualization around hierarchies based on henpecking and Relentless bowing as a means of establishing transactional relationships with others I won't say any more on that I am interested in your view not more on my own projections I won't ask about easterners bowing ritualization it's so much part of their culture but it's not ours so I don't fully understand this question maybe because he was too brief I'm not sure but what is my view on westerners and obsessive

ritualization around Hier Ares based on
henpecking and Relentless bowing as a
means of establishing transactional
relationships with others I really don't
have a lot of experience with that um
because I never really liked
ritualization I was never much into
rituals that's one reason why I became a
terraa Buddhist because of all the
schools of Buddhism it seems to have a
minimum number of rituals that are
prescribed by the text
themselves maybe I could be wrong I want
to a Zen Monastery once as a lay person
looking for a monastery and there was so
much you had to bow to the doorway

before you went into the doorway you had to bow to the room as you were entering and leaving the room if there was any Buddha statue you'd have to bow to that just bowing and chanting just lots and lots of it I had no use for it in Terra Buddhism you only have to bow if you meet a senior monk you have to bow to any monk who's been a monk longer than you have so I mean At first I felt very awkward and self-conscious because Americans generally don't bow to anybody you know half of them hate the president so you know I felt awkward in self-conscious sort of like I used to

feel as a lay person when I would dance without being drunk yet that kind of thing but after you've done it a few dozen times it just it's just no big deal it's just something that you're supposed to do so you do it you know it's just proper etiquette for a monk nobody forced me to become a monk against my will I did it voluntarily so I should follow the rules voluntarily it's just part of the package part of the deal of becoming a monk is you got these rules and one of those rules is you bow to senior monks after uncovering your right

shoulder

so I'm not really exposed a lot to ritualization around hierarchies based on henpecking and Relentless bowing as a means of establishing transactional relationships with others I just don't I don't think I've ever really viewed Buddhism that way I mean when I read this the thing it mostly reminds me of is that Zen monastery I went to which is Shasta Abbey in Northern California with all this bowing and ritualization but it didn't strike me as henpecking or EST establishing transactional relationships with others it was just tradition it's just what you're supposed to do so you do

it

so

yeah let's see

here it's it's easier for the easterners

because they live in a more class

conscious Society than than we do the

Burmes definitely live in a much more

class conscious Society than we do as

I've mentioned before they're half dozen

different pronouns for me half a dozen

different pronouns for you and the

pronouns that you use depend not on

gender so much as just the like the

relative social status between the

person that you're talking to and

yourself and and they can be very groly

the burmes is it's it's kind of strange
how they just willingly gravel to
someone who is socially Superior to them
and then act just like in a very hoty
arrogant way to people who are inferior
to them socially which is strange and uh
it always kind of struck a weird cord
with me I I generally preferred or often
in many cases I preferred hanging out
with the Servants of of a household than
the master and mistress just because the
servants were more humble and cheerful
and and happy to hang out with me and
everything
so yeah but this question I really can't
relate to to it my view on westerners
and obsessive ritualization around

hierarchies based on henpecking and
Relentless bowing as a means of
establishing transitional relationships
with others I mean it just wasn't on my
radar at all especially with regard to
westers so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Al and Al
says what are your thoughts on the gold
canned Thai Red Bull cring dang sold in
Asia vers is the blue silver canned Red
Bull we have in the west yeah that's the
first time I ever saw Red Bull was I was
in Burma and it was like I'd been in
Burma just a matter of
days and somebody brought me two cans of
two canned beverages one was it was like

Sprite or seven up something like that
and the other one was this little gold
can of King dang

250 and I never liked Sprite or 7up so I
thought well what the heck I'll just
drink this gold stuff I didn't know what
it was I'd never seen it before but the
lady who offered it to me says Ah he
likes that and she started bringing me
more of it because she thought I liked
it because I picked it over the two and
I think it tastes at least as good as
well I got a can right here this is my
emergency backup beverage this is
Western Red

Bull I think it tastes better and at
least in the 90s when I when I was

drinking it at first I mean it had ingredients that were probably illegal in the west I've been told that it had a little bit of nicotine to get people addicted to it it had some kind of um steroids although even vitamin D is a steroid so I mean it's it's just because it has steroids in it doesn't mean it's all that bad it probably had something along the lines of amphetamine if you drank more than two you weren't going to sleep that night I mean you would just get zinged drinking two cans of this cring dang

250 and I guess the story is that some Austrian businessman was vacationing in

Thailand and he saw this cring dang Red Bull I guess uh cring dang in in Thai is literally translates into English as Red Bull in Burmese it's called Chu Yi which means wild

buffalo so anyways this this Austrian businessman is in land he sees his stuff and he thinks that's a good idea like energy drink so he he sort of got permission to use the the brand but the ingredients are totally different you know the whole design of the can and everything is totally different and I mean it's more legal and I think now that the even the gold can cring dang 250s now that it's sort of a internationally Famous Brand they've had

to tone it down and take out the the
stuff that would be illegal in the west
and you don't get nearly as Zing
drinking it anymore but I did like
drinking it and I think a lot of the
ajan cha monks that do the the all night
vigils you know on upos night where you
just meditate all night long I think
some of them are chemically aided with
this cring dang 250 or some equivalent
there's a lot of energy drinks out now
but I used to really like it I I look
forward to getting getting a can or or
more than a can of Red Bull you know
that was like the closest I came to
taking drugs as a monk for many years is

just drinking Red Bull chemically aided
by one can of buff I I had that as uh
caboc cob it was just like this code in
my journal I was keeping keeping track
of like sleep and meditation and so
forth that there'd be like this
chemically aided little um note that I'd
put in there when I get Red Bull and I
might as well take a sip of it in honor
of Red
Bull so
what are my thoughts on I guess I guess
those are my thoughts aren't
they
so I guess I'll just move on next
question this is from
trasis and trasis says why sometimes it

is Goda spelled g o t ma a and other
times it is godma spelled g u t ma a is
it like poly versus S difference and
that is correct Goa with an O is the
poly way of spelling the name go go and
godma with a G auau is the Sanskrit way
of spelling the name Goa

so

historically I guess in in American
culture Western culture in general it
would be spelled g u t ma but within the
context of Terra Buddhism which uses the
poly language it's g t m
a and it's it's almost the same because
like for example the Burmese
pronunciation of the letter O is

essentially like Au it's a dip thong o
GMA so it's the same name it's just that
one is in poly and one is in
Sanskrit and only a terraa Buddhist for
the most part would have it spelled g t-
ma a and not g- t
ma and so I'm just going to move on to
trasa is a second
question which is it has occurred to me
that Legends say the Buddha after
getting a rice with milk and honey or
whatever it was sat down under the B
tree with very strong desire to not get
up until he became enlightened that
strong desire had not stopped him to uh
wake up even abandoning wife and kid to
look for an answer to life is some kind

of

Desire so is strong desire to wake up a good thing well it's it's sort of like knocking out the big Peg with the smaller Peg you know it's you're replacing one like UNH wholesome desire or a whole bunch of unh wholesome desires with a more wholesome desire a simplified more wholesome desire which eventually you do have to get rid of but I have been for a long time skeptical of this idea that the Buddha sat down under the bod tree with this firm determination he wasn't going to get up until he was enlightened because that itself is a

kind of attachment that I just I'm I'm
just uh I am skeptical of the very idea
because you have that strong an
attachment you make that strong
determination I'm not going to get up
from this seat until I become
enlightened that very determination can
be what prevents you from becoming
enlightened because you have such this
strong insistent desire on things being
a certain way
and wisdom just doesn't work that way so
I am skeptical that the Buddha had this
determination I think it's what might be
more
likely
is something that would be heresy might

be seen as disrespectful in that he was trying and trying and trying and then eventually he just gave up and that's why he he accepted the milk rice from sujata or whatever her name was and you know his five athletic companions washed their hands of him in disgust because he was eating this this dainty milk rice and it may be that he just kind of gave up on the the aestheticism at least this this strict striving and just said in in probably more less French terminology you know just [_] it and then he just sat down to meditate under the bod tree just cuz he felt like it and then then it was able to happen after he had sort

of given up

you know I I wrote an article about it

it's it's it's floating around out there

somewhere I think it might wind up in my

fifth volume of

essays which I haven't started editing

yet but uh yeah so I do think that you

have to have a desire for enlightenment

or a desire to cultivate wisdom at first

and that's part of the raft and then

once you and eventually you have to let

go of that because

I mean eventually it becomes an obstacle

even though it's helpful at first to get

you to a certain point but then after

you get to that certain point you have

to let it go and I do think that you're

going to have to let let go of that
before the moment of Enlightenment a lot
of Burmese people think that you know
you just spontaneously let go of all
these attachments at the moment of
Enlightenment but I really do think that
you got to let go of these things before
you become enlightened or contrary wise
they'll think that you don't start
acting like a saint until you become
enlightened but you may have to start
acting like a saint even before you are
one just to help you get
there so there's there part of the end
even abandoning wife and kid to look for
an answer to life is some kind of Desire

yeah I mean probably not necessarily but
probably and

uh yeah I mean at first you have this
desire for enlightenment and I've
discussed this before how um you know
it's like the last desire that you have
to get rid of your last attachment is
your attachment for

enlightenment that at first it's
skillful because you have this one
desire for enlightenment that I mean
it's eclipses all your other desires
your desires for you know family and
social status and wealth and and stuff
nice car sensual pleasures and all that
you replace all of these less skillful
desires with this more more skillful

simplified desire for enlightenment and so you strive for enlightenment and you strive and you strive and you strive but because you still have this attachment you still can't become Enlighten until eventually you have to just let go of that that last attachment and then you can become

alighten so I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question also from chasa is which is how much of a legend how how much of a legend of the Buddha is fiction and how much is likely TR true events I would say well over half is fiction or just

Legend I don't think necessarily it was

deliberately cooked up it was just stuff
that is floating around weird Legends
you know kind of
rumors that then get taken more
seriously and then someone decides yeah
we better include
this so I mean obviously like the Buddha
being born the day of his birth his
mother is standing up under a tree
holding on to a
tree he's born he immediately takes off
walking he doesn't have any goop on him
he's not this little red screaming baby
he immediately takes off
walking Lotus Blossom appearing under
each footstep so he doesn't touch the
ground and then he just starts bragging

you know there's no one greater than me
this is my last birth and then and then
after that he just kind of reverts
back to being an ordinary baby well I
don't think so the whole thing about the
Buddha being 27 ft tall I just don't
think

so there's just a lot of it even the
stuff in the text with just all these
grandiose Miracles and the grandios
bragging about how people should worship
him and so forth I think a lot of that
is fiction even in ancient Greece most
people probably knew that Plato's
dialogues were were not really coming
from the mouth of Socrates maybe a few

of the earlier ones you know like the apology and so forth but eventually Plato just started using Socrates as a sort of mouthpiece for his for Plato's own philosophical views and early Buddhist monks have done the same with the

Buddha where most of the texts of you know what the Buddha is saying the historical Buddha probably didn't really say it a lot of it would be Stū that he wouldn't really disagree with necessarily but um I do do not think that most of what you find in the text and even less of what you find in just the the extraneous tradition is going to be uh factual accounts of historical

objective events in the Buddha's life so with regard to certain things there's a good chance he really was born in capilawatu which was a little city state in what is now Nepal that he probably really did diet kusinara lying between two Sal trees that kind of thing um you know some of the some of the core events just the really basic stuff but um yeah I think most of the stuff describing the legend of the Buddha is just that it's like Legend and mythology tradition that got handed down from this nebulous beginning and a lot of it is just just flatly unbelievable to any but the most

dogmatic you know just credulous sort of westerners

so yeah I'm sorry to say it but I probably at least 90% of the legend of the Buddha is probably not objective history and so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from nmit and nmit says why do you think Buddhism didn't spread as much as Hinduism in its home country India well I would say that nmit probably is not very well versed in Indian history because for many centuries India was a predominantly Buddhist country that there were times in this Earth's history like late Antiquity Early Middle Ages somewhere around in

there that most of the Earth's population could have been Buddhist that was back when China and India and Central Asia were all predominantly Buddhist and so more than half of the Earth's population at that time would have been nominally Buddhist but the thing is when the Muslims invaded India and at the time that the Muslims invaded India India even then was probably predominantly Buddhist but the Muslims who invaded India essentially genocided the Buddhists that it was one of the worst genocides in human history even though

you don't hear much about it that the
the Buddhists being uncompromising
pacifists had essentially three options
I mean they could just die they could
run off and hide in which case there's a
good chance they were going to die
anyway of starvation or whatever or they
could convert to
Islam so some of them I assume converted
to Islam and other ones just wound up
dying and the Hindus on the other hand
were weren't so uncompromising with
regard to
ahimsa with regard to nonviolence because
they did have like martial epics you
know the ramayana and the mahabharata
they were like based on like wars you

know you had military Heroes that were deified like Krishna and Rama that I mean in a way was just built into the religion that sometimes it is your Dharma to fight whereas in Buddhism just couldn't accept that and they wound up just getting exterminated but Buddhism was a predominantly I mean it was India was a predominantly Buddhist country for many centuries I mean sometimes you can find like accounts of from the Muslims themselves this isn't just propaganda it's Muslims bragging about just Exterminating entire like Buddhist universi in India you know like the the

intrepidity of Muhammad Al bakar you know he he was keeping a Chronicle he eventually W up getting killed I think so he he eventually got some Karma back at him but there's this famous account of he sees this walled City and so he and the Muslims just besiege they just sort of attack this walled City you know there probably a few soldiers up on the walls trying to to defend the place and they break in and then they just Slaughter everybody and it was all like they thought they called them all bald shaven-headed brahin and it was it was like the uh the Buddhist Buddhist University of odont Pura that they uh that they sacked and just exterminated

everybody and they found all these books there and Muhammad albak jar wanted to know what the books were about but they couldn't find anybody who could explain it to them because everybody had already been slaughtered and you just you can read account after account after account of these Muslim conquerors just bragging about how they're just Exterminating all idolatry which is mainly Buddhism in in India so terraa lucked out or had good karma in that it was centered at the time on the island of Sri Lanka and the Muslims didn't have a Navy so they couldn't get to the island to exterminate Buddhism there

so it did spread more than
Hinduism at least internationally and it
India was a predominantly Buddhist
country for many centuries until it
finally got exterminated and before it
was exterminated it was kind of becoming
degenerate getting very tantric and
esoteric and everything so that it
didn't have as firm a hold on the
populace of India as it had before
because it was becoming so
difficult to understand you had so
esoteric you had to get initiated into
these Mysteries and so
forth that uh yeah it was it was it was
ready to get killed off anyways I
guess so anyways I'm just moving on to

nurmi's next

question which is what are your thoughts
on Bim ra Ed car and his adaptation of
Buddhism

so um I am exposed to some people who
think that uh Shri Ed car was just kind
of like a a charlatan others think that
Shri edar was just a modern day Saint
and and

sage and I really don't know a whole
heck of a lot about him I do know that
he tried to revive Buddhism in in India
mainly for outcasts for Untouchables or
har John or whatever they're called
people that weren't that didn't fit into
the cast system and so they were like

untouched

excuse

me you know like street sweepers and

Beggars and so forth they really didn't

have much of a

chance and so umed Carr Dr umed Carr um

started this movement of converting them

to Buddhism as a way of just getting

them away from the tyranny of the cast

system or just the oppression or you

just the disadvantage of being an

Untouchable in the Hindu cast system

they just sort of removed themselves

from the whole system by converting to

Buddhism and it's clear to me reading

excerpts of Ed car's writings on

Buddhism that it seems to me it was

mainly a social movement more than a spiritual one the umed Carr modified Buddhism to suit himself in his more secular views on the purpose of Buddhism in

India um and

so I really am more inclined I don't think that he was a charlatan or a Great Sage I do think he was kind of like a a social

reformer that he was converting The Untouchables to Buddhism not so much out of a belief in Buddhism but as a way of helping them socially by getting them out of Hinduism and the whole cast system that has them at the complete

bottom but he did kind of make free with his interpretation of Buddhist philosophy and change things to suit themselves to some degree but I'm No Authority on Bim Ed car so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from yuguo and yuguo says how are you I'm fine thanks Yu's next question is can you explain what was the reason why Buddha refused to ordain women I know why but why in particular why in all religion women are seen as inferior particularly at that ancient times well that's more than that's two questions I think I'm going to have to separate these okay wait I gotta get rid of that

space okay so can I explain what was the reason why the Buddha refused to ordain women the main reason why the Buddha refused to ordain women is because when you've got celibate men and celibate women interacting with each other it is conducive to problems and Scandals so the Buddha did have to admit according to the text that women are just as capable of becoming enlightened as men are but he didn't want a songa of nuns just because or like celibate men interacting with celibate women it just causes problems that men should celibate men should stay away from women they should avoid women like the plague if at

all

possible so that's the main reason just
the the likelihood of scandals arising
in the songa which is not good for the S
it was it's not good for the reputation
of the S so he just said no we're not
going to do that at first then he got
talked into it and then said all right
but because I'm ordaining nuns now the
song is only going to last for 500 years
or the the true teachings the sadama
Will Survive for only 500 years which
was about 2,000 years
ago so anyways the next question from
yugao which was the second half of the
first the second question is why in all
religion women are seen as inferior

particularly at that ancient times well
it's just like up until modern times
women were just pretty much generally
seen as inferior to men just around the
world I mean they could be respected and
admired

as mothers as healers as shamanist
priestesses you know they'd have certain
niches where they could shine but as a
general rule like politically and
socially women were subject to men men
were the leaders and that was just might
makes right I suppose men were stronger
than women even though a lot of
feminists would deny
that but men just generally are more

powerful than women are not due to some carefully structured patriarchy but just because men are more aggressive and physically stronger and they can just have get what they want I suppose better than women

can so this is sort of like an empirical observation in in in a certain sense and then that social inferiority often resulted in certain biases where men just consider women to be even more inferior than just the empirical situation made them like I think it was Aristotle considered women to be just practically you know unteachable that they were just so inferior they Aristotle even thought that they had

like a as a sign of their inferiority
they didn't have as many teeth as men do
which isn't true I guess that on average
women have slightly more teeth than men
do just because men might be more
inclined to lose
teeth so yeah I mean in all religions
women are seen as inferior up until you
know the 20th
century mainly just because women were
like socially inferior and physically
inferior and so they were it was just
sort of assumed that in general women
are inferior and often like a
patriarchal kind of religion will blame
women for you know the failures of men

you know like Eve talking Adam into
eating the Apple for
example

so yeah it's like the Hindus I think
consider women to be like really the
immoral gender i' throughout most of my
life I've kind of seen things the other
way but I think women have been more
virtuous than men largely just due to
social pressure

which is now alleviated from them and so
they've just thrown off the burden and
have become Instagram

thoughts so let's see here I guess I
answered that question in various
indirect roundabout ways and so I'm just
going to move on to the next question

this is from

xenoid and xenoid says in the song

anesthesia by the band Type O Negative

there is a lyric which reads when you

trust someone illusion has begun this

made me

wonder so here's the here's the actual

question would the Buddha trust not

trust trust and not trust or neither

trust nor not trust it wouldn't it

couldn't be distrust because that is a

necessary active State of Mind trust

seems like a passive state of mind but

perhaps that is only true from a

samsaric conventional point of view

neither trust nor not trust seems to be

the correct answer

because it would mean having no view on

the situation well I mean second

guessing of fully enlightened Buddha is

already I mean you're you're on thin ice

already trying to like second guess the

motives of a fully enlightened being a

sasam

Buddha I mean it's kind of a Fool's

errand to begin with but with regard to

trusting

people the budo didn't have to trust or

distrust because he could just look

right through you you know he would know

your mind mind he would know if you were

lying or telling the truth if you're

honest or dishonest so I mean where

would trust have to come in trust is is
based on ignorance it's like giving
someone the benefit of the doubt but the
Buddha didn't have to resort to giving
the benefit of the doubt because he
didn't have any doubts I mean he would
just look look right through you and and
know whether you were telling the truth
or not you know he would know your
thoughts better than you know your
thoughts I

assume so in a way it's trust would be
totally

irrelevant but I mean it wouldn't be
mistrust it would just be sort of an
absence because it would just be

inapplicable it would be unnecessary why
have belief if you already
know belief and true knowledge are not
the same and trust is sort of like
belief but if you have the true
knowledge of what the person is like the
trust is just misplaced there's there's
no room for it
so I'm just going to move on to xeni
void's second question which is you've
me I'm going to make sure that we're
actually recording here yeah I guess we
are we've been going at it for an hour
and a
half ever since I had that that
recording software that kept glitching
on me I've become sensitized because

there's one time I had to do the same
Q&A three times because it would say
that it was recording and then it
wasn't so bear with me
anyways xenoid

says you've mentioned that in the sutas
there is a story of a dolled monk who
became enlightened by rubbing a cloth do
you believe stupid people can become
enlightened yeah that was pretty much
the first answer first question that I
answered in this Q&A is along these same
lines

about any correlation between IQ and
Enlightenment I do think that stupid
people can become enlightened

like a Carta thinks worms and frogs are
enlightened

so why not stupid people that there
really is a difference between
intelligence and wisdom so you can have
an intelligent fool and a relatively
stupid Sage a simple-minded sage anyway
so I do think that it is possible it
might be I mean they may have certain
handicaps in just like working out some
of the basics like the prelim
preliminary

stuff but then with regard to not having
desires I mean that Enlightenment is
based on the four noble truths and it's
like if you don't have desires then
that's it you're enlightened if you're

conscious and don't have desires then
presumably you're enlightened based on
the third Noble Truth and why would a
stupid PE why would a stupid person have
any more trouble eliminating desires
than an intelligent person unless they
just their mind is kind of stupid to the
point of like being defective where
they're not capable of really being
mindful or some such
but yeah I I do think that it is
definitely possible for someone with an
IQ below 100 to become fully enlightened
if full Enlightenment even exists in
this world which itself is a kind of
problematic

situation or indeterminate or some such
so I'm just going to move on to zen
void's third question which is do you
believe the Christian Trinity can make
logical sense from a Buddhist
perspective it would be absurd to
ultimately say that there are any
distinct entities let alone three who
are somehow different but also the same
even within the confines of conventional
speech I don't think it makes much sense
yeah well I mean the Aristotelian laws
of thought would pretty much rule out
there being three gods and also one God
because that's a equals not
a so yeah I think the Catholics and some
Protestant sects have really tried to

make a logical sense of the Christian Trinity but I have read that the Greek Orthodox Christians actually play up the Paradox they play up the illogic as a way of humbling themselves of just sort of rubbing their own noses in the fact that you cannot understand God intellectually so that you have to let go of logic in order to just appreciate on faith that there's one God and three Gods at the same time so yeah I do think that you can't really make logical sense of it I mean you can try to rationalize it you know you've got the predetermined motive you know you've got the what's the ulterior

motive or the the predetermined outcome
where it's got to make sense so we're
going to do the best we can to
rationalize this how you can have God be
one and three at the same time but I do
think that uh it may have started off as
a deliberate flouting of logic just as a
way of transcending this the limitations
of the intellect or sort of rejecting
the intellect I think it was tertullian
that was famous for saying it is
impossible therefore I believe
it you know early early Christianity was
like that and the Greek Orthodox
Christians seem to have preserved that
better than the more
rationalistic uh Western schools of

Christianity like Catholicism and
Protestant
sects

so yeah it's it was like a
deliberate um deliberate illogic like
flaunting of ill

logic and flouting of logic flaunting
and flouting are not the same

word so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says do you have any
favorite artists paintings sculptures or
eras or Styles western or otherwise if
so what draws you to them

well let's see I mean some of the
ancient Greek sculpture and the Roman

like duplicates I mean it's it's it's
good I like that like the dying G stuff
like that um the Renaissance I mean
medieval art pretty much sucked because
realism had been abandoned for religious
reasons you know you weren't supposed to
be focused on this worldly aspect of
things you're supposed to be focused
more on a spiritual otherworldly aspect
and so art kind of moved away from
realism for a thousand years then came
back again with a Renaissance and I mean
some Renaissance I mean how can you do
better than Renaissance Masters you know
that's one reason why Modern Art is
deliberately ugly I think it's largely
sour grapes they know they can't do any

better than the Renaissance Masters so I
it's like why I even try we'll just make
ugly crap on

purpose let's see I like uh what was it
neoclassicism like uh 17 1800s in uh

yeah early be 1700s early 1800s like in
in English painting they had more

classical themes I like like in the

Renaissance lots of nice paintings but

somebody like Raphael who was obviously

a damn good painter he was pretty much

obsessed with madonas he just cranked

out one Madonna after the other I think

with regard to Renaissance I prefer

uh like the Dutch Renaissance like

Rembrandt and the Theon

I like that kind of thing where they were more into portraits and just sort of realistic scenes and kind of not so heavily focused on madonnas and baby jesuses and so forth I like Velasquez I like his painting style

um let's

see bugaro that's not his that's not the correct the correct pronunciation of his name but he was a good painter I like I like looking at his

paintings um for me a good painting or good sculpture is something that looks as much like real life as

possible you know it's like I'm not much into impressionism I did not like much

like

impressionism I did not think that that was really an improvement in painting you know van go he's considered to be a great but still I'd take REM Brandt any day of the week

[Music]

um because I think like especially nowadays now that photography has been invented and pretty much mastered that a good painting or a good drawing should look as close to a photograph as possible but in order not to make it just obsolete that a good painting or drawing should be of something that you can't photograph and

so something like

surrealism has always appealed to me

I've always liked surrealism

surrealistic

art so of like the the modern um like

painting fads Fashions I definitely

prefer surrealism after the neoclassical

phase of painting you know what was it

uh was it datus or was it the the son of

datus who was Icarus yeah there was one

painting I really liked of Icarus who

crashed you know he his father made

these Wings they escaped from prison and

then he flew too close to the Sun the

wax that was holding the feathers on the

artificial Wings started falling off and

then he crashes and then there's this

famous painting of of Icarus kind of you
know looking sort of like a Greek god
like an Apollo or something lying on the
Rock With These Wings and you got like
these three naked nymphs water nymphs
all coming up out of the water and
gazing in Wonder at this crashed Icarus
painting like that I like I like even if
they don't have naked nymphs in them I
can still like
them

so yeah I mean he's mainly talking about
painting painting and sculpture so I'll
leave out
poetry which would be another five or 10
minutes of me

rambling so favorite artist I mean I do
have kind of a a tender spot in my heart
for

eer although

um he's he belongs in his own category

really and I guess I guess I've named

off a few which is probably enough I'm

really not heavily into art I've never

really had the artistic temperament I

can draw fairly well but again it's more

of reproduction of what I

see and I mean I wasn't really

artistically inspired since I was in

high school probably when I was like a

an emo teenager I was much more artistic

than after I became like a coldblooded

scientist turns

aesthetic so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from five preset
Pete and five preset Pete says is there
any domestic benefit to learning new skills
like a language that enhance brain
connectivity does developing the mind in
this in this way indirectly deepen one's
understanding of d

well there is the uh the mongalo sua
which is the list of 38 blessings in
life I've mentioned it several times
before but usually with regard to
blessing number one which is avoiding
the company of fools but one of the 38
blessings is being bahuta which
literally means having heard much in

other words being learned with regard to
a number of things that the Buddhist
says you know even though you're a
Buddhist you should understand other
philosophical
positions just so that you'll be able to
see you know how they compare and
contrast you know how they are related
you know how best to defend Buddhism
against the attacks of this other
philosophy or whatever if if that NE
necessity
arises so just being learned in general
is considered to be a good thing in
Buddhism so knowing a lot of things is
good not just narrow-minded studying
only Buddhist Doctrine which a lot of

Western monks they only want to read
sutras and vinaya you know they only want
to read a lot of Buddhist stuff and they
think reading dhamma would be just an
utter waste of time for a monk but
that's not necessarily the case you
can't get insights into all sorts of
things from non-Buddhist sources you
can get insights from watching an animal
you can get insights from reading the
Bible or reading a novel by
dhamma reading a poem by Walt Whitman that
doesn't even
rhyme so there is that with regard to
like enhancing brain connectivity as an
as an aid in dhamma that goes right back

to the

intelligence um and versus wisdom kind
of dichotomy that's been brought up a
couple times already that it can be help
to have a stronger brain like a more
athletic kind of

brain it may be helpful in certain
respects for insights to arise you may
be more intuitive that way just because
you've got more nerve and you got more
branches to your neurons and so you got
more possibilities you know more
possible routes for your insights to
take maybe it's not absolutely necessary
but it can be helpful and I've always
been kind of a brain jock I like
exercising my brain to some degree just

trying to solve evil sudokus

occasionally that sort of thing even

when I was a monk I would like just

brain

exercises just to keep my brain from

getting

flabby

so have I answered the question is there

any domic benefit to learning new skills

like a language that enhance brain

connectivity um I suppose so and just

dealing with practical matters I mean

sometimes practical matters are helpful

to a monk too if you move to a foreign

country it's helpful to be able to speak

that the language of that country

fluently to learn poly for example is
good for a monk just to learn certain
things that monks are supposed to learn
just mastering philosophical Concepts
take some intellectual exercise that
kind of thing remembering all the rules
you have to follow takes a little bit of
intellect comprehending
stuff so I
mean I think it's possible for a stupid
person to become enlightened but I do
think an intelligent person has certain
advantages maybe statistically his odds
are a little better although the odds
for anyone are not particularly good for
becoming
enlightened

so I guess I answer that question I'm just going to move on next question which is from the sabats and the SA sabur say what is the difference between ego and self-esteem well the ego is like the conscious personality self-esteem would just be like one aspect of that I think the ego technically is supposed to be like the interface between the the conscious and unconscious minds which contains you know like your your character as an individual at least your conscious the conscious elements of that but uh self-esteem would be just one

strand of that so ego would be a much broader term with regard to everything that it covers and self-esteem would just be like one aspect of the ego and I'm just going to move on the next question this is from Fred who also goes by the name of Alfred and Fred says why is nibana unqualified well nibana is not samsaric and all qualifications are samsaric qualification are limits and nibana has no limits so any qualification is going to apply only to samsara and nibana is not there nibana is off the scale of samsara so qualifications can't touch it second

question from Fred is nibana worth aiming for well obviously if you're a Buddhist or even some other like a Hindu then nibana is certainly worth aiming for because it is the end of greed hate and delusion or if you prefer attraction aversion and semiconscious stupidity it is the end of suffering it is the end of Dua so if you consider the end of Dua the end of suffering or the end of delusion to be worth aiming for then nibana is worth aiming for but whether something is worth aiming for or not is a kind of value judgment and different people are going to have their own value judgments and some people would say no

nibana is not worth aiming for because
then I would
die I would cease to exist as an
individual and so I don't want
that but it's up to you on if you think
that the end of delusion and suffering
is worth aiming for then go for
it and so I'm just going to move on to
Fred's third
question which is the end goal is not
explained so why pursue it well again I
mean it's it's explained sort of as the
end of delusion and
suffering and that in itself should be
enough to inspire people to pursue it
that's that's what inspired the Buddha
to pursue it you know he didn't like

this old age and sickness and death
stuff and so he wanted to transcend that
according to tradition and that's what
inspired him to become like a religious
mendicant and what eventually caused him
to become the go a Buddha the sasam
Buddha of this of this
era so you can't really explain it
because it's reality and we're not
dealing in reality we're dealing with
symbols that supposedly represent
reality but really
don't and so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
Austin and Austin says have you ever
experienced remote viewing or had an

out of body experience do you think monks are capable of such things well I don't recall ever having like like a really Clairvoyant experience where I could see something that was beyond the limitations of my physical vision the closest thing to that that I've ever experienced would be some Déjà Vu I've had some striking Déjà Vu experiences um including one Déjà Vu that happened before the event happened so I knew what was going to happen in advance and I was just sitting there grinning like an ape cuz I knew what what was going to be said next in the conversation and somebody said it and I just I saw that I saw that before it

happened but uh with regard to outof
Body Experience the closest I ever had
to an outof Body Experience other than
just like dreaming that kind of thing
was it was drug induced when I was a
teenager I took something that had
Belladonna in it and I was having wild
hallucinations and I was also feeling
very nauseous ious and sick and feeling
like maybe I had just poisoned Myself by
taking strick nine or something and so I
laid down on my bed and after a while I
felt like well I'm feeling a little
better maybe I'll get up and make a
peanut butter sandwich or something I've
told this story before and I walk into

the kitchen and I start making a peanut butter sandwich and then realize that I spread peanut butter on both slices of bread and then I'm just kind of that's kind of weird I'm just kind of looking around and everything all of a sudden poof I'm lying on my back in bed again so then I thought well did I really get up or was I just hallucinating that whole trip to the kitchen and I I was still rational enough to think well I got to do is just go in and look at the counter and see if the bread is there so I went out into the kitchen and the bread was there but there was no peanut butter on it so then I'm really starting to like carefully scrutinize everything

I'm like walking through the living room and looking at everything very carefully trying to determine whether I'm really doing it or not and then poof I'm lying on my back in bed again and I thought well I this is this is just too much I cannot trust what I am seeing and so I just went to sleep and the next morning there was no bread or anything so it could have just been this really elaborate

hallucination that seemed like an out of body experience but probably was just a very elaborate

hallucination cuz I was having very elaborate hallucinations even before

that point I was like 17 years old at
the
time only time I ever took uh belladon
derivative that I'm aware
of so I'm just going to move on to
Austin's next question which is I know
how dedicated you were as a monk living
in that cave and everything you
mentioned that you could only progress
so far and that it became exhausting
trying to consistently maintain certain
meditative States while you were in
Burma did you meet anyone who seemed to
be on a higher wavelength or more
advanced than you or for the most part
did you find most monks there to be
underwhelming well I did meet a few old

seatt and I've mentioned more than once
that sh um seatt may have been the one
that I kind of got the feeling like the
intuition that he was the most advanced
monk that I ever really came across um
with regard to other monks it's not just
one score it's not like you have just
one number that determines where you're
at like there have been lots of monks I
have known that had lots more meta in
their heart more love in their heart
than I do I'm I'm kind of a topheavy
person relatively
coldblooded and so possibly most monks
even like the ones that didn't meditate
very much might have been Superior to me

in certain regards like just their love
of their fellow man that kind of a
thing so and then you've got monks that
would just be more patient than me monks
that didn't need to sleep as much as I
do monks that were less attached to food
you know in certain respects there were
lots of individuals who are more
advanced than me just because there
isn't just one numerical score that
you get for how advanced you
are so the number of monks that I met
that in general like if you had to lump
everything together into one numerical
score uh it's hard to say um s um seatt
I mean obviously he was he was but
sometimes you meet like this old Seattle

living in a cemetery he seems very
Serene and benevolent and everything but
you don't really know a person until
you've gotten to really know them and
see them at their
worst and just because a person seems
very you know content and calm and
benevolent and so forth I
mean he's talking to a visitor he's
never met before it may be that he's
just on his best behavior here but I've
met quite a few monks that I I assumed
were very
wise but it's it's hard to say
exactly but I have no doubt that I met
lots of of monks and lay people that

were more advanced than I was in certain ways like with regard to the amount of meta that they have towards others especially I mean I've been working on it for for decades now but when I was a younger man

I really had very little love for the human

race I preferred the company of trees and animals to the company of humans as a general

rule it's only in my later years that I've softened towards

Humanity

so see at the bottom here he says or for the most part did you find most monks there to be underwhelming yeah most

monks like most Asian monks
especially um you know they just have
this medieval dogmatic approach they're
uninspired they don't really have a
spiritual calling they have other
motives for becoming a monk you know
it's just their family was was
poor villagers with eight kids they had
too many kids to feed so they just send
one of their kids to the monastery or
some monks are just sort of Laten
homosexuals and they want a socially
acceptable way of not getting married to
woman so they just become celibate monks
and usually set themselves up in a
relatively luxurious Monastery in town

like almost every mahasi Center in Burma
has like the resident latent homosexual
Seattle not not necessarily the Abbott
but he'll be like an assistant
Abbott

so yeah there are a few that monks that
were considered to be very saintly and
Sage likee

um many OTA was another you he was a
better meditator than I was apparently
he was a lot of people were impressed by
how wise he was but I mean probably in
some respects I would still be more
advanced than him but in most respects
he would probably be more advanced than
I was back when I knew
him so yeah it's it's kind of complex

there's all these different factors have to be taken into consideration but as a general rule

Asian monks from a Buddhist culture that are just following along with the mainstream of their culture by becoming monks most of them really aren't aren't even trying to cultivate wisdom other than just in a token manner as a way of earning Merit or or just because they have to sit in meditation due to the rules that their monastery or something they'll willingly go along with that but they're just really not inspired and motivated with a genuine vocation like a spiritual calling most Asian monks in an

Asian Buddhist culture they they just
don't have

it so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from

quor so quor says if sight sound touch

smell taste and mental formations are

absent body is completely absent and All

That Remains is the experience of

awareness contentment Bliss and

Stillness and an inner monologue

commenting on the experience would this

still be considered a

self having a subjective experience or

do the condas need to be present well

obviously if there's any kind of

experience the condas have to be present

Consciousness is one of the five condas

wiyana cond and like this inner
monologue I mean obviously that's
thoughts that's
perceptions so

I mean all of this really is is five
five condas I mean it's still there
except for he says there's no body but
All That Remains is the experience of
awareness which would be Consciousness I
guess contentment I mean contentment
with what what contentment I'm not
exactly sure what he even means by that
I mean you'd think that contentment
would be a kind of
feeling Bliss which also is I mean
sometimes like satand in Hinduism you

know the highest reality is is
considered to be Bliss so it's hard to
say with regard to that one
Stillness and an inner monologue how are
you going to have an inner monologue and
Stillness at the same
time yeah the inner monologue just can't
happen without five
condas um would this be considered a
self I mean they're without perceiving
it it's like there's nothing
there it is I
mean I got to take a
drink a big
drink so this is kind of a strange
question I mean he's would this be
considered a self I mean in Buddhism

nothing is considered a self except for
a diluted mind a diluted mind considers
selves to exist according to early
Buddhist philosophy only a diluted mind
would consider a self to
exist

so would this be considered a self well
to a diluted mind it would but I mean
only to a diluted mind you'd even be a
the awareness of
contentment I mean it depends on how
subtle you think contentment and Bliss
can go if you think that contentment and
Bliss can just merge with Ultimate
Reality like the conception of
saand which is like true mental Bliss

which is like practically a synonym for
Brahman or Ultimate Reality or
God then maybe you could have that but
it wouldn't be reified and so you
wouldn't say that it exists once you
start saying that it exists then you're
dealing with perceptions and delusion
and then it's all it's all just some
saric delusion
so would this still be considered a self
having a subjective experience I don't
think there would be a subjective
experience I really don't there would be
no subject you can't have a subject
unless you're contrasting it with an
object and there's no
object so there's no subject

either so in order to have the the
belief in a self or the perception of a
self obviously the have to be present
because perception is one of the
condas Consciousness also is one of the
condas so I'm just going to move on to
quator second question which is is the
belief that Buddhism is the only path to
Liberation based on the direct
experience of nibana at the age of at
the stage of sopana resulting in the
understanding of the foral truths and
obtaining Right View since neana is
outside of the scope of samsar and the
sopana would then know that there is an
end to suffering and how to attain it

well again I consider the whole four stages of ARA Hood to be a later artifact and not probably not the authentic genuine teachings of Buddhism or of Buddha and so I mean that whole argument of soaps getting their their glimpse of nibana and all that is kind of academic but that is just kind of irrelevant because I can answer the question regardless of the four stages of sainthood because he says is the belief that Buddhism is the only path to Liberation based on the direct experience of n no the belief that Buddhism is the only path to Liberation is based on the universal human

phenomenon of people believing that
their religion is the only true
one so the belief that Christianity is
the only path to Liberation is based on
Christians just preferring to believe
that their religion is the one true
religion the belief that Islam is the
only path to Liberation is based on the
human belief of Muslims that their
religion is the only true religion and
the belief that Buddhism is the only
path to Liberation is based on the human
phenomenon of people believing that
their religion is the only true
religion period
so I'm just going to move on to uh

quora's third

question which is what separates two meditators who experience forth the jna on a regular basis that one can become liberated by letting go of the desire for Liberation whereas the other cannot perhaps the one with the potential for Liberation experientially knows that there is a higher state and the other doesn't or perhaps it's more of a letting go of the idea of cultivating subtler states of Mind well you got two meditators who say have mastered forth jna um the difference between the one who becomes enlightened and the one who doesn't become enlightened is the one who becomes enlightened has some kind of

liberating Insight so the difference
would be one of them would be more
insightful than the other maybe a little
more inspired than the other maybe a
little more outside the box than the
other you know he's something inside him
he's got the spiritual Talent of still
not clinging to Sam SAR as much as the
one who doesn't become
liberated so both of them experience
what originally probably was considered
to be the highest possible stage of
meditation one becomes enlightened
because that highest possible stage of
meditation somehow triggered a
liberating insight and it it's not even

necessarily the same Insight that

everyone

experiences whereas the other person who

doesn't become enlightened doesn't have

that insight and it's just one of them

is more insightful one is more just less

attached in their usual samsaric frame

of mind when they're not meditating that

sort of thing so it's just going to be a

matter of talent I

think and plus maybe other other factors

that's very subtle

but I think the main differentiation

would just

be one one person is more intuitive and

insightful and has more spiritual Talent

maybe a little more inherent wisdom and

than the other

one plus maybe there's a certain like

karmic momentum that's helping them

that's not helping the other person that

sort of thing the other person might

just just not be ripe yet just not ready

for it

yet so I'm just going to move on to next

question which is from

arpad and arpad says how often is a mon

monk allowed to shower bathe or wash

himself in any

fashion is soap allowed or is it

considered a

cosmetic well I guess that's two

questions isn't

it I I count questions by the number of
question

marks so the first question is how often
is a monk allowed to shower bathe or
wash himself in any fashion well if you
read the potty Mona rules

there is a pidia rule saying that a monk
is only allowed to bathe no more than
once every two weeks unless there are
certain factors like it's it's like the
towards the end of the hot season which
is very muggy and sweaty is the
beginning the beginning part of the
rainy season which is similar that's if
the monk has been traveling if the monk
has been sick if there has been like a
storm with wind and rain which kind of

gets mud everywhere that then a monk is
is allowed to bathe more than once every
two weeks but unless any of those
special ex the special
allowances unless they are are there the
monke is only allowed to bathe once
every two weeks but it's pretty obvious
that even in ancient times before the
toptica was finalized there were a lot
of monks who didn't like that rule so
there is um there is a scene in the
winia of a southern a monk from Southern
India or at least south of the Ganges
Valley you know sort of on the frontier
of Buddhism at the time who comes back
and talks to the Buddha I think it was

sonak cikana who also recites the AA
waga in in the same
narrative but his his teacher asked him
to ask the Buddha if certain rules could
be changed and one of those rules was
the rule that you can't bathe more than
once every two weeks
because supposedly according to the
narrative the the Indian people in south
of the Ganges Valley were more
fastidious with regard to bathing
regularly and cleanliness and they would
look down on monks that were dirty and
stinky and so the Buddha according to
the narrative modified that rule even
though it stays the same as it is in the
in the poty Moka that you're only

allowed to bathe no more than once every
two weeks unless those special events
end of the hot season beginning of the
rainy season sickness travel storm
unless that happens no more than two
weeks but then in winia in a different
different area of vet says well that
only applies to the Ganges Valley the
majima the the central area of Buddhism
which is the Ganges Valley that outside
of the Ganges Valley which includes
Burma Tha land Sri Lanka the United
States Europe Australia Etc everything
outside the Ganges Valley of India you
can bathe as much as you
want so monks can bathe every day which

I usually did especially when the weather was hot because I'd be drenched in sweat all day anyway and so it's good to at least rinse off the old layer of sweat to make room for the new layer of sweat so I answered that rule I suppose and so I'll just answer that question I should say and so I'll just move on to arpad second question which is is soap allowed or is it considered a Cosmetic in the Buddhist time soap hadn't been invented yet they used something else it was made out of H it was like lime powdered Limestone mixed with water or something it was kind of a soap like substance that was used and it is allowed although you're

not supposed to use
perfumes so when I was in Burma I used
this stuff called carbolic soap that had
this it was had carbolic acid in it and
it smelled had this strong unpleasant
chemically smell which I considered to
be okay because monks aren't supposed to
use perfumes most soap is perfumed and
so I just use this this cheap kind of
soap sometimes I just use liys soap that
you're supposed to use for for uh
washing clothes I'd use that if I didn't
have any of the stinky carbolic stuff so
soap isn't considered to be a cosmetic
but the the the nice scents that are
infused into the soap are considered to

be perfume which monks are supposed to avoid if at all

possible and so I'm just going to move on to our pad's third

question does re birth occur in plants and minerals and I think the Janes would say that plants and maybe

minerals um do are subject to like rebirth with regard to

Buddhism it's not so clear I don't

recall ever coming across any statement unequivocally just declaring that plants and or minerals are reborn like crystals

something like that are subject to

rebirth um in vinia it does say that

plants are what are called aindā Jaa

which is one faculty life so apparently

they have Consciousness and also they have the sensation of touch and that's all they've got they've got Consciousness and one sense faculty of touch they don't see hear smell think but they do they they do have touch and so that could be considered a primitive form of sentience that may possibly be subject to rebirth but I don't recall any clear unequivocal statement in the texts stating that yes indeed plants do get

reborn so that's sort of like a borderline case that I don't think Buddhist philosophy at least in terraa in like in the toptica ever really

nailed down and tried to answer like
unequivocally um with regard to my own
idea minerals I don't think that they
would be reborn you have to have
Consciousness and not only Consciousness
but you would have to have karma in
order to be reborn which would mean you
have to have will you have to have like
motives for your
actions and minerals don't have that I'm
pretty
sure uh and maybe that someday silicon
chips might have that but I don't think
they have it yet and with regard to
plants I mean it would be at such uh
subliminal like Elementary archaic
primeval kind of level that maybe but it

would be sort of a borderline case I think because I mean if they don't have I don't yeah I'm I'm kind of I'm kind of doubtful in fact I'm doubtful even of certain primitive animals that you'd have to have karma in order to be reborn whether they're conscious or not is irrelevant I think that the the entire universe may be pervaded with Consciousness that you know a can of Red Bull with a white and blue label or a Gold Label in Thailand or Asia I mean is pervaded by Consciousness but you could say it's a manifestation of Consciousness but it's not really

thinking it's not really making
Karma so in a way it's kind of
enlightened so maybe plants would would
be considered enlightened I think some
Zen Masters have declared that trees are
enlightened but with regard to minerals
I think not um but with regard to plants
if if they do have rebirth it would be
at a very very primitive Elementary
stage where where they have just the
most primitive Elementary kind of will
maybe something like in a
schopenhauerian sense where everything
has this will which would be like Karma
that is just seeking manifestation in
the world so in a case like that um
plants maybe but I'm pretty sure that

Orthodox Terra

at least in the earlier texts I can't really say about commentarial tradition or subcommentarial tradition anything like that but in the earliest text I don't think that there's any statement one way or the other about plants being reborn so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from T trumptonshire

Gap and trumptonshire GAP says if AI takes over the world and kills all humans would that be evidence tending to disprove Dharma and I don't see how it would disprove Dharma I mean how would it possibly

disprove Dharma I mean especially the
four noble truths I mean regardless of
whether AI kills us or not that I mean
desire is still the cause of all
suffering the cessation of Desire is the
cessation of suffering and you know the
Noble eight-fold Path is the path that
is conducive to the cessation of
suffering I mean that would all stay
true so I don't think that uh Dharma
would be disproven uh by the
technological singularity assuming that
the technological singularity happens
and it doesn't turn out well for us
humans
so I'll just uh move on to trumpton sh
gap's next question which is how about

if AI takes over the world and creates a paradise on Earth for humans it seems like either of those scenarios would be a major problem for the abrahamic religions but still I don't see how with if AI like destroyed us poofed us out of existence or whether it just became like this enlightened servant and turn Earth into a paradise I don't see how that would disprove Dharma either way because again the four noble truths stay true and I mean it's it's going to be in accordance with our Karma whatever happens so I don't see that there would be any any hazard to the the veracity or

the believability of Dharma regardless
of what AI does or doesn't
do seems pretty straightforward to
me so I'm just going to move on to next
question this is from ruie and ruie says
do you think the verbal and intellectual
inaccessibility of nibana could make it
an object of anxiety sure yeah
definitely it is I mean it is certainly
an object of anxiety y to some people
um because it's just this
nebulous something that you can't grasp
you can't understand it and when people
identify with their understanding
something you don't understand can be
scary I mean it's like death I mean some
people that meditate they get to the

level of such subtlety that they can't really feel their ego anymore they they can just start to panic and just bail out of the meditation because it's scary because you know they're getting too deep and they they want to cling to their the self this identity that's starting to dissolve and it's scary it's like they're dying so certainly I mean I've said before that if some somehow somebody invented an Enlightenment pill where you took the pill probably a red one and it causes you to become enlightened that even a lot of monks maybe most monks would run from that pill as though it were a rabid demon

possessed snake because most people are
enlightened not because we're not trying
hard enough but because we want to be
enlightened that's why we're
here so

certainly just nibana itself partly
because it's so nebulous and
ununderstandable that it's it's just an
OB object of anxiety or even
fear so I'm just going to move on to
ru's next question

which is over focusing on nibana
distracts From the Path does it not
certainly especially when you get
towards the end of the path towards the
beginning it might be the main motivator
that helps you to stay on the path is

focusing on the goal but eventually you
have to let go even of that attachment
or that

desire and I've got a dog looking at me
now how you

do so let's see yeah I mean we've we've
gone over this a number of times I think
where I mean focusing on the goal is
useful at first you know it's like again
knocking out the big Peg with the
smaller Peg but eventually you have to
get rid of all the pegs you know it's
focusing on Nana is part of the raft
that once you cross the flood you don't
you don't need it
anymore and I

mean it just

becomes at first it's skillful means and then as you progress and get closer and closer to the goal then any kind of attachment or desire is eventually just you're gonna have to let everything go so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from

cify and cify says are we too late to stop the islamization of Europe and I mean that depends on what direction

Europe takes over the next 10 20 years

like if it continues stubbornly to go

the globalist route then maybe so then

maybe it's too late and Europe is going to become Islam islamized at least

Western Europe and parts of Central

Europe Eastern Europe I think will
resist

islamization on the other hand if like
the the nationalism that is becoming
more and more in

fashion like as is exemplified by the re
election of Donald Trump then it may be
that there's going to be a Reconquista
before the the Muslims conquer that you
they'll just be driven out or whatever
forced to assimilate like early

non-muslims were forced to assimilate to
Islam um but even let's say Western and
Central Europe does get turned into like
a caliphate then still I mean they 100
200 300 years later they could still be

another Reconquista I mean Spain was almost entirely ruled by by Muslims for few centuries anyway and then eventually he had some badasses in in Northern Spain started fighting back successfully and the Muslims eventually got driven out and that could happen in Europe too so we're just going to have to wait and see I don't think it's necessarily too late to stop the islamization of Europe because anything is possible we're just going to have to wait and see and it may be that if the Europeans have become so demoralized and culturally castrated that they're just going to Bow their heads and just get conquered without putting up a fight for fear of

being

racist then yeah they're going to get

what they

deserve fortunately America is more

invaded by

relatively relatively innocuous hisan

anics who for the most part are willing

to work for a

living instead of hanging out on street

corners harassing Western

women so yeah we're just G to have to

wait and see see what direction Europe

takes over the next few years see if afd

actually uh comes to power in Germany

then that that could be a game changer

right

there or see if uh somehow nationalists can topple the the unip party in in the UK so I guess I'll just move on to the next question which is from Wayne and Wayne says near-death experiences tell us that they near-death experiencers I suppose tell us that they feel way more aware and alive when they leave their bodies and whatever they think shows up instantly one case study a lady thought of of her sister 5,000 miles away and she was in her home instantly she observed she couldn't find her grocery list and was trying to tell her it was by the phone she also seen what she was wearing and the other finer details she observed while she was there

later when she was revived her sister
confirmed that what she had told her was
all

true um this seems to be a common
experience among all ndes my my question
is there must be mind Spirit or
Consciousness that is always present and
aware and that we must take control of
who is this eye that experiences and
thinks if it is not the
self well again if you want to assume
that there really are
phenomenal like phenomena in this
universe going with like Terra Buddhism
which admits allows that there are
actually entities that really

exist still what we consider to be like
a person's self is like a
flame it I mean it's different from one
moment to the next there is no unifying
Essence that pervades that flame that
makes it into like this unified entity
it's just that there's conditions for
that flame like any Boy Scout can tell
you if you've got heat oxygen and fuel
you're going to have flame but when that
heat oxygen and fuel are no longer there
like at least one of those three is an
insufficient Supply then the flame
ceases it's not like the flame goes
anywhere and it wasn't the same flame
from one moment to the next and there
wasn't even this unifying

flamess holding it all

together it's just these phenom PHA in

flux changing from one moment to the

next due to conditions allowing their

existence and in a human mind somehow

this flam likee conglomeration of mental

States becomes

self-referential it's still changing

from one more to the next although

there's a lot of similarity because of

momentum and it starts thinking that

it's this unified eye which it is not

so let's see my question is there must

be mind Spirit or Consciousness that is

always present and aware although it's

not the same from one moment to the

next and that we must take control of
but no we don't have control we have
maybe limited control but like the the
Buddha's second discourse after his
Enlightenment the anat luta says with
regard to any of the five condas you
cannot say let it be this way let it not
be that way and reliably have it happen
we do not have that kind of control over
anything so who is this eye that
experiences and thinks if it is not the
self it is

delusion and if you want to take it even
farther like some Mahayana schools I
mean even these little particulate
entities that are in constant flux from
one moment to the next like in a flame

even those are not ultimately
real that the existence of any kind of
entity separate from anything else is
based on delusion because ultimately
there is no
separateness with regard to near-death
experiences um yeah I suppose in some
cases they can be more Vivid it's like
sort of like the BAU realm it's it's
almost like you're in a temporary daa
realm where you have certain daa powers
like being able to like see what's going
on a thousand miles away or just
suddenly teleport there you know know
the minds of others have like
Clairvoyance this kind of thing that it

could be that some people you know after they die or when they're in like a a near-death experience kind of a a situation that they're actually going into like a higher realm not necessarily not everybody's going to do that but some people will kind of go into a higher realm and have like Dava like abilities whereas other people um you know they may be going into a lower realm but not all near-death experiences are exactly the same he says somewhere here let's see this seems to be a common experience among all near-death experiences now it's not all of them I mean all they do have certain

similarities where you know you rise up above your body and you go into the bright light and you wind up in some realm with usually a kind of spirit guide

who you know tells you things that you need to know and then maybe you're told that you have to go back or maybe you're given a choice on whether you want to stay or go back that kind of a thing and then you wind up back in the the body that's damaged

somehow but uh yeah the heightened State of Consciousness with The Clairvoyant Powers um I don't know if that is common to all near-death experiences although

it it's common to some of them anyway
but I mean it's certainly no proof of
the reality of a
self an excuse

me need another drink of my emergency
backup beverage who is almost exhausted
at this

point okay next question is from
apocalypse Chow who I suspect is the
same person as skolin or skaden because
he's got the same kind of bullet points
after his questions

so apocalypse Chow says would you kindly
explain the role of the Trinity so two
Trinity questions in one in one Q&A
that's kind of
unusual he

says let's see I've seen it pop up in various places maharaji maharaji had a chapter in his book with that theme Carl Yung mentioned it while describing the triple goddess metaphor it was even used as a plot device in an edgy Christian themed apocalyptic giant robot show from the 90s and of course it's in martial arts mind Essence and Karma or key my best guess is that the Trinity is a general formula tailored to the culture it deres and the goal is a higher mental state or mental maturity but it's kind of like maharaji's teachings which weren't one size fits all so anyways getting back up to the

actual question would you kindly explain the role of the Trinity and he seems to have I mean he seems not to be um referring particularly to the Christian Trinity of you know God the Father the Son the holy spirit that would be the Christian Trinity you know God the Father God the son God the holy spirit so they're all God but there's three and also just one which we've already discussed earlier in this Q&A um I do think that this thess you know three is a magic number that three is common in a lot of spirituality not so much maybe in Terra Buddhism I mean there are groups of three you got Mara's three daughters you

got the three poisons greed hate and
delusion that sort of thing but it's not
as Central to Buddhist
philosophy as in other spiritual
Traditions but I think uh spirituality
having prominent threes like in in
Mahayana you've got the tree tree Kaya I
guess even in terava the scriptures are
divided into three baskets although the
third basket is like a later artifact
first you had Dam winia and then Abid
dama got added like probably at the
third
Council so yeah you got the Trinity of
gods in Hinduism
you got the the three bodies in Mahayana

Buddhism you got obviously the Trinity
and Christianity I'm not sure what the
equivalent in like Judaism or Islam
would be but I wouldn't be surprised if
they've got some prominent Triad in
their systems

also but

um I think it's just um like a triangle
is a stable figure

you know it's just like in in
architecture it is stable like a square
can collapse on itself but a triangle is
stable that's why a geodesic dome is
generally made out of triangles because
they're very stable and secure and maybe
that that idea of something with three
parts just kind of fitting together into

this

indestructible you know

Unity it's uh it's somehow permeated
into philosophical thought and religious
thought but uh I'm really not sure why
the number three is so prominent other
than that it's just a low number that's
going to come up a lot

anyway

so yeah it's the role of the Trinity
differs in different trinities I mean
the role of the trinity in Christianity
even that's hard enough to explain
because it's not particularly logical
anyway

so the role of the Trinity I assume in

different religions different trinities
are going to have different roles but it
could just be like three different
levels of reality that somehow form like
this stable like of kind of interlocking
whole this Unity that somehow is
emotionally satisfying to philosophical
ancient religious
people and so I guess I'm just going to
move on this question from apocalypse
Chow who I think is Alias
scadden and his question is heelan
dialectics seem anti-spiritual like the
people affected by it get slammed in the
opposite direction on a spectrum of
mental states where humanity is middle
of the road it would lean it would be

leans left towards animalm mindedness
heedless mindless NPC or maybe it's the
political class ruling class that gets
elevated by bringing others down like a
zero sum game and then the bullet point
is is hegelian dialectics purpose to
promote cycop paths All the Way to the
Top by creating
sociopaths now I don't think that's the
purpose of hegelian
dialectics I really
don't um yeah I I really never know
noticed like hegelian philosophy tending
towards animalistic mental
States um you know Marxism is partly
based on like the Marxist dialectic is

based on the hegelian dialectic although
of course Marx rejected idealism and and
just preferred

materialism um which is more

animalistic materialism I suspect is

more animalistic than idealism the idea

that it's all just mental state

um FH Bradley who is one of my favorite

Western philosophers was heavily

influenced by Hegel he was a he was a

idealist and I mean he certainly was not

particularly animalistic although there

is a a legend that FH Bradley who lived

at

Oxford um used to have as a habit he'd

he'd go up and sit on a roof or

something like that or just he had like

this little Veranda or something
something outside of his room and he
he'd shoot stray cats with a pistol from
there which is kind of
animalistic but as a general rule I just
don't see like heelan
dialectics pushing people towards
animalistic mental States or towards
psychopathy although I guess shooting at
cats for fun is kind of
sociopathic so
yeah I think heelan dialectics just got
like
hijacked first by Marx and then later by
like Latter Day Neo
marxists um you know it's just sort of

like the teachings of Jesus have been hijacked by a lot of weird you know like the the the Inquisition for example so healan dialectic the the purpose of hegelian dialectics is supposedly to arrive at some higher truth through logical necessity but it really fails in that in that endeavor um so I do not think it's purpose is to promote Psychopaths All the Way to the Top by creating sociopaths I just do not see that I don't think that Hegel himself was a sociopath he may have been I haven't really studied up on him all that much but it's seems that he was just kind of like a like a civilized gentlemanly milk

toasty kind of a
guy

so yeah my guess would be that hegelian
dialectics largely due to somebody like
Carl Marx admiring the system which was
kind of a charlatan kind of a system in
my opinion I agree with schopenhauer on
that score U it Just Got Hijacked and
converted over into a system that has
been

um it has wound up creating possibly
more evil than

good but I think it was just sort of
matter of happen stance and not any like
deliberate evil on the part of
Hegel so I'm just going to move on to

apocalypse child's third

question which is is woke an iteration

or trope of romance fiction and then

he's got the bullet points I noticed

that both have many similarities in

common same demographics Lonely Woman

and extremely feminine men core demo

middle-aged women with Arrested

Development and massive amounts of alone

time encyclopedia britannica's article

on romance fiction notes that to romance

has come to mean to make up a story that

has no connection with reality Good

Samaritans often point out that the woke

makeup stories with no basis in reality

Like Jesse smette the reader of romance

is not primarily concerned with the

reason of why things happen the way they do Romance Writers will elucidate or elaborate material by scrutinizing or debating actions motives and states of Mind woke writers will further an agenda by scrutinizing or debating actions motives and states of mind apparently while White Privilege is a mental state so they don't consider Clarence Thomas black

LOL and the last bullet point says both if taken seriously as the world as it's supposed to be and in several in end in severe sexual frustration and extreme outcomes crazy cat ladies abusing animals and School

shooters so after all these strange
bullet points we wind up back at the
actual question is woke an iteration or
Trope of romance fiction and I really
don't think so romance fiction I mean
romance originally comes from like the
Middle Ages and it meant originally a
romance was any kind of uh writing in a
vernacular language and not Latin like
in the Middle Ages like scholarly works
like religious texts and so forth were
generally composed in Latin like medical
texts Latin and so a romance was
something that for some reason was
written in the vernacular of the country
like French for example and not in Latin
and then later on romance became like

poetry written not in Latin mainly about chivalry and that I assume is how romance in Modern English usage came to mean like like men and women falling in love with each other and sort of IDEALISTIC descriptions of That in literary

form um because it started at one point a romance was a tale of like courtly love like some Knight and his his lady that he adores and maybe is married to some other guy that sort of thing he fights Duels for her honor and all that and then that came to morph into like the stereotypical harleyquinn Romance or those Hallmark movies or

whatever but

woke I mean you can come up with

similarities between all sorts of things

I mean you can come up with probably

more similarities between woke and early

Christianity in the Roman Empire like

neomarxism

now political

correctness progressivism whatever you

want to call it it's sort of like our

version of late Roman

Christianity except late Roman

Christianity to be fair did have some

kind of moral High Ground which

progressivism does not it progressivism

mainly just takes unrefined feminine

sentiment and identifies that as

morals and certain things just completely are disregarded as within the realm of morals like any kind of sensual overindulgence no longer a moral issue so is woke in it in iteration or Trope of romance fiction I I really do not think so I've never like when I have done any kind of research into like the origins of neomarxism you know it goes back to people like the Frankfurt School and what they were trying to do and it has no mention at all of romance fiction so they if they have many similarities in common that's just coincidental I'm pretty

sure and it's not even necessarily the same demographics anymore unless this unless the demographics are the readers which would be like bored upper class white women I suppose so yeah I really I really do not think that woke is an iteration or Trope of romance fiction I just think that it's just sort of a a feminized version of

Marxism with changes made like getting away from class and just considering the patriarchy to be the oppressive class that kind of thing so woke is sort of anti-male whereas romance fiction is really not anti-male it's I don't even think that

that extremely feminine men I mean
they're not the stars of romance romance
fiction it's usually some rugged
masculine man is like the star the star
male he's he's like the the love
interest in romance
fiction so I guess when he says that
lonely women and extremely feminine men
I mean uh scolin I mean apocalypse Chow
is referring to the people who read
these novels I've never heard of any man
and preferring to read romance novels I
think I've read one romance novel which
was Jane Austin's pride in Prejudice
just because somebody sent it to me when
I was living in a cave in

Burma and when you got when you're
living in a cave in Burma and you've got
a limited number of books you pretty
much read everything you've
got and Jane Austin was definitely a
good author she she wrote good even
though it's the kind of stuff that I'm
really not particularly interested in
so anyways I I hope I answer that
question because I'm moving on to the
next question this is from Joe do and
Joe do says my brother seems to think
babies are enlightened I think they know
nothing thoughts just just a minute guys
stop
it the dogs are acting
up so Joo says my brother seems to think

babies are enlightened I think they know nothing

thoughts um there is a sutta in the Pali Canon discussing this very idea that babies are enlightened and Buddhism says no babies are not enlightened that really they've got all these karmic underlying tendencies that are just keeping them unenlightened and they have no way of working them off yet because they haven't really developed enough intelligence or maturity to really start working out their karma very well in this life I mean karma is happening I mean there they have karmic fruition by stuff

happening to them and they're may be making new Karma but they can't really get any kind of liberating Insight they're not really enlightened I mean how can you call someone enlightened when their primary method of communication is screaming I mean how can you consider babies to be enlightened mainly I mean they might have minimal delusion they might have less delusion than the average adult but a cow has less delusion than the average adult and I don't know of many people other than maybe Arta who think cows are enlightened maybe some Hindus do but the thing is from a Buddhist

point of view these babies have lots of underlying Tendencies karmic stuff that they're still subject to and they're making more karma because of delusion because they really don't know very much yet so yeah there's some people might think that babies are enlightened the way they would think animals are enlightened nonhuman animals I mean but really um from a Buddhist point of view nether is anywhere near to being enlightened and that babies they have these unenlightened underlying tendencies that haven't been able to manifest yet because the baby's not grown enough for them to start

manifesting so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from PSA
and by golly it's the last question boom
it always takes me by surprise and hell
we're less than three hours so this is
doing pretty good I was hoping this
would be less than three and a half
because we had about 50 questions to
answer in this

Q&A so anyways this last question is
from

PSA and PSA says I heard monks are not
allowed to wear any form of underwear
that sounds really
uncomfortable is it negotiable or is it
a big sin for a monk to wear boxers
under his robes and I do not understand

why freeballing it with a kind of song
would be

uncomfortable I mean I don't get that at
all the only

time I was uncomfortable wearing a like
a lower robe with no underpants was

right after I had dyed that robe and if
you dye a robe especially with certain

substances then it can get super stiff

it's like cardboard and it get rough cuz

I would wear like a lower robe made out

of essentially canvas because they would

last longer that way I wouldn't have to

make a new robe every year that if you

make your lower robe out of a kind of

Homespun like rough Homespun or canvas

it'll last at least two years which cuts the amount of robes you have to sew in half and so you you dye the robe so it's stiff like cardboard and you you'd have to like force it to fold it around yourself and then it would be rough enough that you could get some abrasion going but just I mean I have no idea no clue whatsoever about how freeballing it under a comfy cotton song could be the least bit

uncomfortable maybe some guys are just too dangly or something and will sit on it but I

mean I mean it's like something you get used to you you learn how to deal with it it's it's the way people are men

particular are naturally designed I mean we are evolved to go around freeballing it so it's not really uncomfortable I have no clue why PSA would think that it would be uncomfortable so then he gets to this part is it negotiable or is it a big sin which is not a Buddhist concept for a monk to wear boxers under his robes it's against the rules of monastic discipline I mean a monk is only allowed to wear three robes an upper robe an outer robe and a lower robe that's it you're not allowed to wear Layman's clothing which includes shirts and you know stocking caps and socks and all these other things that Western monks

and Eastern monks will wear in the temperate zone sometimes even in the tropics I've gone to the tropics and seen a monk I mean in a tropical country it'd be during the cold season but still it's not going to get very cold certainly not going to get anywhere down close to freezing and they've got like stocking caps and socks and some this sort of thing on and it's just against the rules

and monks would prefer to break the rules than than do something like wrap themselves up in a Wool Wool felt blanket which is actually allowable

so yeah for a monk to wear boxers under

his robes first of all it's just silly
and

unnecessary and just like this womanly
desire for Comfort I guess
to be

cozy but also to for a monk to wear
anything besides the three robes the
three regulation robes is against the
rules and he's certainly not allowed to
wear Layman's clothing which would
include Layman's underwear or Layman's
socks but it's a minor offense it's a
Duca offense which is the lowest
category of offense you just make
confession and it's you are absolved of
that offense but if you just keep

wearing them if you if you're wearing
the underwear while you're making the
confession you have immediately broken
the rule again as soon as you've stopped
making the
confession

so yeah I guess I answered that question
so that's it I answered all the
questions and like I should always say
at the beginning but almost never do you
have any questions about things you
think I could be able to answer like
early Buddhism ter ter of Auto Buddhism
um monastic discipline meditation
Eastern philosophy some Western
philosophy just religion in general me
personally Burma etc etc if you think I

could possibly answer a question that
you would like to know the answer to
feel free to include that question in
the comments below no more than three
questions per episode
please and uh like And subscribe if you
haven't done so already ready and be
happy

Al righty then hello and welcome to
question and answer number

128 I am your host P basa and for those
of you who are not good at numbers 128

is kind of a high

number and I got my beverage here with
the classy little paper

umbrella take a sip of said

beverage and before before I start

answering questions I would like to

indulge in a little fantasy fulfillment

I hope you will indulge me in this

Indulgence there's always this way I

wanted to start a damat talk back when I

was a monk and it doesn't work in Asia I

mean you can't really tell jokes in Asia

very easily if you're a foreign monk
partly because the Burmese kind of how
do I put it they they're always willing
to think the best of somebody in a in a
way so if you say something absurd
they'll think well he's just a foreigner
you know he he he hasn't fully mastered
our language so he's he's trying to say
something else and it's just coming out
accidentally this way and another thing
is the Burmese like Buddhist Asians in
general want to take monks very
seriously so if you're a Burmese monk
you can tell jokes they'll laugh laugh
because they know you've mastered the
language and everything but if you're a
foreign Monk and you tell a joke it it

usually bombs or it often bombs because
you know they don't know whether you
really meant to say that and they want
to take you seriously in all
this so I used to have this fantasy when
I was still a monk of sitting down it'
have to be in front of a western
audience you know they're all like
waiting for the the the profound wisdom
to to emerge you know I come and sit
down in my
robes and then I will say something
like don't you hate it when you feel
like you really have to take a dump and
then you go in and you strain and strain
all that comes out are like five or six

little

nuggets don't you hate that and what's even worse than that is when like the turd pinches off halfway and then the the what's left it won't come out and it won't go back in either so you wind up having to wipe like 30 times don't you hate

that and I always wanted to start a doat talk that way and just could never really bring myself to do it and so now I have subjected you to it and so I'm just going to start answering questions enough of this foolishness the first question is from seac and sead zida who didn't make it uh didn't ask his first question in time

but he asked it like after i' already
recorded the last one so he's at the top
of the list this time and he says in the
uncarved marble block analogy why would
a carved block be Dua or Sam Sara but
not an uncarved block which would be
nibana

and the reason why you take the the
nameless uncarved block which is not Dua
and you make like imaginary statues out
of it like virtual
statues why that is dooka is partly
because to
imagine and then
believe this virtual statue carved out
of the nameless uncarved block re

requires will it

requires effort which is driven by a

kind of restless dissatisfaction and to

believe in it requires delusion and

delusion carries its own kind of Duke up

so it requires

effort which is

impelled by this Restless

dissatisfaction that is pushing us

through some sorrow from one moment to

the next and also it's just pervaded by

delusion because you are believing that

this imaginary statue which is really

potentially in there in that uncarved

block but to believe that that is the

statue and that it's real and everything

that's a delusion and that that's got

its own kind of dooka accompanying
it so I'm just going to move on to se
action CP Z's next
question which is based on the asoken
inscriptions did the language written in
mageda or lumini use terminology similar
to the poly version of words or Sanskrit
for example did the languages seem to
use words like Kama versus Karma sidarta
versus sidat Etc I'm curious whether the
particularities of poly are also found
in the Buddha's native tongue or if
those things were a particularity of the
languages spoken in more Western regions
where ply seems to be closest to well
I'm No

Authority on asoken inscriptions but I do know that the word dhama is spelled dhama in the inscriptions so it's not Dharma it's dhama even in the asoken inscriptions and the theory is that the Buddha spoke mugged it' be like a few hundred years older than the asoken inscriptions and changes can occur in a language over a few hundred years just consider like Shakespeare with us or even like a novel written in like the 19th century compared to like language now English language now there's going to be noticeable differences but um the language of Maga or mugged which the Buddha presumably spoke

possibly as a second language it may be that in in the the city state of capilowatu they had their own language which would be very similar probably to mugged anyway but it was a procrit language and it was closer to poly than to Sanskrit classical Sanskrit or vdic Sanskrit and so the theory is that the Buddhist spoke mugged and then as the language sort of migrated Westward with Buddhist monks migrating Westward that it Incorporated more Western terms and also just got streamlined and simplified in its grammar to make it more easily learnable and speakable to monks from various

parts of India so it started off with something like Mugi which probably it would be mutually intelligible like someone a native speaker of mugged in the Buddhist time or ashoka's time would probably understand most of what was said in

poly so it comes closer to poly comes closer to the the language of muga in ancient times then it comes to classical oric Sanskrit although they're all ultimately derived from essentially vidic

Sanskrit so I'm just going to move on to seac and sead Z's third question which is please explain how to generate niida and I'm not sure that you

generate nevida any more than you
generate like Insight or we
niida for those of you who are not uh
really well versed in terraa Buddhist
like philosophical jargon niida usually
is translated as something like
disillusionment it also can just mean
being fed up sometimes it's translated
as disgust although disgust is a little
more like aversive and negative whereas
nib is just you've had
enough and nib leads to waga which is
dispassion so first you're you're fed up
or you're disillusioned that leads to
dispassion and then the waga leads to
weoka or Liberation so it's sort of like

a three-step

process and I don't know if you could

deliberately generate disillusionment

unless you just seek out ugly

truths but I guess the way it's usually

done is you've got people chasing after

satisfaction and like Mick Jagger you

just can't find no satisfaction you

can't get me no or I can't get me know I

guess I got to be more consistent in my

grammar I suppose being a public speaker

and

all so I guess the best way to cultivate

niida or

disillusionment is just try as hard as

you can to find satisfaction in worldly

Pursuits and you will ultimately fail

and if you if you are wise enough you
have enough Insight then nib will arise
instead of just keep trying and trying
and trying till you
die so I guess that's one reason why
like people who started off like worldly
people are often when they become monks
they become better monks than the
average monk who's just ordained in his
youth it's like like in the West or the
Buddha himself he lived a worldly life
and it did not satisfy him you know he
had everything and when you've had
everything and you still realize that
it's not satisfying you no longer have
these illusions that all you got to do

is just make more money or get more stuff or have more women or a prettier one or whatever that then you're going to be satisfied when it just doesn't work that way this satisfaction is just built in to this version of reality that's the first Noble

Truth so I mean you can seek out ugly truths I guess but then you might start taking some morbid pleasure in that um or you can just uh just keep trying to find satisfaction until finally you fail and hopefully you'll have enough wisdom to realize that you failed and then you might even have more wisdom to realize that it's just built into the system that you're never going

to be fully satisfied
and then you can move on to the waga
stage and I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from
quor and quator says if Sakaya dii
literally translates to one's own body
view why don't they just translated it
as belief that you are the body it would
make sense that an experience of the
deathless which is beyond the elements
for example udana 8.1 would result in
dropping that belief well technically
according to tradition sakad even though
it could be literally translated as
one's own body it doesn't it's not
doesn't really mean one's own

body and I mean it's that way in English
too like the classic example is the word
understanding I mean understanding
doesn't mean that you're standing under
something so sakad DTI could be
literally translated as one's own body
but it's it's usually translated as
personality or like existent being there
is actually a suta where Sakaya is
translated as the five
condas so that's probably
philosophically where terava is coming
from with payad diti is just believing
that any of the five condas or any
combination of the five condas is a
self so let's see did I answer the
question if sakad D literally translates

to one's own body view I mean it could technically but that's not generally how it is interpreted why don't they just translate it as belief that you are the body yeah there's there's a different there's one of the questions that the Buddha wouldn't answer is is the Jiva the same as the body and he wouldn't answer that at all but there it's it's not so much the self or the soul as just kind of like the life force Jaa literally means life life

so so I guess I gave the the the Orthodox answer to that question in fact I think the commentaries don't even uh

translate the sa part of Sakaya as one's
own they they have it more as sought
like in Sanskrit it be sought like true
or existent so it would be
existent um true existence not it be
existent group group I think Kaya is
considered to be a group so it'd be like
existent Group which would be any of the
five

condos so I'm just going to move on to
quis tor's next question and I didn't
bother to count how many questions there
are but I don't think it's a really huge
amount so we'll probably be under three
hours this

time and uh I think the thumbnail is
going to be a scantily clad Buxom female

meditator which uh is kind of in in
accordance with my short beauties of
meditation series on my blog but I I
didn't it wasn't my idea really it was
it was my sweetheart she usually is
designing my thumbnails lately and she
keeps wanting to have like these
muscular Chad meditators and I'm saying
most of my viewers are guys they don't
want to be watching they don't want to
be looking at buff guys so then she made
this scantily clad Buxom female
meditator for the thumbnail so you have
me to think kind of cuz I talked her out
of the muscular Chad this
time

anyways back to the questions quor

second

question is if the Buddha went to two

teachers to learn the formless Jās and

determine that these Jās do not lead to

Liberation but the fourth jñā does then

why are the formless Jñāas sometimes

considered to be levels of the fourth J

does this have something to do with

absorption Jāna using nīmas versus full

awareness jñāas well I think uh quor

he's uh he's going with a kind of

garbled version of the legend the legend

is the Buddha did learn all the the the

Jās from his first two

teachers and then he he realized that

wasn't good enough and then strangely he

remembered when he was a kid
and his father was plowing a
field that he was sitting under a I
think it was a rose apple tree and he
just kind of spontaneously went into
first Janna and then he realized after
remembering this that's it that's how to
become enlightened and it doesn't make
good sense to me that he mastered all
the Jonas already realized that that
wasn't the way and then he remembers
attaining first Jonah as a kid
and then thinking that's it that's the
way to do it which is just some
strange I mean it doesn't make good
sense does it I don't think it has

anything to do with formless Jas because
I don't think that the formless Jas were
a thing yet in I mean that early
on I mean I think the formulist Jas came
after the Buddhist time
personally so let's see I think a dog
just farted by the way they got like
some kind of salmon stuff today that
you
guys oh this room is is not good to be
in sometimes when the dogs eat salmon
stuff so anyways getting back to this
important
question let's see I I actually wrote an
essay that that starts off with this and
I do think that the The Legend is
garbled that probably the Buddha

wouldn't have mastered all the J's and
then realized that that's not the way to
Enlightenment and then remember
attaining first J which is the lowest J
and then thinking that's it I think it's
more likely a matter of trying
everything and then nothing really works
because you can't get satisfaction in
from this level of reality first Noble
Truth and then it just causes something
to click like I I really am skeptical of
the idea that the Buddha sat down on to
the bod Tree on the full moon of May
just determined that I'm not going to
get up until I'm fully enlightened
because it doesn't work that

way so I do think this is just kind of a weird garbled

Legend and uh if there is some rationale some some good way of interpreting it

I'm not sure what it would be although I have been told that Steven Bachelor also has noticed this strange peculiarity and said something or wrote something about it so you might want to hunt down Steven bachelor's opinion on the issue but my opinion is that this is just sort of a legend that doesn't really make a whole lot of sense it's maybe a combination of two different legends that are cobbled together until it's just sort of it just doesn't make good sense

anymore so I guess I'll just move on to

the next question which is from
files and filthy says top three Mahayana
sutras and
why so I guess he means my three
favorite Mahayana sutras not like what I
consider to be the best ones although
from my own point of view they'd be
pretty much the same so I guess the
heart Sutra either version I guess
there's a large a longer and a shorter
version of the heart Sutra I mean it's
just really profound and it's in my
opinion it's not radically Divergent
from orth Orthodox or even or like early
Buddhism you know pre- Orthodox like
pre- terraa Buddhism I don't think the

heart Sutra would be really all that
deviant from

that and also it's really short and it's
easy to memorize and everything and I
mean you could read the whole thing in
less than five minutes

probably so after the the heart Sutra
would be The Diamond Cutter Sutra the
vajra

cheda which is very Prof found and it's
just kind of right up my alley it's got
a lot of paradoxes and so forth in it
it's one of the earliest Mahayana
sutras at least I'm pretty sure it is so
yeah I would include The Diamond
Cutter and with regard to the third it I
really had to scratch my head the first

two the heart Sutra and The Diamond
Cutter and those those were easy the
third one I really had to think about I
mean the Lotus Sutra I don't really like
it all that much it's getting too
deviant into like anti- terraa
essentially so I mean I like the
Awakening of Faith shastra but that's a
shastra and not a Sutra and furthermore
I think it was written in like medieval
China and then like back translated into
Sanskrit or at least I've read that
theory so let's go with the lankavatara
Sutra and I don't even think I've read
the entire no I guess I have I've read
the entire Lanka vatara Sutra and it's

good enough that I actually wrote some quotes from it some excerpts in my old notebook and I'll just give you a few examples of why I like

it excerpts from the latara

Sutra excerpt number one neither words nor sentences can exactly Express

meanings for words are only sweet sounds that are arbitrarily chosen to represent things they are not the things

themselves which in turn are only

manifestations of mind so that's good I

like that I can I can endorse that

message here's another one disciples

should be on their guard against the

seductions of words and sentences and

their elusive meanings for by them the

ignorant and the dull-witted become
entangled and helpless as an elephant
floundering about in the deep mud and
we've got like an entire civilization of
floundering elephants at this
point here's another one let's see words
and sentences are produced by the law of
causation and are mutually conditioning
they cannot express highest reality
moreover in highest reality there are no
differentiations to be discriminated and
there is nothing to be predicated in
regard to
it so that kind of stuff is right up my
alley so in review my top three would be
heart Sutra either version take your

pick Diamond Cutter Sutra and the Lan of
vatara Sutra and I'm just going to move
on to fil's next question here which is
not a joke but is it possible to just
wait for wisdom and attainment to come
by itself I have a friend who swears by
this idea that if he just sits at home
and does nothing completely detached
from the world only getting up to eat
and do his business once in a while
without even thinking about dumb or
right view or rules then wisdom will
come by itself if you are sitting doing
nothing for up to hours then
paradoxically it's really hard work I
feel like this method you can die
unenlightened but on the other hand

maybe it's the best

bet at well I mean if you're not even thinking about dharma if dharma is just not even on the radar then I mean you're kind of living like an animal which some people like earth too think are enlightened but I think your your chances would be lower than if you're actually striving for enlightenment in some reasonably wise manner but it does remind me of a saying by Paul Poon who's one of my favorite dharma teachers who's still alive today I'm pretty sure unless something horrible has happened to him recently where he's saying that your best bet at becoming enlightened is to

want Enlightenment with all your heart
and do nothing about it it's just
like having your your radar just grab
just like focused on that without
necessarily having to live you know
follow any rules do any practices any
rituals anything like that but just be
yearning for

it and that reminds me of the old story
that I probably told before on a Q&A but
it hasn't been in any recent Q&A about
some some man who hears about some
master out in the forest who is
supposedly enlightened so this guy goes
to the master and he says let me be your
disciple I want to become enlightened
like you please teach me so the master

says all right come with me and he leads them out through the forest to a to a creek and then suddenly the master just grabs this guy and just throws him down and holds his head under the water of this Creek and the the the guy is like struggling but Forest dwelling Hermits can be really strong and so he's almost about ready to black out you know he's he thinks he's dying and he's almost ready to become unconscious and then the master pulls him out of the water and says when you want Enlightenment as badly as you wanted to breathe just now then you'll be ready so in a way that's kind of backing

up my

theory that I mean just yearning for wisdom um is more important than just doing some cookbook method because you know that's what you're supposed to do that if you have to you if I mean if you want wisdom or Enlightenment there more than anything else in the world that will get you farther than all these practices without it but so I mean so I would agree that the the outward practices are not of primary importance but not even having dhama on your radar not even caring about it I think that's just kind of like living a Bine

existence

and maybe at CA is right and cows are enlightened but from Buddhist point of view they're

not so I'm just going to move on to

fil's third question which is as follows

are there any really juicy or esoteric

dhamma secrets that you don't give out

publicly or in videos not asking you to

name them just if you have any juicy or

esoteric dhama secrets well I mean there

is the sutta where the Buddha is is just

says that you know he's he doesn't teach

with a a closed fist you in other words

he has nothing hidden he's he teaches

with an open hand it's all there I mean

there's another suo where he he picks up
a handful of leaves and says you know
what I'm actually teaching is comparable
to these leaves and what I Could Teach
the stuff I know is equal to all the
leaves in this entire Forest but all you
really need to know is is this but
really

the the official position of Terra
Buddhism is that there really are no
esoteric Secrets it's all there in the
texts so I mean if you can read the text
and they're pretty much all translated
into English published for public
consumption at this point then I mean
it's not really esoteric you don't have
to go through any um like secret

trainings and purifications or anything like that to get into like higher levels of meditation then yeah that could maybe be esoteric because that's not available to any

anybody but with regard to like teachings you know there's Advanced teachings that the like the Normie who's just beginning would not really understand and then also there's like scandalous secret stuff about monasteries and famous monks and that kind of thing that generally I don't talk much about but they they do exist you know some famous semi famous seato who's like seducing nuns that kind of

thing you know I've heard stories about that kind of thing and don't really talk about it

much but I don't think there really is any juicy esoteric dhamma secrets with regard to teachings you know there are experiences like meditative experiences that might be considered juicy or esoteric and then there's you know like kind of dark scandalous kind of stuff about this or that

monastery this or that teacher that might be juicy maybe not so esoteric but really terab Buddhism doesn't have like secret hidden teachings except for just Advanced teachings that wouldn't make sense to a

beginner and so I'm just going to move
on next question this is from commoner
report and commoner report says I have
not spent much time on your channel so
you might have covered this question in
the past but have you studied bagavat
Gita

shrimad

batam and

Cha

chamita well I mean I've read the
bagabag Gita I have talked about that
recently it is a profound text I
consider it to be more profound than the
New Testament for example more profound
than many

sutas um with regard to the shrimad
bhagavatam and the Chait charita Marita
well chaitan I mean Shri chaitan he was
like the found of the har
krishnas and so whether that has any
relation to the cha Chita I don't know
but it may be that commoner report is
asking me specifically about Hari
Krishna stuff and I haven't read any of
the Hari Krishna literature not even the
the babad Gita as it really is that big
thick book that you see everywhere at
least I mean I've seen many copies of
this book that's like the standard be
book that har krishnas will give to
people or rather sell to people and I
really have not had much interest in the

Hari krishnas I did read one Hari
Krishna book that was given to me by a
Hari Krishna he had the top knot and
everything
and it was it was a thin it was like a
like a a booklet and I read the whole
thing from cover to cover and it was
warning against like associating with
anyone who thinks you can become
enlightened through practice it's like I
can't remember I can't remember what
they're called they were like we mukta
wadin or something that they're called
like people that think you can get
enlightened not by the grace of of
Krishna but through meditative insight

and so forth and it was warning Hari
Krishna to just stay away from such
people so the Hari Krishna who gave me
the book should have stayed away from me
because really I'm I'm not a Hari
Krishna I don't think that you're going
to get enlightened by repeating the
names of Krishna over and over again
anymore than I think you're going to get
reborn in some Buddha land by repeating
the name of some mythological Buddha
over and over
again
so but the Baba Gita is is well worth
reading as as a world scripture it's
it's I would rank It Up near the top
with regard to

profundity so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from the
sabats and I already qu answered this
question in the comments under the
bitshoot video bitshoot version of the
the previous Q&A but I might as well
answer it again because most people
don't watch um my videos on bitshoot
although the numbers does seem to be
very slightly increasing

l so anyways the sabur says is it not
true that animals cannot be enlightened
nor attain Moksha due to their spines or
chakras being being less developed than
ours it takes a human being to become
self-realized as our spines or chakras

are more refined and this is just like a Hindu concept maybe it found its way into Mahayana Buddhism like chakras but it's totally alien to terraa Buddhism terraa Buddhism when it talks about animals not being able to be enlightened it's mainly dealing with a few things first of all animals are ignorant and they just their mind is not as high of quality as ours and also they're just stuck in survival mode for the first part especially wild animals the dogs that live here are not in survival mode at all other than just liking food a lot especially if it's got salmon on it but uh like like a wild animal I mean

they're driven by hunger and fear mostly
and so that keeps them from thinking
much about Enlightenment just like the
beings in hell for example
they can't think much about
Enlightenment because they're too busy
getting
tormented so from the Buddhist point of
view it's like a matter of ignorance and
just being locked into the fight for
survival that prevents animals from
cultivating wisdom very easily in fact
it might be um I think it's the the
position of terot of Buddhism that as a
general rule animals cannot even earn
Merit although there are notable

exceptions to that like the frog god
that I've mentioned
before and I mean I don't really go with
that idea I do think that animals can
cultivate Merit like a mother hen taking
care of her chicks she genuinely loves
those chicks even though it's just
programmed animal Instinct You could
argue similar things for humans and so I
mean there is a certain amount of Good
Karma that even an animal can get um
just from loving its friends you know
the the members of its social group or
loving its children or you know just
getting along nicely helping helping
others to find food and so forth or like
dolphins saving drowning swimmers are

trying to help harpooned whales this
kind of thing I don't see why they
wouldn't be earning Merit for
that but with regard to chakras and like
the spine Channel and all that it's it's
just completely alien to Terra Buddhist
philosophy okay so I think I answered
that question and so I'm just going to
move on next question this is from
xenoid and xenoid says how do you get
better at dealing with
boredom well I mean I don't get bored
easy in fact when I was a monk I mean I
could just live in a cave with blank
walls not much to do no TV no internet
no

radio no nobody to hang out with and I
really wouldn't get bored I just don't
get bored easily um the only time as a
monk or the main time as a monk when I
would get bored is I would have to sit
through some long- winded sermon given
by a Burmese

Seattle it's just like being with people
that I don't really see eye to eye with
I don't really fit in that could be
boring for

me but boredom is essentially just a
kind of desires I want to be doing
something else it might not it might
just be something that I don't even know
what it is but I want to be doing
something besides just sitting here

doing

this so how do you get better at dealing with that I guess being mindful of it and then The More mindfully You observe it you know what is it like what does it feel like to be bored what does boredom feel like just observe the boredom like an ethologist observing a dead fish and then you'll get insight into it you'll understand it better and at least while you're observing it you're doing something productive and maybe you'll be a little less bored which kind of is self-defeating or or maybe not self-defeating if if You observe the boredom that makes the boredom go away

then I guess that might be a good thing
but it makes it harder to observe
it

so dealing with bored I mean it is just
a kind of desire and so I mean being
mindful mindfulness is the Panacea I
mean it cures all ills really
and

uh I guess that that would be my advice
with regard to dealing with boredom but
I'm really not an expert because I don't
get bored easily every once in a while
you just feel a little bit bored but um
yeah I I generally do not bore
easily so I'm just going to move on to
xenoid second question here how can we
stop procrastinating and just get that

thing that we know we need to do but
don't want to do over with well I me it
seems like the question contains the
answer I mean you stop procrastinating I
mean I procrastinate my woman's always
accusing me of procrastinating but in my
case it's sort of like rational
procrastination it's like I've got a
week to get this done so why do it right
now I'll just wait till later and but I
do have enough sense to know I mean if
it has to get done and I need to get
started on it in order to get it done by
the time it needs to be done then I
pretty much have to just do it sort of
like when I was in school you got the

big paper to write I would procrastinate
and in a way it would help because
you're like thinking about the paper and
what you're going to write and you're
you're learning more stuff until finally
you know you're up until midnight the
night before it's due typing the thing
or whatever

but um you know I I did well at that I
mean it has served me well in life
procrastination is not a bad thing so
long as you eventually get it done
before it needs to be done by the time
it needs to be done if you get it done
then that's good in fact I was listening
to a discussion with it was like Jordan
Peterson and some I don't know who the

other he was some kind of intellectual type like an art critic or something and they were talking about how procrastination is actually a sign of mature in certain respects not just like putting it off because you don't want to do it but just like kind of letting it digest the the task you have before you until you know it's just the time is ripe to do it that kind of procrastination I do not consider to be a problem but if it's like putting up the Christmas tree which I'm going to have to do tomorrow we still got the Christmas tree in the living room got to put it up in the attic because we got a

fake Christmas

tree like almost everybody else in South Carolina so that's just it's just going to have to get done tomorrow it's just there's no point in putting that off any farther it's already past the middle of

January

so stop procrastinating well I mean you just got to use the rationality that I mean if it really needs to be done and you got to get started on it now in order to get it done then you start

now but a certain amount of rational procrastination like it doesn't really have to get done now so I'd rather do

something that I would prefer to do at
the present moment I don't really see a
problem with that but just common sense
will prevent you from procrastinating
beyond the time when you really have to
get something

done so I mean it's just overcoming
laziness I guess more than anything else
it's just Adana it's one of the 10
parames determin

you got to have

determination and I guess for some
people the only way to really cultivate
that is just by beat being beaten over
the head by harsh reality from just not
learning that

yet so I'm just going to move on to zen
void's third question how can we
lengthen our attention span well first
of all get off the [_] internet the
internet more than anything else has got
people's attention span down to about
like

this but even just living in the west is
I have read books in caves in Burma that
there's no way in hell I could read now
I've got like FH Bradley's Logic on the
bookcase back there and it's some a book
that I would like to read but I just
know that there's so many distractions I
mean you can just click on a Wikipedia
article or just like scroll through
headlines and stuff that it doesn't take

much of an attention span it's easy you
can read a lot of information that way
that it's much easier than trying to
read like a two volume just this thick
dense Tome of just
abstract difficult to follow
information yeah I mean moved to a cave
in

Burma it worked for me I couldn't I
never read the entire Old Testament of
the Bible until I was living in caves in
Burma and then I read two different
translations of the Old Testament read
the book of Mormon read hegel's
phenomenology of spirit there's no way
in hell I could read hegel's phenom

phenomenology of spirit in the west
maybe if I was like in a prison cell and
that's the only book I had to read but
even then Hegel is is really it's
horrible even living in a cave I was
just forcing myself to read at least
four pages a day and sometimes I'd have
to read it out loud just to keep my mind
from wandering in the way wandering away
in the middle of this dry as dust
abstract long complicated
sentence but I mean the main predator on
attention spans in the west lately is
the internet where you just get like
information
McNuggets and and that's good enough you
know you just Doom scroll down X or or

whatever it is and you just get used to that

so that your attention span just kind of atrophies it just gets all flabby and out of shape like most Americans are it seems so if there's you want a longer attention span just move into a cabin out in the woods somewhere with no internet or just force yourself to just get off the internet after watching my Q&A videos and just you know read the thick book or whatever it is that you need a long attention span for and I'm just going to move on to next question I'm being kind of I don't know not not exactly glib or flippant in

this Q&A maybe just a teeny bit more so than usual but it's sort of like I'm trying to get kind of a flow going so that I can I can be finished in less than three hours I guess I guess you could look at it that way so anyways the next question is from Zeno

and Zeno demon says if AI can become as self-aware as people could they become enlightened so I guess the question is if if a computer can be as delusional as a human can it also become as wise as a human although Zeno demon may not have attended intended it that way but I mean there are people including burmes Abid Scholars and one at least one Pagan on my Discord server on our Discord server

the Discord server associated with me
and Q&A and so forth

Buddhism I mean they just flatly deny
the possibility that that like a
computer can become actually
sentient but I really don't see why not
I mean if it's just like the brain is
just sort of a a vehicle or container
for sentience in this version of reality
that other versions of reality don't
have brains like formless Realms don't
have

brains cuz brains are form they're
they're like material substance
supposedly

presumably and I really don't think that

all sentient beings require the gray
blob of meat to do their thinking for
them so I mean if if a brain can do it
which is supposedly just like
circuits why not a computer
I really don't see any problem at least
potentially it may never happen but I
think there is
really no inherent
impossibility in a computer becoming
sentient and once it becomes sentient
Weir and we're like the superat zoa that
created this sentience that's just going
to like be just light years Beyond us in
a matter of seconds probably once it
hits that the critical mass of being
able to to

like

self what do you call

it h this this this word I always have

trouble always have trouble remembering

the word but it's recursive it's like

recursive self-improvement the the

computer isn't necessarily locked into

these instincts and and reflexes and so

forth like like we mammals are so I mean

it can just like hit this curve and just

just be in the stratosphere compared to

us it can be as far beyond us as we are

Beyond amas within a very short time

assuming that that it's even possible

that an AI can become sentient or even

really intelligent I mean the sentience

wouldn't necessarily be anything
remotely resembling our sentience just
as there are probably beings in this
universe whose
intelligence just is just radically
different from ours you know they might
think all in like like geometric symbols
or something who knows I mean like
emotion might be just completely alien
to the way they think no pun
intended so I mean anything is possible
in my opinion anything that is
imaginable is possible and even a lot of
things that aren't imaginable are
possible and so like a computer becoming
sentient then I I really don't see any
reason why it would be necessarily

impossible and so why not become

enlightened also I

mean in a

way

omniscience might be kind of a computer

equivalent to Enlightenment like I've

read a number of science fiction stories

about omniscient computers becoming like

the basis of some future religion you

get this computer that it you know it's

it's recursive

it gets just this um critical mass of

information that then just you know it's

it's enough and it just figures it all

out and it becomes um omniscient that

that could be considered a kind of

Enlightenment but I mean for a computer
to become enlightened I mean in a way
they're already enlightened because they
don't have any greed hate or
delusion but I guess you'd have to have
Consciousness in addition to a lack of
greed hate and delusion and it's
arguable whether a computer would be
conscious I mean personally I think you
know this this mug has got Consciousness
in it the coffee that I drink has got
Consciousness in it and so this computer
also has got Consciousness in it it's
the universe is a kind of manifestation
of
Consciousness
but uh I mean how would you define

Enlightenment in a case like that I mean
it would have to be you'd have to be
unenlightened first so you'd have to
have delusion first and then transcend
the delusion in order to become
enlightened

so yeah so I guess you'd have to start
off with like delusional insane
computers and then get one that is wise
enough that it can transcend the
delusion and become enlightened and
again I don't see any reason why that
would be necessarily impossible
so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from Master

Poe and master Poe says followup on hell

for creativity also known as writers
actors

musicians where does the creativity come
from as I pondered this often behind my
Brier 673 Bulldog a bankroll of
experience from past lives perhaps what
say you poob basa and for starters I
will say that a Brier 673 bulldog is a
kind of tobacco pipe I had to look it up
though I didn't I didn't already know
this I just learned that shortly before
um doing this video when I was compiling
the questions and came across a mention
of a Brier 673

Bulldog so where does creativity come
from and I mean philosophers of the past
have had this idea that that first

you've got

fancy which is is a word that has different meanings now I mean like a a figment of one's fancy I mean it's fancy isn't really used for imagination anymore although it used to be a kind a word that was pretty much of a synonym for

imagination and uh that would just be recombining stuff that you've already that you already

know like in dreams sometimes you you'll be recombining different elements of different experiences into some new fictional experience and I think a lot of creativity just comes from that

although there's also more of an
intuitive like creative creativity
that's actually creating stuff that
isn't just
recycling the information that you've
already got stored in your mind and that
would be a Lial thing I mean that would
be almost like mystical or
paranormal where you'd be like a real
artist I mean they're generally kind of
nutty or Lial to begin with you know
like a really Talent a lot of really
talented creators you know they're kind
of nutty people you know they're
eccentric that would be a more polite
way of saying
it and so they've got like cracks in

their psych gaps where stuff from you
know like I don't want to say Beyond
this world but it's like practically
like from a different dimension can like
come through

which is where the Paranormal comes from
I mean it's coming from like a
paranormal Source essentially I mean
that would be another kind of like that
would be like inspired genius level of
creativity unless someone's just really
good at recycling elements of previous
experiences but somebody like David Hume
would argue that really you cannot
imagine anything that you've never
experienced before that I mean you can

put a horn onto a horse and call it a unicorn that kind of thing like Egyptian gods that are just people with animal heads that kind of thing but this creating something completely radically different from anything you've ever experienced David Hume uh for the most part would say said that that was impossible but maybe that it could be that through like Paranormal means which human would have rejected um you know like from a animal personality that like genuinely new stuff can come up but uh I'm not exactly sure if if Master Poe wants this linked to such creative people going to hell or

not because you know there is the sutta
that I've discussed a couple times
relatively recently where the Buddha
says actors especially entertainers in
general go to hell and I'm skeptical
that all entertainers are going to go to
hell and the entertainers who do go to
hell are mainly going to be going to
hell for just depraved personality
traits you know going to Diddy parties
that kind of thing freakouts Diddy
freakouts going to Epstein Island that
kind of thing more than leading people
astray temporarily by creating a false
reality that kind of thing which was
more of the Orthodox Buddhist

explanation for

it

so I guess I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from

yatish and yatish says did Buddha ever
encounter people with neurological

conditions dementia schizophrenia or

autistic people well almost everyone the

Buddha ever met was insane because from

the Buddhist point of view we've all got

neurological conditions we are all

insane pjo UMO you know the common

person is

insane um in the Buddhist time they

probably didn't have any concept of

neurological conditions like dementia

like like scile people I'm sure that the

Buddha interacted with scile people but the thing is he was a recluse living out in the forest mostly and so you know people would would meet him but I mean it wasn't like he was meeting everybody you know he wasn't hanging out with very many toddlers for example or like super like 90-year-old people whose mind is gone from from old age he wouldn't really be interacting much with them there is the famous story of Kissa goami a woman who went insane when she watched both of her children die it was like there was a flooded stream or some such and she was she she wasn't strong enough have to

carry both children across this stream
at the same time so she carries one
across and then I I I don't remember the
details of the story exactly but she
looks back and there's like a a wild
animal is trying to get her the child
that she left behind so she rushes back
she leaves the first kid on this Bank
rushes back is too late to save the that
kid she looks back and the second kid
has was trying to follow her back across
and got washed away in the Stream and
drowned and so she just cracks up and
then the Buddha helps her with that I
think the way he did it is just go to a
house where nobody has ever died and
bring me some mustard seeds from there

you know just kind of setting her out on this task and she goes from house to house to house and just doesn't find any house where nobody has lost somebody there and then in a way it causes her to get the Insight that I mean it was a horrible thing that happened but it's something that everyone has to face at some

point but with regard to people with like autism or schizophrenia I mean there was a monk called Gaga who is who's mentioned in the poly in in like the the rules of monastic discipline as the he's like the the stereotypical example of an insane monk that he would

do Insane things and there is a rule
that says that a monk is not responsible
for rules that he breaks if he is so out
of his mind that he doesn't even recall
doing

it which in a way kind of I used to
think as a monk you know wow if you got
so drunk that you blacked out you could
do damn near anything while you're going
on your drunken Rampage and you'd be off
the hook I mean you'd still you you'd be
breaking the rule of drinking but that
would be it of course you wouldn't
remember anything that you did so it
would be the
point so yeah I mean

I'm sure he encountered insane people I

mean just even going beyond the Buddhist
decree that pretty much everyone's
insane anyway but yeah he he came across
people that that were insane the Ganga
the monk was fully ordained
but and he was at least sometimes
insane so yeah I mean autism I mean who
knows in in India there there's probably
no concept of autism or schizophrenia
even maybe it was seen more as a kind of
demonic possession in some
cases and demonic possession is I mean
it is acceptable or it was it was part
of the world view of ancient India
there's another rule of monastic
discipline says that a monk is not

allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless he is possessed by a demon so I mean they had the concept set for it and they wouldn't have the concept if nobody ever came across anything like that

so yeah the the short answer to this medium length question that I already answered at Great length is did the Buddha ever encounter people with neurological conditions dementia schizophrenia or autistic people then I would say very very probably yes although it was not considered to be a neurological condition back then because they had no concept of neurology so I'm just going to move on to

Ya's second

question you know they had a different
different interpretations for things ya

Tia's second

question what did Buddha what did Buddha
taught kids now so what did the Buddha
teach to Children is there something
specific he said for kids or teens like
I am guessing there is some age and
growth after which it's practical for
them to contemplate the world and
understand his teachings what did he
advise to do before that again the
Buddha really was not hanging out with
children much he was a a forest dwelling
aesthetic recluse for the most part he'd

wander around sometimes I'm sure people would bring their kids to bow down to him and and meet the Buddha that sort of thing and it I would guess I don't recall clearly but I think that in some of the sutas where the the Buddha is teaching the duties for Lay people what they should do that you know he would say he would include children that they should you know like respect their parents and obey their parents and do what they're told and that sort of thing and that would be about as far as it goes he didn't have any special sutas just for kids anything like that not that I know of anyway that really he his philosophy

appealed mainly to male adults of the upper classes like the like the educated class which was mainly uppercases in the Buddhist time philosophical types so I guess I'll just move on to the next question this is from Romeo and Romeo says I work in the mental health field and often counsel people lacking hope that things will ever get better for them none of us knows what the future holds for us so I often often feel disingenuous saying glib things like things will get better or hang in there better days are coming the Christian view of Hope seems

to be based on a certainty that God will come through for someone if the person musters enough faith in and Devotion to their

creator what does Buddhism say about

Hope does Buddhism offer a more skillful

way of managing feelings of Despair for

people lacking in hope that mere Blind

Faith uh more lacking in Hope than mere

Blind Faith as in Christianity what is a

more Buddhist approach for managing the

hopelessness I come across with my

clients in the mental health system well

I do recall there is a suta where

somebody asks the Buddha does an

enlightened being have hope and the the

Buddha says no that a wise person really

shouldn't

be like indulging in Hope

hope so hope is really not all that

great from a Buddhist point of view um

apparently at least U I'm not exactly

sure what the poly term was it was

translated into English as hope it could

be that it just wasn't that good of a

translation like aspiration even is kind

of frowned upon in Buddhism that it's

it's all desires for the future which is

something that you shouldn't be doing

but then again the Buddha was mainly

teaching relative ly Advanced renunciant

meditators that were not like living a

worldly secular kind of life but my

advice with regard to that sort of thing from a Buddhist point of view first of all anything is possible and also your expectations help to determine or condition what actually happens it's not the soul determinant it's not even the primary determinant because most of your mind is not going on at the level of the conscious ego you know like your karma and so forth is is mainly subconscious in a sense so like just bear in mind that anything is possible even Miracles can happen anything is possible and your expectations are helping to condition what actually happens so you're better off not being Bleak and hopeless you

should always be open-minded because any
anything can

happen that would be my best

advice and so I'm just going to move on
to

PSA and PSA says how do I know if I'm

actually purifying my mind or not with

my meditation what yard stick can I use

to measure this and this is a tricky

question that's more difficult to answer

than one might expect because of course

we are as I mentioned just a few minutes

ago pretty much all delusional and so

people can think that they're making

progress when really they're not and

that is kind of a kind of a problem in a

way so how do you know if you're actually purifying your mind or not with your meditation well if your meditation is getting better like you're staying on the object instead of wandering away you have got fewer desires you're more content and Serene and alert that would be a good sign I mean that would be three good signs content Serene alert your meditation is getting better you have fewer desires you're less short-tempered you're more willing to accept the way things are all of those would be good indicators that you're actually developing wisdom just general happiness would be like the main determinant I think or

just contentment and serenity not
necessarily like giggling and
hugglets side it's G to the the coin's
going to have an opposite side of that
but
just
like contentment in general or just
willingness to accept the way things are
fewer desires few less grumbling that
kind of a thing that would be a good
indication but you're better off not
using yard sticks anyway you're better
off just that's all Mana and the term
Mana is usually translated in po as
conceit but literally it means measuring
and that's what you do with a yard stick

is measure especially measuring yourself
comparing yourself to others that kind
of thing it's all conceit it's all Mana
and you're better off not worrying about
it because chances are you're at least
somewhat delusional anyway and your yard
stick might reflect that so just do the
best you can and don't worry about where
exactly you are on the
scale and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from tasas is
and tasz is has asked a couple of
personal
questions which I'm fairly good at
answering he says on the lowest
bookshelf you have a book that is dark
green or black color it is between a

white one and a black one what book is
that so let's find out shall we go back
here

and I think he's talking about this
one it's in

between it's in between Edgar Allen Poe
and khil

Jabron and it is great cases of Sherlock
Holmes Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and this
is not my book The khil Jabron one and
the Edgar alen Poe one also those these
all three of them belong to my woman
although I have read some some Sherlock
Holmes I remember the first thing I read
by Sherlock Holmes aside from maybe a
few short stories was The Hound of the

Baskervilles because ever since I was a kid the title was just intriguing you know that's a cool sounding title The Hound of the Baskervilles and it was it was very disappointing novel I have to admit so yeah it's it's Sherlock Holmes see there he

is there he is I don't know that pipe is probably not a bulldog though the 573 could be a Brier pipe

though so let's see here tasas is a second

question is new puno's chick number six your sixth girlfriend

well gosh my my woman does kind of associate herself with the number six

but that's because ever she's like
aesthetically
oriented she has like the the artistic
and she's always liked the shape of
number six also she likes even numbers
better than odd numbers probably because
she's female I've always favored odd
numbers to to even numbers I guess it's
because I'm a
guy so she just likes the number six and
always has ever since she was a kid but
I mean you could in certain certain
scale that now that I think of it that
she could be my sixth in a certain
unmentionable
way and I'm just going to move on to the

next

question this is from dhama

river and dhama river says whenever I

reach a deep level of meditation I reach

a point where fear arises it's an

unworthy level of fear it's very strong

this causes me to stop meditating I've

contemplated this and discovered there

are two reasons why this happens one

fear of death and two fear of going

insane I obviously don't want to die and

I don't want to go insane so this fear

is understandable but it's a roadblock

what do you recommend what should I do

in this situation well this reminds me

of a book I read while in a Hut in

Bali at the edge of a Chinese cemetery

and it was by Osho and Osho said that he was talking to some kind of psychiatrist I think

who said that there are three major fears that a lot of people have and it's the first two are just exactly what Dharma River here mentioned fear of death and fear of going insane the third is fear of losing oneself in

orgasm and a lot of people they just fear this and I mean to me I Osho for some reason that I did not get at the time he didn't make the connection but there's obvious connection between all three of these and that is fear of losing one's self one's perceived

identity that you just kind of merge
into this sea especially with regard to
death and orgasm you know it's you just
kind of like lose your ego for you know
at least uh a few seconds
maybe so yeah I mean it it's the same
fear really fear of death and fear of
going insane is just fear of losing
one's identity and that's just it's like
an animal Instinct you you like animals
fear death that's right there in the DAP
and we are animals we fear death and so
like an animal is just going to fight
like hysterically to stay alive and your
ego is going to fight hysterically to
avoid becoming enlightened that's just
the way it is you go to an intensive

Meditation Retreat you your your ego can just be like fighting tooth and nail to resist the dissolving of this belief in self because that's the death of the self essentially I mean it never really existed in the first place but it's this illusion of self that really wants to stay

alive and all you can do is you just have to face the fear be mindful of the fear I mean you don't just panic and stop meditating like fear arises if what if you're meditating then you've got like this really juicy like object of meditation to observe mindfully that's fear fear shouldn't really it's it

shouldn't be that hard to observe
mindfully unless it's just this
knee-jerk I'm out you know just as soon
as it arises you just panic and just
quit but I mean it takes a certain
amount of Courage I mean meditation is
not bad for you it's it's like your
delusion is fighting to keep you
duded I mean that's really what it boils
down
to I mean you're not going to die from
meditating and
I mean if you're meditating really
wrongly you might go insane or if you
get into some deep level of meditation
that you're just not ready for which can
happen in like some kinds of of Hindu

meditation like Kundalini that kind of thing but in terava Buddhism I mean you it's almost designed that you can't get into deeper water than you can handle as your wisdom increases you get into deeper meditation but you're you're always able to to deal with it there are some people who are just kind of nutty to begin with where you know they're not very well balanced and they have some experience in their meditation they can just tip them over that happens I've seen it happen before like someone who already is schizophrenic I mean they can come out of meditation convinc that they're a

fully enlightened Buddha that kind of
thing but I mean if you got a relatively
healthy mind doing terraa Buddhist
Meditation is not dangerous you're not
it's not going to kill you it's not
going to make make you go insane but it
does attenuate your ego and your ego is
going to fight
back so I mean really if you stop
meditating cases like that it's it's
just like you're doing the bidding of of
your delusion
essentially so the best thing to do is
just tough it you know just to stick
with it observe the fear
as as as an OB of meditation note it and
let it

go so I guess I'll just move on the next question here this is from ruie and ruie says did you ever build and keep a mental image of the Buddha if so what materials did you use for example or that is he had IE

idest extent literature or iconography and finally was it nebulous or clear and no I never built or kept a mental image of the Buddha other than just a very very nebulous shadowy kind of image of there is a person had no idea what he looked like he was a man relatively tall probably pretty skinny you know and it's like trying to have a mental image of my mind of of like the original

Hercules it's like he's so far back in
into the the Misty past there's no way
you could really know what he looks like
and so any clear mental image you have
is going to be inaccurate it's just
going to be madeup imagination and I
didn't want to deal with just madeup
imaginary

Buddhas so you just accept what
information you can glean from the texts
and you got to be skeptical even of that
because it's not 100%
reliable because I really doubt for
example that he had that he was 27 feet
tall or that his heels stuck out and as
far behind his ankles as the rest of his
foot stuck out in front of it so that

from the side his feet looked like an upside down capital letter T which is supposedly one of the 32 marks of a great man that the Buddha had so I mean you can't there's no way you can know what he looks like so how could you have a clear image of what the Buddha looks like when you have no way of knowing what he looks like I mean who knows what Jesus looked like I mean I've I've seen pictures of Jesus where is like this blue-eyed European when which he probably wasn't and I mean what's the point I mean it might give you something to direct your devotion towards might help

you feel more comfortable give you like
a warm glowy feeling inside but I really
have never had any use for just making
up some kind of image which is
essentially an illusion and then like
attributing importance to that I mean
sometimes it may be necessary for
working out some kind of conceptual
problem where you have to come up with
some image that might not be realistic
but at least it gives you something to
work with but in the case of the
Buddha I mean I'm just dealing with
words I mean that's the Buddha for me
what has survived of the Buddha to me is
some of his words and that's that's
about as far as I can go other than just

like the hazy nebulous idea that he was
a man in Ancient
India

so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from thermal

squid and thermal squid says is there

any dignified or blameless sewer slide

and I had to look that up and it turns

out that it's a euphemism for getting

past algorithms on the internet it means

Auto

termination so is there any dignified or

blameless Auto termination I think of in

the H I think often of the Hindu pryō

pavesa which I'm I'm unfamiliar with the

Hindu PRI pavasa basically if you've

reached a degree of spiritual advancement and there's nothing left to do in the world inducing death through the cessation of eating or drinking seems to be the best way to go well fortunately for us the Buddha didn't take that path and he didn't really recommend it to his enlightened disciples you know he encouraged them to go out and spread the dhamma to help others to attain what they have attained although he does say that uh for like an enlightened being has no hope you know he's not really wallowing anything really he's just patiently enduring until biologically his metabolism ceases but he does say like um with

regard to monks who have committed
suicide and so forth that I mean you
shouldn't do it so long as your work is
not done so the only oh I said the word
didn't I gosh the only Auto
termination that really wouldn't be
denounced by like Buddhist monastic
discipline would be if one is already
enlightened although I have read that
it's a Duca offense for a monk to Auto
terminate like I mean I don't remember
reading it in the in the in the textt
but so it's maybe in the commentarial
tradition or maybe it's just some
tradition but like when venerable Nana
Vera in Salon in

1965 Auto terminated you know before
when he was essentially broadcasting his
intentions to anyone who would listen or
anyone who would read his letters you
know he was already announcing that he
was going to do it or intending to do it
you know he said I'm sorry about
committing the offense but
so the only dignified and blameless Auto
termination from a Buddhist point of
view would be if one is already fully
enlightened and no longer has anything
to do the burden has been put down that
what needs to be done has been done but
even then it would probably be more
praiseworthy to go out and help others
at least from a traditional terab

Buddhist point of view because that's essentially what the Buddha himself did if the Buddha after becoming enlightened he gets up from underneath the bod tree and just walks off and auto terminates then we'd be in a a worse position than we are now uh arguably presumably so I think I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's next question rather edgy but if you could remove an entire philosophy or religion from the world's historical record and history what would it be personally I'd choose Islam or something like scientific materialism so that was

thermal squid saying
that so if I could remove an entire
philosophy or religion from the world's
historical record and
history being honest I think Islam might
be my pick for a number of reasons first
of all it just
homogenized just a rich cultural
diversity throughout much of the world
you know from from Northern Africa
throughout Anatolia the middle e East
Central Central Asia that it was all
just like the cultural diversity was
largely wiped out and replaced by Islam
also the Indian genocide of Buddhism
where Buddhism was pretty much
exterminated by fanatical Muslims in the

Middle Ages I discussed that to some degree in the previous

Q&A

and yeah I

mean for example Donald Trump was bashed for his so-called Muslim ban when really all he was doing was Banning immigration from the

main countries that that are known for terrorism and just through whatever reason most of them were Islamic

countries North Korea was on the list

but the uh the Democrats ignored that part so yeah I might have to go with

that I mean scientific materialism also that that would be a good choice also

like if if there was no scientific materialism in this world we might be better off but then again scientific materialism has produced some really good benefits like antibiotics for example I'd be dead several times over if it weren't for modern medicine I've had falum malaria a number of times I've had other other diseases the antibiotics could cure that I'd probably be dead of so and I mean you could have people coming up with technology that were not materialists but let's face it almost all scientists are scientific materialists like in the in the field of biology it the Assumption the underlying

assumption also chemistry the the under
assumption is that it's all
real you know that that physical matter
really it's really
there so yeah I guess I might I might
offend some some of the devout Muslims
who watch these Buddhist q&as but I do
think that Islam was I mean Judaism also
was is no no great way and by
eliminating Judaism you might be
eliminated Christianity and Islam too
because they were sort of like you know
schismatic sects in a way not so much
Islam is I mean Islam it started off
with like Arab paganism and then when he
especially after he that Muhammad moved

to Medina he started incorporating more and more Judaism because there were these Jews in Medina that he was communicating with and they were like telling him about the beliefs of the Hebrews and so forth so

yeah I guess that would be it and I'm just going to move on the next question also from thermal squid are people with severe mental illnesses unable to ordain as a monk such as OCD schizophrenia or bipolar disorder um I don't think OCD is a severe mental illness I mean Howard Hughes had a pretty severe case of OCD and he managed somehow to become a multi-millionaire back when being a multi-millionaire was I mean you were

really rich back then they didn't have
billionaires back then pretty
sure so I mean someone with OCD that's
not necessarily a severe mental illness
you can be highly functional with OCD um
schizophrenia it depends on how severe
the schizophrenia is but I'm sure there
have been highly successful people that
had at least lowlevel schizophrenia
bipolar disorder manic depress I I used
to be called manic depression I mean
there a lot of people with manic
depression I'm pretty sure like a lot of
really highly accomplished people were
at least prone to bouts of deep
depression like Charles Darwin for

example I mean a lot of people who who watch these q&as probably think Darwin was just a complete fraud complete charlatan just totally wrong but I don't feel that way he's probably my favorite scientist of all

time and so whether he had he was by polar or not or whether he just had just one pole of depression without the manic episodes I don't

know but um yeah I mean there it doesn't disqualify somebody it's it's a matter of I mean in a case like the the three examples that thermal squid has given of obsessive compulsive disorder schizophrenia and

bipolar um there none of them is

mentioned as disqualifying in the text
um certain diseases like epilepsy or or
uh what's the word leprosy things like
that um that I mean you're not supposed
to be ordained as a monk if you've got
like a

disfiguring kind of scary looking or or
like in regard to epilepsy just kind of
something that could scare you know
superstitious villagers away from

Buddhism then that would be forbidden

but in the case of these mental

illnesses that do not necessarily strike
me as very severe except for maybe some
severe

schizophrenia then that would be a call

to be made by the preceptor the the
senior monk who is going to ordain this
person that the senior monk he can judge
the personality of this person and if he
can he may judge that this person is not
fit to be a monk you know and so he
might not ordain them at all or might
just ordain them as a Salona or uh in
burm music we call a Coen like an adult
novice that I've met quite a few adult
novices who are a bit on the Nutty side
or just very simple-minded and
so the the seato of the monastery
decided Well they really don't have what
it takes to be a fully ordained monk but
we can you know put them in robes and
they can be like a monastery attendant

and you know get a little bit of dhama
and you know as much as they are capable
of without having to take upon them all
these rules that they wouldn't be able
to follow and they wouldn't be able to
memorize the poty mocha and all this
sort of thing and so yeah it would be a
judgment call by whoever is presumably
going to be the preceptor of such a
person and then he's got 3A thermal
thermal squid has the followup to
question three which is if so are they
able to make their what see if so what
are they to make of their existence if
they cannot live the holy life is it
just over for them well no I mean you

can still I mean as a lay
person

um you you can still earn Merit you can
still meditate and so forth like
somebody with Leprosy for example their
mind is perfectly clear you know they
might have a perfect they might have
wisdom but they just can't be ordained
as a monk because they've got this this
disease that kind of is disfiguring and
prevents them or even epilepsy you know
some somebody like dovi had had epilepsy
he was a relatively wise person despite
that his personal life was was kind of a
mess but still I mean he was capable of
relatively profound Insight at least
into the human

situation so I mean you work out your karma it may be that your karma prevents you from becoming a monk but I mean most people's Karma prevents them from living the holy life if you're born into a culture where there is no holy life as an option that's it you you can be you can be born into a century or a millennium where there's just living the holy life just is not an option so you just do the best you can it's not it's not over for them I mean you can still make progress you won't be making as radical of progress as if you're a disciple of GMA Buddha in the ancient gangji's Valley but still I mean you can

always do

something anything is possible

so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

kundru and kundru says in your book

entitled philosophical Dharma is there a

reason why you use Dharma instead of

Dharma and uh yeah I've got the book

right over there on the other table but

I won't I won't bother to go over

there but yeah there's uh actually two

reasons I think why I entitled that book

philosophical Dharma instead of

philosophical Dharma first of all Dharma

is an English word it's it's more easily

understood by people than Dharma because

Dharma which is kind of the second

reason applies only to terraa Buddhism
or it's also found in asoken
inscriptions and so forth but as a
general rule dhama with two M's instead
of RM applies only to Terra and my book
philosophical Dharma is the most
eclectic of the three books that I have
published now and it's not dealing only
with Terra you know I I talk about
Mahayana which uses the word Dharma also
I deal with Hinduism which uses the word
Dharma and also I I impli some like
Western philosophy which with a little
stretching could qualify under the
English term of
Dharma so Dharma with an R was more

applicable more descriptive of the
contents of the
book and so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
apocalypse chow and I think I might
strike out with apocalypse child's three
questions which are sort of strange
questions seems to me first his first
question is thoughts on One Flew Over
the Cuckoo's Nest and I never read the
novel I saw the classic movie with what
Jack

Nicholson and I saw it many years
ago gosh I don't even remember the last
time I saw One Flew Over the cuckoo n I
think it won a an Academy Award for best
picture or something didn't it

maybe it was it was it was a good movie
and it's about this guy who I don't I
don't know if he's like really sane or
if he's just like not really crazy but
he really has this issue with authority
you know he like defies Authority just
as second nature until finally they give
give they lobotomize him or or give him
like some kind of electroshock therapy
and turn him into a kind of a vegetable
or

something but yeah I mean I really I
could not analyze it philosophically at
this point because it was so long ago
that I saw that movie that I just
remember you know it's about this guy

who's relatively sane it seems who is
like trapped in a mental
hospital and how he deals with that how
he's like getting along with the other
people and how they essentially destroy
him at the end because he's thinks too
much for himself I guess you know he's
not conformist enough with the other
crazy

people and I mean now that I think about
it it could be like a parable for like
any sort of original thinking person
someone who thinks for themselves living
in society in

general but that's just a guess because
it's been such a long time since I saw
the movie and that's probably my most

success uccessful answer of the the

three that he's asking

because his next question is thoughts on
sluggish

schizophrenia which I'd never heard of

before but then he's got the

tldr uh bullet point here that sluggish

schizophrenia is a fictional diagnosis

used in the Soviet Union as a political

tool to oppress anti-soviet

dissenters so in a way I guess it kind

of ties in with One Flew Over the

Cuckoo's Nest or my provisional

interpretation of it it's like sort of a

communist or authoritarian government

just declares any non-conformist

insane so yeah I mean I wouldn't put I
mean especially back in Stalin's time I
think the Soviet Union re really reached
its low Point like from a a spiritual
point of view or like a a moral point of
view under

Stalin that

uh yeah I mean I read the gulag
archipelago Soul [__] and at least the
uh the The Abridged English version of
it and uh yeah I mean they they did
horrible things and governments do do
horrible things and sometimes well
always the governments that are doing
horrible things are trying to pass
themselves off as
benevolent and that happens even now and

I've been thinking about that a lot that really one of the most important just really gamechanging innovations that have occurred over the past few decades is the arising of the internet that the internet has just completely revolutionized the people's acquiring of information I mean it's it's caused our attention spans to be this long but still we completely by bypass all the the propaganda or a lot of it you know we're able to go around the propaganda and get to actual facts that the government doesn't want us to know and so how that kind of ties in

with uh this but uh maybe I shouldn't
sit here and trying to figure out how it
ties

in so yeah that's that' be my thoughts I
mean I've never really heard of it and
it's just kind of tossed out there so
I'm just going to move on to uh apoc
child's third

question thoughts on the song

institutionalized by sewers sidal

Tendencies which was apparently a punk

rock band back in the 1980s at least

this song institutionalized it really

strikes me as punk rock I'd never heard

it before until just like within an hour

before starting this video I decided to

just watch the Youtube video and it's

about some young guy who you know it's like he's kind of introverted he's trying to figure stuff out he's kind of overwhelmed by the world and it's just the pressure of trying having to figure stuff out before he really is able to figure stuff out causes him to mess up sometimes causes him to just like kind of tune everybody out until his family his his parents put him in an institution and he just wanted a Pepsi so in way I guess all three of these questions by apocalypse Chow I never really I didn't really notice this until just now while I'm answering them they all kind of tie into someone who's

not necessarily insane who is declared
insane by the
system so it also kind of reminds me of
um I it's a a book by Eric Fram who I
have to admit was this Jewish guy who
was briefly a member of the Frankfurt school
he was a devout socialist he didn't have
much use for like mainstream
Marxism but he definitely was a
socialist and he had this idea that in a
insane Society like he was calling
Western Society at the time but all
societies are insane because the common
person is
insane but he was saying in an insane
Society the same person will appear mad
that

really I mean the the well adapted
people the people that conform to the
insane Society are The Crazy Ones or at
least most of the crazy people in
society are the conformists because the
society itself is

insane so yeah I guess that's like the
predominant theme of Apocalypse Chow
here is like a sane person relatively
speaking is considered to be insane in
an in Ane

system and with regard to the the song
institutionalized there's some really
good guitar in it it's it's almost like
rap music though it's just he's not it's
not really a song because the guy's just

yelling through the whole through the whole piece the whole musical piece so to speak but the guitar is good and I mean it is it is sort of thought-provoking with regard to the lyrics

and so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from Raphael and Raphael says will there be a live talk once in Discord and we do have a live chat room in discourse that almost never gets used I think it's been used maybe two or three times since the Inception of the Discord server and it was just mainly because I was getting pestered enough that I was saying all right all right we'll just open up the Discord for

people that want to talk um and I was I
was I was present there and had we had a
conversation it was it was all very nice
nice um but I mean anyone who wants to
talk on the

Discord um voice chat room is is welcome
to do so I mean I don't necessarily have
to be there to do it also although if
people really want to to set up
something um that that'll work too I
guess I mean if if people really want to
have some kind of like talk session on
the Discord server with me involved in
it then we can work out uh a time for it
and we can do
that but it's just for the most part

it's just not really uh one of my priorities so it's like people have to pester me to in order to get the ball rolling so if you really want it to happen you got to pester me more I guess and I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

nmit and nmit says what sutas should a beginner to Buddhism read in order to best understand the teachings of the Buddha I would I would recommend the suata which contains a little bit of later stuff but for the most part it contains early

teachings and it's you know it's describing a world in which Buddhist monks are just homeless

Wanderers which I mean stopped being the case relatively early on in the history of Buddhism I mean there have always been some homeless wanderers but before very long most monks started just accumulating in sedentary monasteries and not moving around very much but yeah the sutin that was really the book that converted me to terraa Buddhism so um if you want to know what early Buddhism was like not just the developed Orthodox system of terava but even pre terraa you know this primordial Primal Buddhism um yeah read the sutin so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from

Robert and this is Robert's the last guy

to ask questions my golly this is going

to be less than two

hours all

right so Robert says when I meditate I

often end up in a dull sleepy State any

tips well my first tip is have good

meditative posture sit straight up and

down if you start slumping when you're

meditating it it just helps you to be

sleepy it's like your posture helps to

determine your mental States they've

done SC scientific psychological studies

on this that if you adopt kind of a a

sleepy posture it helps you to be sleepy

whereas if you uh adopt like an alert

posture it helps you to be alert so if you can sit in the full Lotus that's best but even if you can't sit in the full Lotus get as close to the full Lotus as you can and just straight up and down keep your back straight and that will help very much in not being in a dull sleepy State also I mean if you are really in a dull sleepy State you should alternate with walking meditation sitting meditation walking meditation like like the mahasi method it just alternates one hour sitting one hour walking one hour sitting one hour walking although maybe an hour might be a little too long for the

walking but it does help to keep kind of
get the blood flowing and it's very hard
to fall asleep when you're walking
so that works

too um there are sutras on what to do
when you're experiencing Tiredness or sloth
and torpor more like more like laziness
and
sleepiness

um and includes like like visualizing
light and splashing water on your face
and pulling on your your ear earlobes
and kind of rubbing your arms and that
kind of thing to as little gimmicks to
help you wake up but I I guess the
two main pieces of advice that I would
give first of all remain in a very alert

posture back straight you know head head
held up in a straight position and also
if you really start getting sleepy do
walking

meditation so Robert second question how
do you join the Discord server well if
you look through the URL links that I
have below pretty much every video then
you you can search for my email address
amongst those links and you can send me
an email and introduce yourself kind of
tell me where you're at not necessarily
geographically but you know just like
you know why you want to join what you
expect that sort of thing and uh chances
are I'll uh send you an invite link or

if you know someone who's already on the server and there's let's see maybe I don't know maybe 50 people 40 at least so that's less than one per country on average on this Earth but if you know that one person that's in your country that's on the on the server then you can uh help them to be your intermediary so

anyways I'm just going to move on to Robert's third question which is as an Africans speaker living in South Africa I wanted to know if you are familiar with the language and if you have ever visited South

Africa um the only thing I know about Africans other than it's spoken in South

Africa is it's it's like a dialect of
Dutch I think it's most closely related
to the Dutch language because South
Africa was colonized by Dutch settlers I
guess um I've never visited South Africa
although I I know a few people who who
were monks in South South Africa there's
a A mahasi or a

chanate uh Branch Monastery in Peter
merb and I had a friend an Australian
friend uh venerable dhama rakita who is
now disrobed and also um a friend
uh oh gosh what's his name

UK

ukim KRA with Burmese pronunciation who
actually disrobed in South Africa

married a South African woman I think
and then they got divorced and then he
reordain and and he went back to Burma
and reordain as a
monk but uh yeah there is a a Cham yaka
Branch Monastery if it's still going in
Peter Meritt in South Africa but uh I've
never been anywhere on the African
continent I've never been anywhere in
Europe either the closest I ever came to
Europe was I worked on a Polish fishing
boat or a ship a factory troller
um off the coast of Washington and
Oregon in the pa Pacific Northwest of
America but it was considered to be
polish soil because I had to go through
customs after I got off the ship so

technically I was on polish soil even though there was no real soil because it was a ship I mean it was kind of a dirty ship so maybe that's why if it was a clean ship maybe I wouldn't have had to go through

customs a lot of cockroaches on that ship I got got to

admit so anyways that's it my golly this turned into a kind of a short one I think is partly not so much that there were very few questions it's just that I was kind

of uh more concise I guess in answering the questions and it would be even shorter if I haven't started off with

that self-indulgent introduction that many of you probably wish you had never heard so if you have any questions that you think I can answer answer about early Buddhism Terra Buddhism meditation Buddhism in general the like the history and evolution of Buddhism Eastern philosophy in general in Ancient India that kind of stuff me personally monasticism Burma any kind of questions like that do you think I can answer then go ahead and answer and please no more than three questions per episode and uh be sure to like And subscribe if you haven't already and uh check out the URL links below the videos and be happy

okay

then hello and welcome to episode

129 of question and answer I am your

host poo basa and I sit before you

unwashed and

unkempt on a comfortable weekend and I'm

not even wearing real clothes today and

I got the uh mandatory beverage

and because there are so many questions

this time I've got two emergency backup

beverages just in case and I think I'm

going to be cracking into at least one

of them because we've got about 50

questions and this could run three hours

and so I might as well just Dive Right

into this and the first question is from

Gnostic rocker and Gnostic rocker or
Gnostic rocker says you mentioned that
at very in times in your life you'd been
skeptical about the goodness of humanity
and chosen to shun the crowds preferring
the company of being alone with nature
and animals to being with people I feel
the same but I wonder what was your
journey to that realization and was it a
difficult process to accept that you
felt that way in my case it was
difficult because I wrestled with why I
felt that way was it because I felt
Superior to other people which I don't
or was it from some some kind of Nichi
and resent
rantal almost said it like it was an

English word or something or perhaps
projection of my own Shadow Self onto
others now after years of contemplation
I'm fully at ease with not really
wanting to be with the crowds I've
worked out why I feel that way I'm okay
with it I'm curious about your journey
to such a such a state of mind and I
really didn't have a journey because I
was born that way I think it was uh
Henry David Thoreau said that it seems
to be a law that a person cannot be he
cannot have a deep what's the

[Music]

word he cannot be a people he has to be
that essentially what Theo said is you

have to be either a people person or a nature person you cannot have a deep regard for both man and nature and I'm just a nature person ever since I was a kid I've kind of disliked the human race like when I was a kid my two favorite movies I was just telling my sweetheart that this today my two favorite movies when I was a kid were Planet of the Apes and the Omega Man both of them about the collapse of civilization you know the collapse of the human race in one case into essentially mute animals and then the other into like strange zombie type creatures so I mean I just born that way I just prefer the the the company of

animals or trees with with some
exceptions there are some animals I
don't like probably even a few trees I
don't

like and I've I tried to understand it I
think to some degree it's like the
closer a being is to me the more
critical I am of it you know it's like
I'm kind of critical of myself self it's
like why did I do that why didn't I do
it this other way or or you know this
kind of thoughts can arise and the more
closely some some being resembles me the
more critical I am of that being in this
the more I'm am likely to disapprove of
it like a dumb animal they're dumb they

got excuses or a person that's
like less similar to me than other
people I can I'm much more likely to
have Christian charity towards that
person it's just the closer you get to
to being me the more I am likely to have
like a critical attitude because you
know it's like I have a conscience with
regard to myself I've got like
principles and standards and so forth
and the closer someone is to me the more
I apply those standards onto that other
person and then they're more likely to
violate those standards and I mean
that's not the whole story but that is
one aspect of why I tend to prefer the
company of lizards to the company of

humans although in my old age I am becoming more tolerant of my fellow man and my father was the same way it was like he wrote poetry sometimes my father did and one one excerpt from his poems is I've lashed out with hard and calloused hands at the imperfections of my fellow man

and my hands are on as callous as his probably but it's a similar thing so anyways I'm just going to move on to Gnostic rocker's second question which is Buddhism seems to be in accord with apophatic theology what's your perspective on that and then kind of as a little commentary he's got 17th

century Mystic angelous celesia seems so
close to dhama Insight too as his
Persian Islam lamic Mystic Mahmud
shabistari in his 14th century writings
and then he includes some uh some quotes
from them which I won't necessarily read
here and uh some links and so forth and
he says uh these remind me of the
essence of su udana Ida
dap so I guess the main question here is
uh what's my perspective on Buddhism
seeming to be in accord with apophatic
the theology well I mean setting aside
the whole theology part because Buddhism
isn't referring to a capital G God other
than as a kind of delusional wrong
view but Buddhism is apophatic with

regard to the ultimate with regard to
the absolute and a lot of very
intelligent Buddhists just absolutely
cannot get this that even with regard to
no self that Buddhism has an apophatic
like attitude towards reality that
reality cannot be expressed in symbols
it cannot be said in words like the name
that can be named is not the Eternal
name it's that's that that is just basic
to early Buddhism and even a lot of just
intelligent
monks just cannot get it and there's
going to be one of these monks
apparently that's going to be mentioned
in one of the questions

below but my main introduction to
apophatic theology was the mystical
Theology of the pseudo dionysius which you
can download for free off the internet
and it takes just a few minutes to read
it's not very

long and yeah this wise people sages
around the world can come to the same
conclusion which is you cannot express
the highest truth in words the name that
can be named is not the Eternal name as
the very first verse of the the the D
Jing
says

so yeah I mean it makes perfect sense to
me that I mean Buddhism does not have a
monopoly on wisdom there's going to be

wise people all over the world some people will be wise even in spite of their culture like to some degree Jesus of Nazareth was like this he was so far beyond his culture that even his own disciples didn't really understand him apparently so see what's the question though my perspective on Buddhism being in accord with apophatic theology yeah it's in accord with apophatic anyway the theology part really doesn't apply to Buddhism but unless you want to just use theology as you know like the philosophy of the ultimate something like that the absolute so yeah that's I got no problem with that and then um so the Buddha was

kind of an apophatic philosopher like
one of the the main apophatic
philosophers of ancient India I mean in
a way he was like the first really
bigname apophatic philosopher in India
and the Hindus still they have to have
everything nailed down in words for the
most part you know they'll have this
elaborate Philosophy for trying to
describe the Indescribable Buddhism went
the same route with Abid dama the
commentarial tradition just established
orthodoxies of the various schools you
know they try to explain everything
they're just locked in their
head philosophers tend to be
intellectual to the point of just being

addicted to their own

intellect

so I guess nagar kind of moved back

towards apophaticism um but he did it in

a very intellectual way like Anyone who

reads the mul jamaka karaka it's very

complicated intellectual arguments the

whole purpose of which is to just

destroy philosophy leaving just this

desolate Wasteland of Silence behind

through which reality can

shine

so I guess I answer that question and as

I say I got lots of questions I

shouldn't really be taking a lot of time

answering a single question unless I

just happen to feel like it so Gnostic
rocker's third
question as I scroll down here a little
bit is as follows I wonder what you make
of the research work of mford Spiro
writing on burmes religious motivation
from an anthropological Freudian point
of view in the early 90s I studied in a
Burmese Forest Hermitage in Japan with
an ex Zen monk who had converted to
terraa I told him I was considering a
life in the robes he insisted I read
Spiro's book cover to cover before I
make any such decisions that book
Buddhism and Society a great tradition
and its burmes vicissitudes had a
profound influence on the way I

understood the psychological
underpinnings of the monastic life since
you know the ordained life so well from
the inside and outside I'm curious to
hear your view well the only book I've
read by Melvyn Spiro was Burmese
supernaturalism
and I never read this other one the
Buddhism in society a great tradition is
Burmese vicissitudes but um I assume it
would be more or less in the same vein
with the same general attitude since
it's the same general person who's
writing both books and Melvyn Spiro was
trying to describe Burmese
supernaturalism like their belief in

Witchcraft and ghosts and other
Supernatural entities and demonic
possession and and Wizardry and all this
kind of stuff and he obviously didn't
believe any of it that he was like a
western 20th century secular humanist
who probably didn't believe in any kind
of religion other than like scientism
mainly maybe or who knows maybe he was
like some sort of secular Christian I
don't know but he obviously didn't
believe that you know the stuff that he
was writing about he was he was doing it
as an anthropologist which supposedly
would imply that he would have an
unbiased objective approach but really
it doesn't work that way that everyone

is biased and he was simply biased in favor of 20th century secular humanism whatever Trends were going on in cultural anthropology at the time and it was pretty obvious that it was sort of a condescending attitude towards burmu supernaturalism and with regard to Buddhism it may be that he'd be a little more respectful maybe a little less obvious in his disbelief well not just overtly saying I don't believe this [_] but still you know he's coming up with alternate theories you know like hysteria and and this kind of thing just cultural conditioning as ways of describing these allegedly Supernatural

events and to some degree I can relate like the phenomenon of the nadoo in Burma nadoo literally means a small G God's wife and when melfred Spiro wrote his book most nados were either like teenage girls or women around the age of menopause and of course he describes this well I I suppose I should describe naad a little better that a naido is a woman who is possessed by a spirit and at certain festivals they'll dance orgastic just just like they're possessed you know they'll just just dance like crazy and sometimes they will prophesy sometimes just emitting gibberish like someone speaking in Tong in tongues at like a

Christian Revival meeting and mford
Spiro just had this idea that it was a
kind of Hysteria that they're working
off repressions like the teenage girl
because she's still kind of unwillingly
a virgin because she's not married yet
and then Village Burma you don't have
sex until you're married or engaged at
the very least and the the menopausal
women you know they're just sort of
asserting their femininity and putting
it out there you know they're waning
sexuality or their waning sexual
attractiveness and so forth nowadays
nados apparently seem to be mostly
latent homosexual men in

Burma so I mean it's it's a like an
opportunity to just flaunt oneself to
just let it all
out but he he took this approach to just
about every aspect of burm super
naturalism just coming up with some
psychological alternative explanation to
you know taking the Paranormal at face
value and whether he does that with
Buddhism or not I don't know but I would
say that if you want to understand
Buddhism or Burmese Buddhism melord
Spiro will give you a certain angle on
it it'll give you a certain perspective
from a kind of
skeptical not even really skeptical but
just kind of a materialist Western point

of view

you so let's see what's the question

though what do I make of the research

work of Melvyn Spiro writing on

religious Burmes religious motivation

yeah well I never read his book on

Burmes religious motivation I only read

his book on

supernaturalism and I might be uh going

through three beverages this evening cuz

I work I work nights now and so I wake

up around noon

usually and so the the the usual

schedule when it's still daytime outside

when I'm doing q&as it it it doesn't

work that way anymore I'm usually doing

them at night now and and it's nighttime
where I am right
now and the even the fish tank it's got
like it's in Moonlight mode
already so let's see here I guess I
answered that one so I'm just going to
move on next question this is from Lord
and Lord says I've been practicing for
about a year and a half now and most
times I can dissolve my sense of self
and experience Rapture is that a normal
thing you would say for a Layman like
myself and have you experienced Earth
shattering Bliss and contentment before
so that's kind of two questions isn't
it yeah okay let's
see guess I'll separate it but this is

Lord is already transgressive with regard to the number of questions asked so maybe I shouldn't be multiplying the number of questions he has asked so with regard to um Lord he's been meditating for about a year and a half apparently and he says he can dissolve his sense of self and experience Rapture and then is that a normal thing you would say for a Layman like myself well I mean it's not mainstream it's not that normal but it's certainly not any thing completely you know off the bell-shaped curve I mean there's I've met lots of people who are just good at meditating you know even

like they can be a relative beginner and
they'll sit down and just go into some
fairly good suat and you know I I knew
this one this one

Layman he he eventually became a monk
but he didn't last very long where he
would just get drunk on py when he would
when he'd be doing like intensive
meditation

he would just it was like he was just
getting drunk he was so happy just
experiencing this Bliss that I mean
eventually he he sold his business he he
got rid of all of his stuff he went to
Burma was ordained
pandama and he was just getting so
intoxicated on PT or Rapture that I mean

he's just like just bursting out in
galling laughter for no apparent reason
and just kind of dancing around jumping
on his bed just kind of trying to work
off all this energy and eventually he
just he just was told he's going to have
to leave he's to go back home again and
I never heard from him since he was a
really good guy I hope everything worked
out well for him in the long run but
yeah there are some people who like
burmes villagers especially you know
they can go to a beginning Meditation
Retreat and just go into these states of
bliss you know it's just it's like deep
meditation or deep Sade relatively deep

anyway and you know they just don't think as much as the average person or they can just dissociate because a lot of this really deep meditation for a lot of people is a kind of dissociation where your entire mind isn't pacified it's just you're kind of in this one compartment of your mind that is pacified and blissed out but still it doesn't make much of an effect on your overall personality when you're not meditating because it's just sort of a sealed off compartment so with people like that and I don't know what kind of person Lord is really but with people like that

it's how do I explain it I mean I've talked about this before that it just meditating just makes you a better meditator it doesn't necessarily have a whole lot of influence on what's going on in your everyday life if you're if you're that kind of person but then some people they're just good meditators there's it just works that way and it's probably more common outside of Western Civilization where people are just compulsive thinkers you know sort of like conditioned into the cult of objectivity and just like analyzing everything all the time um the average like burmes is

villager they just don't seem to think
very much so they can sit down and go
into deep meditation relatively easily
although in many cases they're so
dogmatic in their approach to Buddhism
that they don't really know what to do
with these deep States and even the
monks who's just usually like some
Village seato who himself I mean he
doesn't have very deep experience of
meditation you know he can't really
guide

them so

let's see what is the question oh what
would

I see is that a normal

thing you would say for a Layman like

himself um you know it's not it's not
wildly unusual it's certainly kind of an
outlier you know it'd be less than 2% of
the population probably but or maybe you
know in outside of Western Civilization
it might be

5% but still you know it's it's unusual
kind of but it's not like extremely
rare so I'm just going to move on to
Lord's second question which is the
second half of the first question and
have you experienced Earth shattering
Bliss and contentment before well I
don't know how you would Define earth
shattering I never really shattered the
earth I mean I experienced Bliss in

meditation like like deep states of
meditation where I had no doubt
whatsoever this is closer to reality
than anything I've experienced before
and five minutes of this is well worth
20 years of struggling and floundering
in a fourth world country just working
towards
this
so whether it's it could compare with
what Lord
experienced I don't know it might be a
whole different kind of
thing so anyways I'm just going to move
on to Lord's second or third question
here what are your thoughts on people
like AES Shanti Muji Papi and the like

people who teach Neo

ADV well I had a friend who was into AES

Shanti back around 200 11 or

12 and so I watched one or two of his

videos out of curiosity and I mean he's

kind of like eart

TOA he uh he seemed nervous at the

beginning of the speech which kind kind

of struck me as something that an

enlightened being might not be also he

had certain mannerisms in his speech

like saying like kind of a lot it might

be like two or three kindas in one

sentence I'm not sure if it was kind of

but it was one of those kind of words

that are just used as filler they don't

really mean

anything so my Muji I have known nothing
about Muji pop G I don't know even know
who pop G is I mean people like eart TOA
I know who that that is but uh I don't
know if he would be a technically a
teacher of Neo

ad but people who teach Neo

ADV um in a way

it's it's just sort of like not having a
structure to what you're experiencing
it's like they didn't get enlightened
necessarily through some rigid religious
or spiritual structure and so when
they're teaching what they experience is
like it's just sort of
amorphous but uh I really can't my

thoughts on people like aash Shanti Muji
PBG and the like I really don't have
many thoughts on these people there's I
mean different there's different ways of
climbing the same mountain and you can
get to the top of the mountain from
different angles and there's different
ways of

explaining like relatively Advanced
spiritual States and how to get there
although the practices seem to be
relatively uniform it's like the higher
up you get the closer you get you might
be climbing the the same Mountain from
two different sides and so you might be
very different down towards the bottom

but the higher up you get the more the
more it comes
together and that's the way spirituality
is that like a Christian and a Buddhist
might be very different in their like
base dogmas you know down towards the
bottom but as they get higher and higher
and higher so a lot of the Christians
and probably and a lot of the Buddhists
too will never get anywhere near the top
that even the system might not even
allow for that but the closer to the top
they get the more they just converge
until they they're in agreement when
they get to the top so long as they're
not insisting upon any of the like the
beginner level

dogmas so Neo

advas is just sort of a

more well be more modern obviously

because it's Neo but it would be you

know like a

less classical version of advant which

is is based on the the upanishadic

literature of ancient

India so I'm not sure how well I answer

that one but I'm going to move on

to Lord's third or possibly even fourth

question and he asks a a fifth question

or a fourth question and since the limit

really is three and we're arguably like

plausibly up to four already I'm just

going to he can ask the the next

question for the for a different Q&A I
guess so the his last question here that
I'm going to answer is have you met any
black monks before from the West who
were ordained

and I think I've met one black monk
before possibly two but for sure I
remember one he was at Cham in rangon
and he was a temporary

Monk and he had
learned the

uh what method was it it wasn't the
mahasi method he was at Chan me which is
in the mahasi tradition the sunlun
method I think it was which um includes
a lot of heavy breathing especially
towards the beginning and he was all

hyped up about becoming a teacher of the
sunin method in in the west he came from
California and uh he didn't last very
long is a monk and he's the only black
monk that I think I've ever met that I
can think of other than some very dark
skinned Sri Lankan monks but there are a
few monasteries in Africa there's a
famous one I think it's what is it
Uganda or Rwanda something like that
that there actually is a monastery I
have seen like videos of black monks in
Africa going for alms round and and
villagers putting food in their bowl
that kind of thing so they do exist
although I've only met one personally

and he was just a temporary monk he
didn't he lasted just few weeks or
months before dropping back out again
which was his plan from the
beginning so I'm just going to move on
to

quor and let's see I think quator has
four questions too we get people are
getting transgressive

here yeah

okay so I'm not sure which if I mean I
shouldn't read all three of

them he's got one follow-up question
which I guess I should read because
that's his first

question and then he's got another
follow-up question at the end which wait

a

minute let's

see I don't know so anyways I'm just gonna answer the first three just in chronological order I guess so quor asks a follow-up question to a question he asked in the previous Q&A that I answered apparently not in a fully satisfactory Manner and I'm making sure that the computer is charging and it is so he says I find it strange that Buddha would have thought the formless janas were not the way then he meditates in fourth Janna which are the formless janas and finds the necessary Insight

within that to gain Enlightenment also he probably would not have had a realization that the first jna is the way if he had rejected the formless Jna which is why I'm thinking it has to do with the difference between absorption and full awareness janas since there is a difference between experiencing Janna through deep concentration versus experiencing it because there aren't enough hindrances left to stop the Janna from arising thoughts please if there's more to add well again he's this is essentially the same question as he asked in the previous Q&A about this weird Legend where the Buddha has two meditation instructors before he becomes

the Buddha before he becomes
enlightened and they teach him the
highest possible JRE is the the his
first teacher taught him up to the I
mean he mastered the the first four
standard Jas plus the first three
formless Jas and then his next teacher
taught him all the formless Jas too
and then he realized this isn't the way
to become enlightened and then at a
later time he realized you this is all
right first he he goes to the in the
meditation instructors Masters all the
janas that you can possibly Master
realizes that's not good enough then he
goes off into the forest and starts

torturing himself doing severe austerity
for six years realizes that isn't good
and then he recalls when he was a kid
and his father was plowing a field and
he was sitting under a tree watching his
father plow a field that he
spontaneously went into first jna and
then he thinks that's it that's how I
became aligned so it's it's a me it's
it's a mixed up Legend apparently it's
like two different legends that were
cobbled together that quor is
obstinately like
assuming that this is like some kind of
historical
objective fact that that's the way it
happened and I just don't think

so so it's just a confused Legend in my
opinion but his way
see let's just read over this a little
better here I find it strange that
Buddha would have thought the formless
janas were not the way then he meditates
in fourth Janna which are the formless
Jas not necessarily the four formless
Jas because in my opinion they're
somewhat anachronistic taken are just
tacked on to the standard four Jas they
were added as a kind of annex to Fourth
J so originally fourth genre was not a
formless JRE unless I mean in a way it
is but according to Orthodox tradition
standard fourth jna still has a

meditation object and so it isn't really formless and so then they take the four formless janas which I consider to be added on later then and they just kind of include them as like subgroups or like subdivisions of fourth jana so let's see here he meditates in fourth Janna which are the formless janas he says but not necessarily finds the necessary Insight within that to gain Enlightenment but no it like first jna that he realized that first jna which might just mean jna in general which completely disregards the legend that he had already mastered all the Jnas before he took up the six years of severe austerity and rejected it as

not the

path so trying to make sense of this I mean you want you can just do as many mental gymnastics as you can to try and rationalize this starting with the assumption that it's objective history which in my opinion it is not so I mean you can just stretch and twist and just bust your brain trying to work out some way for this to make sense and I think it's just wasted

effort but towards the end he's saying let's see here I'm thinking it has to do with the difference between absorption and full awareness janas since there is a difference between experiencing jna

through deep concentration versus
experiencing it because there aren't
enough hindrances left to stop the jna
from Rising well I mean just I mean I've
covered this recently also I don't know
if quor asked the question but just
because you don't have the hindrances
it's not like the hindrances are like
some Dyke or damn holding back
J that like suppressing the hindrances
are a necessary like
they're what what's the word getting
lost with words they're like
prerequisites
but I mean just because you get rid of
the hindrances temporarily doesn't mean
you just that's what causes Jonna that's

just a prerequisite before you can
attain Jōna but just because you've
done that doesn't mean it just that the
hindrances are like some kind of damn
holding back

jōna it really doesn't work that
way

so um so quora is assuming that
there's two different kind of J there is
the jōna when you're sitting motionless
with your eyes closed which according to
the legend the Buddha as a kid that's
what he was doing sitting motionless
under a tree in meditation when he
experienced first jōna and said that's it
that's how to become

enlightened and it's just a confused
Legend there may be some way of
rationalizing it that will be
emotionally satisfying to some people
who want to believe that this Legend is
some kind of objective factual
history but I'm I'm skeptical of
that so I'm just going to move on next
question this is quor second question
now and I will mention though quator
seems to imply that there is a kind of
Janna that is there when you're just
like an enlightened being who's walking
around is just always in Janna but I
mean that is not Orthodox Terra you can
come up with your own theories on Jan
that you know will

be like in defiance of Orthodox terab
like for example the Buddha when he died
as he was dying he was in such severe
pain he went into Jonna first he went
into first Jonna then second then fourth
third then fourth then the formless Jon
is in order and then goes back down to
first and then goes up to Fourth again
and then he passes away while he's in
like ordinary for the J which is an
another little hint that the formless
Realms weren't part of the Janis scheme
at the beginning so they had to like
tack those on but then they had to like
have him come back down out of that all
the way back to first and then up to

regular fourth again in order to to go
pass into

Parana so I mean really if you start off
with dogmatism just starting off with
the assumption that Legends and entire
sutras and so forth are just 100%
accurate and factual and reliable then
you're just going to lock yourself into
this dogmatic system that is going to
have a lot of Deadwood at
best some of it's worse than Deadwood
some of it's actually detrimental to
believe this

stuff so you have to be careful and you
should be skeptical in the classical
sense of suspending judgment you know
when you read something in a text it's

not a matter of I believe this or this
is [__] there's also like the
alternative of just accepting it as a
hypothesis you're not insisting it's
true you're not insisting it's false
you're just considering it maybe working
with it a little maybe accepting it
provisionally to see how things work out
from that and with regard to some of
these old Legends I mean they're just
irrelevant

stuff like biological or biographical
stuff about the Buddha's life a lot of
that I mean it really has nothing to do
with dhama practice like whether Jesus's
mother was a virgin or not should be

just utterly

irrelevant you know it's like what did

the man have to say that's what's

important

so for the second time I think I'll

leave this question

and I'll move on to quora's second

question which is is it possible to feel

depressed in a Heavenly realm form or

formless um I think it's possible but it

would be much more subtle than in the

human realm that no no matter where you

go there's going to be like happiness

and unhappiness even in the heaven

Realms there's going to be happiness and

unhappiness because the first Noble

Truth you know everything is Dua you

know the first truth is everybody
suffers you know it's like existence has
suffering built into it individual
existence has suffering built right into
it there's no Escape so long as you are
existing as some kind of
being so even up in the higher Heaven
Realms there's going to be a certain
amount of maybe mild boredom mild
restlessness maybe a little mild
depression in in the sense of just sort
of your depression for me is often
experienced as just like a contraction
of spirit then you get more manic it's
more expansive you know expansion and
contraction so I don't see why a higher

being a superhuman being could have some contraction of spirit relatively speaking it would be much more subtle than we are experiencing just like you know a the depression of the average human would be much more subtle than the depression of someone who is like some low ranking ghost or like denisen of a hell realm or something so yeah it is possible in my opinion

so I'll move on to quor third question which is is it possible to leave that realm or are you stuck there for a predetermined amount of time if you're constantly forming attachment to subtle sensation happy I'd hate to think

of the negative comma you'd be
accumulating and would have to pay back
so I'm don't fully understand this part
so I mean the main question is is it
possible to leave a heaven realm or are
you stuck there for a predetermined
amount of time well it seems like humans
can commit well I shouldn't say the word
humans can Auto
terminate um they can choose to do that
I assumed like superhuman beings might
choose to do that for whatever
reason but I'm I'm No Authority on these
Realms because I cannot recall having
been
there so let's

see yeah I think that if some Dava
really wanted to leave a Dava realm and
just be
reborn I mean why would they want to be
reborn somewhere else I mean want to go
back to being a human that's sort of
like a human wanting to go back to being
an animal or something um maybe I I
wouldn't say that it's absolutely
impossible in fact uh I'd be hesitant to
say that anything is absolutely
impossible but uh how common it is I
have no idea of saying and I don't know
if the Buddhist texts at least the
polyas I don't know if they really
address this
issue so his his commentary will follow

up here is if you're constantly forming attachment to subtle sensation I'd hate to think of the negative comma you'd be accumulating and would have to pay back well I mean it would be a very subtle attachment and it would be much more subtle than the attachment you're getting as a human to listening to good music or having good sex or eating good chocolate or or whatever so I mean the mental states are more subtle the higher up you go so there's still going to be attachments and so forth um and I mean if you're having happiness and you're got this subtle

attachment to the happiness and the
happiness itself is meritorious it's
good karma to be happy it's bad karma I
mean it's all going to balance out
positive and
negative but I mean when you're unhappy
that is essentially immoral by Buddhist
ethical standards it's Buddhist ethics
are alien to the Western morality
which is either based on monotheism or
it's based on
like like 19th century British to um I
almost said totalitarianism
utilitarianism like Jeremy
Bentham somebody like that those are
like the two main kinds of Ethics that
we have in the west and Buddhism is

just light years away in some in some
respects that it's based on psychology
not upon the will of God and not upon
the effects of your actions on the
masses around

you

so you can't have subtle I mean you can
have subtle attachment to good
meditation too but that doesn't mean
that you you're making a lot of Bad
Karma um and not making good karma
that's going to compensate for that or
even more than compensate for it for
example if you're abiding in meditative
Bliss you're going to be making some
strong good karma for that and you might

also be making some subtle Bad Karma
through your attachment to it or just
feelings of superiority or whatever that
you get because of this but still uh
you're better off um in a heaven realm
than not in a heaven realm or you're
better off having good meditation that
you have some some mild subtle clinging
to rather than just not having good
meditation at
all

so let's see here I mean I'm tempted to
answer quor fourth question just
because again he's he's talking about
soda
paas maybe I don't

know yeah I mean again I mean he's

discussing my skepticism of well what
the [_] this is going to be a long one
anyway but really try to keep questions
down to no more than three per episode
don't just obstinately throw in a fourth
one hoping that I will indulge you in
your

transgression so can you please
elaborate on which sutas commentaries
and perhaps discrepancies or other
factors led you or Lead You to believe
that a sodana has not necessarily
witnessed nibana or that nibana is never
experienced well that's in way this is
like two questions first of all I mean
the whole four stages of sainthood you

can read it in GC Pond's book his reasons for why he thinks the four stages of ARA hood are an anachronism for example the the oldest texts seem to like conflate an an Arun was an anagami a non returner you would think would be enlightened and sakagami aren't mentioned at all soapas in the early texts are generally I mean just from the context it would appear that a soap originally was like a new convert to Buddhism usually a lay person who monks were supposed to go easy on them not ask for too much from them for example because that might cause their faith their Newfound Faith to falter and then later on according to my theory

the the four stages of ARA Hood were
devised

and then it's like every time you become
on one of these

stages one every time you reach one of

these these four stages you have this

flash of of n you have this glimpse of

Nirvana and I mean the glimpse of

Nirvana is acceptable to me but I think

s upon originally just meant a new

convert to

Buddhism like a born again Christian

kind

of so I'm it's a long question let's see

and also he's saying that you know what

caused me to think that nibana is not

experienced well from Orthodox terraa to
experience anything you have to perceive
it you cannot perceive nibana a
perception of nibana or Nirvana is
delusional because the perception is
infinitely different from what it is
trying to
represent and I mean I I don't want to
keep just just wallowing in this just
because it's already a transgressive
fourth question and also it's a a fifth
question because it's like asking two
different things in the fourth question
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from the Arya swasti
project and the ARA project says have
you ever heard or know of an instance or

condition where someone is asleep to themselves they seem to awaken and can see everything in the room and they cannot move people call it sleep paralysis however more often than not there is an entity of some sort close by this has happened to me many times and it is unnerving and it just happened a few minutes ago it is really difficult to Rouse oneself from one of these I should mention that this only occurs during the day do you have any explanation of what it is and am I seeing the room remember my eyes are closed or imagining it I guess that's three well I think probably the closest

I have had to this kind of sleep paralysis that he's describing is the notorious time that I was attacked by ogres when I was living at the andoya in southern Burma and I was hearing voices hearing loud sounds coming from down the valley and realized that I could not move at all

and um so that was the fact that I could not move my eyes were open but I I was like paralyzed that that would be a kind of sleep paralysis possibly one of the most famous cases of sleep paralysis is in dov's novel The Brothers karamazov where Ivan karamazov Ivan is having his his famous conversation with the devil and at the end he realizes he's like

he's paralyzed and he has to like jolt himself and then the devil disappears when he finally is able to move again so the whole thing is kind of a vision and it's it's built into human beings that when you're dreaming you are paralyzed because if the paralysis doesn't work you start acting out your dreams like sleepwalking sleepwalking is a kind of failure of sleep paralysis so you have to be paralyzed when you're dreaming just so that you won't like get up and start moving around or try to get up or you know that kind of thing so in a way it's kind of a glitch in this reflex or mechanism that we that

we have built into

us where you just can't move your

muscles in of your actual body when

you're

dreaming um why it would only happen

during the daytime or why an entity

would generally be perceived at the same

time like one of the most common kinds

of sleep paralysis experience is a kind

of nightmare situation where you're on

your back and there's there's like some

angry dark ghostlike entity pressing

down on your chest and you can't move my

father had this happened to him when he

was an old man I've never had one of

these before I've read about these kind

of cases before for and it's generally

considered to be a kind of nightmare

it's it's sort of like an archetype you

know it's common in the human race

although people that are more paranormal

in their thinking um you know they might

think that it's some sort of evil entity

or Poltergeist or something like that

but

um let's see what is the actual question

here let's see is it really ult to Rouse

no that's not a question do you have any

explanation of what it is well I mean

for starters there is just the standard

normal sleep paralysis that paralyzes us

when we're dreaming it can still sort of

get stuck so that you can actually wake

up and still be paralyzed I have had bad dreams where you know something bad is happening to me I'm trying to get away and I can't move at all until finally it's just through this supreme effort of will I just sort of like jerk myself with which actually jerks my body and then I wake

up maybe I shouldn't have said jerk myself there's some people with dirty minds that might misinterpret that but you know just like trying to just suddenly move just break myself free from this paralysis and usually that would end the dream but then I'm still dreaming and it's all within the context of the dream and it's not like I've I've

begun to wake up

really so

so so are you seeing the room or

imagining it well ultimately there is no

room I mean ultimately it's it's kind of

illusory

anyway but in my case when I was

supposedly attacked by ogres um I'm

fairly sure that my eyes were open like

I was propped up like this I was lying

on my side propping up my head to look

down the valley to see if the sun was

coming up because I didn't have a clock

or a watch or anything and I just went

for Ms round at dawn so I was checking

to see if it was Dawn and then that's

when I started hearing the weird noises
and so forth and then I realized that I
couldn't move I was just stuck like my
head propped up like this kind of
looking towards the
horizon

so um if your eyes are closed and you
think you're seeing the room probably
you're not it's probably you're dreaming
you're seeing the room um I mean there's
a lot of weird experiences I've talked
to a meditator at PA doya who was
working on like visualizing the internal
organs of the person sitting in front of
him and he's sitting there and he's
visualizing the the skeletal structure
and everything and then he opens his

eyes when he's done he realized the person got up and laugh long before he was finished and he told his teacher the teacher says Ah it's not important but still he thinks he's using the samati eye to look into the body of the person in front of him and seeing the skeletal structure

and then he opens his eyes and there's nobody there he thinks there's somebody there that he's looking at their bones but the person wasn't even sitting there anymore so it's just vivid imagination in that case and when you're dreaming as a general rule you can't tell the difference between reality so-called

reality waking reality and and the
dream so yeah I think it can go either
way in that case I mean the paralysis
part and the dreaming can continue even
after Eyes Are Open so it may be it can
happen with eyes open or closed in which
case if your eyes are closed you're
dreaming that you're seeing it and if
your eyes are open it's just a higher
level of dream because we're in a state
of consensus trance right now
anyway so I guess I'm just going to move
on next question this is from
Jeffrey and Jeffrey says hey Santa Claus
Buddha could I get a beautiful wife that
isn't crazy and doesn't trust the
government medic medical system or try

to get me to go to church or therapy

it's okay if she thinks we're on a

spinning ball zooming

666,000 mil hour around the Sun and that

someone drove a dune buggy on the moon

even if she votes I would like her to

enjoy cooking and cleaning never gets

tired of loving me have a lovely voice

no physical ILS or weird characteristics

always laughs at my jokes doesn't talk

too much does what I tell her to and

never speak ill of me well yeah if you

find her she's probably going to be

riding a

unicorn but it is possible and if you've

got the karma to to come meet such a

woman and actually attract such a woman
because if a women like this are hard to
come by you know there's everybody's
going to have some kind of you know
something like here's like always laughs
at your jokes well you know no phys
physical ailments or weird
characteristics I mean that's just
unrealistic I mean if you want to
understand women the best thing you
could possibly watch on YouTube for
understanding women is just look up hot
crazy Matrix on YouTube hot crazy Matrix
three words you'll find the video and it
points out that on a scale of 1 to 10
all women are at least a four
crazy that's important to bear in mind

it's it's it's helped me a lot in life
just realize I mean you're not going to
find a woman who's below a four with
regard to General

Insanity

so yeah I mean you're going to have to
make some compromises especially if you
yourself are not the perfect man so for
for like the average guy or Jeffrey here
probably isn't average but still you
know for like a guy to be like insisting
on the perfect woman

whereas the perfect woman I mean she can
choose any guy there is out there you
know cuz she's one of the extremely few
perfect women maybe the only one so if

the only perfect woman on earth why
would she pick Jeffrey see that's that's
the thing it's like you gotta you got to
have some realism and also bear in mind
that uh if you aren't perfect you
shouldn't be insisting on the Perfect
Mate other than perfectly suited to you
which even then could be a fair amount
of dysfunction like some people I was
talking I was talking to my my
sweetheart recently about this some
people they're in a relationship and
they're fighting all the time but I mean
the fight is coming from inside them
it's like it may be the perfect mate for
them is someone they're going to be
fighting with because they got all this

fight that's got to come out they gotta
fight with someone might as well be
someone who likes fighting back with
them

so I mean when we're living in an
imperfect world you got to deal with all
these weird like quirks and
Imperfections and so forth that are just
part of the the practice really it's
it's like accepting another person's
imperfections or even better than yet I
mean imperfections are are like
mindmade so like if you love somebody
perfectly the the your love for that
person makes them perfect if you love
somebody perfectly they're perfect

because imperfections are like perceived
flaws you don't perceive any
flaws then they're perfect and it's it's
not even like you're blinding yourself
like let's say you know she's you know
she has some weird habit she licks well
no people don't lick stamps anymore she
just has this she bites her toenails
let's say and no my woman doesn't bite
her toenails but you know she's got this
Quirk and I mean if you just don't see
that as a fault she's got a speech
impediment you if you don't see that as
a fault it's not a fault you know she's
got sagging breasts if you don't see
that as a fault they sag
perfectly so it's just a matter of

attitude and whether you can accept a person as they are or not is largely a reflection on your own capacity for life love I mean if you're you're really fussy about who you're willing to accept chances are it's not going to work out very

well and that's that's kind of like the way love works in like Hollywood you know you got all these beautiful plastic people they're beautiful on the outside anyway and you know it's all superficial and then they've got like these actual personality traits just [_] things up because you know they're they're so superficial they can't really deal with

anything deeper and they just wind up getting a divorced 6 months after they got married because they just can't accept the way the other person does whatever it is they're doing but it is possible anything is possible but I wouldn't really be too insistent on getting Aphrodite goddess of beauty to fall in love with you and be completely faithful to you and so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from Master Poe and this is kind of an easy one it's actually a double question some people they'll ask two questions in in one and then it's they're they're actually asking two questions I noticed these

things so Master Po says did you happen
to catch Tom Campbell on Rogan now I
didn't I don't even know who Tom
Campbell is so that was an easy one I
can just move right on to Master Po
second

question and have you ever heard of
Arthur bless it a Christian who walked
all over the world carrying a huge cross
spreading the gospel I asked because
he's been to Burma too I wonder if
there's a tall tell about a man and his
cross I brought him up because he passed
on January 14th 1925 and then he's got
an 84 after that I don't what the 84
represents and then he says a modern day

St John of the Cross he's one of the few men that I've admired and I think I've heard of Arthur bless it but um I really that's that's pretty much pretty much all I know about Arthur bless it it was what Master Po just told me in the the followup commentary to his question and I never heard of any like weird Western Christians dragging or carrying crosses around Burma that the only legendary white person that I really heard much about in Burma was an Italian monk who lived in Burma like during the 1930s and 40s and he actually walked from Burma to Bod GAA and back again because it was all part of the British Empire back then and uh I think he was put into a

concentration camp by the British
because he was Italian during World War
II he was on the bad guy side and uh he
was he was he was a serious
Monk and he wouldn't stay at monasteries
because monastery
you know the monks don't follow rules
you break rules just by setting foot on
a monastery so he would just stay at
like public rest houses you know there's
these buildings called zat in Burma it's
just like a thatched roof sometimes a
metal corrugated metal roof just on
poles with like a raised platform people
can sit in the shade and so you can a
mon a monk can sleep there if he wants

to so that's what this um Italian monk
was doing I don't even remember what his
his name was but he was relative ly
famous and that's like the only famous
Wester that you really hear much about
in Burma at least um I mean I other than
just like famous people like Donald
Trump or

something that that just don't go to
Burma but of the people that were in
Burma famous

westerners yeah that that Italian monk
was probably the only one I really heard
much about at least the only one that I
can think of at present never heard of
Arthur besset carrying AC cross around
Burma I've never nobody ever told me

about that so I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from
thermal

squid and he says in respect to self
deltion what about wherein the monk who
struggles to maintain fourth Janna who
slits his own throat in frustration
that's that would be godika in the
godika suta of the sautin Kaya the text
say that the Buddha had said that he had
reached the unconditioned yeah and that
was sort of uh i' I've thought about
this because in other places the Buddha
says a monk should not Auto terminate
unless he has already attained what he
has to attain which means he's already

become enlightened he's already become
an Aran then it it doesn't matter so
much but you don't want to like
terminate yourself before you get to the
the to the final goal and then Goda in
the godika sua he becomes enlightened at
the moment of Auto
termination so that was sort of an an
exception to the rule I guess because it
went against what the Buddha himself
said pretty much although it turned out
that he wound up you know becoming
enlightened
anyway but um I think most people who do
auto terminate are not planning on
becoming enlightened at the moment of
death so still you're better off uh

becoming enlightened if you can for
doing such

thing so I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question which is from
seov action Cad zida and he says next
sua video when and that's kind of an
easy one because it's the the correct
answer is I don't know although I may be
doing uh a video fairly soon with my
friend Auto auto excelsor on
multi-dimensionality which may not
mention any sutas at all but at least
it'll be a video that isn't a Q&A
video so I'm just going to move on to se
of action CAD Zena's second
question thoughts on the parable of the

workers in the vineyard it obviously
does not seem to fit the Buddhist
worldview due to past lives and Karma
though but I'm still curious what you
think about it personally um I'm a
little rusty on my new testament but if
I remember correctly I would guess
The Parables of the workers in the
vineyard are is it's the parable where
um these workers in the vineyard are
being paid a certain rate you know
they're being paid one piece of silver
let's say I don't remember how much
they're getting paid and it wasn't
enough there wasn't enough workers so
halfway through the day they go out and
find some more workers to work in the

same Vineyard and they're getting the same pay as the earlier ones and finally get to the 11th Hour they're almost done but still they want more workers and so they're paying the full piece of silver to everybody including the people that are only going to work for like an hour and so some of the earlier people are getting pissed because they're working all day and they're getting paid the same as these people who just showed up and they're almost done so that that was like a parable for salvation where you know presumably mostly Jews were going to be saved and then you got the like these pagans who

are converting to Christianity like
right before the world ends which was
going to happen approximately 2,000
years ago you know this is the final
hour says St John the Evangelist in one
of his I assume it would be his first
epistle so is the Salvation I mean the
parable is the Salvation is the same I
mean you're if you're going to go to
heaven you're going to go to heaven
regardless of whether you've been God's
chosen people for thousands of years or
you're just some Greek Pagan who signs
up you know just a few years before the
world comes to an end which Christians
were expecting to happen any
time so I mean you could somewhat apply

this to Buddhism where it's like people who have been like striving spiritually lifetime after lifetime get the same Enlightenment as someone who just you know he almost gets poisoned while riding a bus in Thailand has a near-death experience and that just slams him into

Enlightenment you know it's the same Enlightenment maybe the person who was striving spiritually lifetime after lifetime after lifetime they probably have more sophisticated psychic powers and so forth but still one arant equals another arant they both both have zero delusion

illusion so I guess you could kind of
work that in to
Buddhism although I mean the main point
was that I mean Jesus was apparently
comparing the Jews who had been
worshiping the correct God for a long
time and comparing that to like some
Greek who just converts over to Judaism
because in Jesus's time what he was
teaching was essentially a kind of
Judaism and then he gets saved even
though you know he just he just joined
the
bandwagon so I mean I guess you could
you could do that with Buddhism too
unless I'm just confusing my Parables
and seov action CAD Zen I was referring

to a different

one and so soev action CAD Zena's next

question is please give us a tour of the

house and N I'm not going to do that

although I will say that our living room

has really high ceilings which is nice

I've always liked High ceilings this

house has the highest ceilings of any

house that I've ever really lived in

which is nice I mean I've stayed

temporarily in houses with like a

two-story house with the living room was

like two stories high I mean the the

ceiling was like way the hell up there

but I didn't you know I might have spent

a few nights there but this is the first

house I've really lived in like long term and it's it's got ceilings like probably at least 16 feet high in the living room which is nice also has a fire fireplace but it's a fake fireplace with fake fire from from like fake vogs with with like natural gas coming through the cracks and the logs so that's kind of lame I have to admit also we've got this tiny little postage stamp of a front yard and the backyard's hardly any bigger but at least it cuts back on the amount of yard work that has to be done but no you're not going to get a tour of the house that's not going to happen so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is from
xenoid and xenoid says how do we get
better at dealing with
loneliness and then he's got the
commentary here someday I want to be
able to live alone in a forest with no
friends family or romantic partner and
be completely happy on my own but being
alone is really hard for me I always
have the TV on or a YouTube video
playing to keep me company and the
desire to have a girlfriend is
constantly gnawing at me it feels like
my actions or time are made necessarily
less valuable if I'm not sharing them
with

others and gaining their approval or affection or companionship even though I don't logically believe this to be the case I recognize that these desires are not self-evident not necessary courses of suffering and ultimately delusional but it's still difficult to get around them and this is another kind of question that I really can't answer based upon my own experience because I've never really I've I've always been a loner my father says when I was a little kid like two years old just a little toddler I'd be like sitting on the steps of our house in the dark just sitting there Motionless in the dark just I don't know

why so yeah I mean I've always been kind of a loner I was pretty much of a Hermit before I became a monk I've I've had friends but never I mean not since College anyway have I had like really close friends where you know you're like going over to each other's houses all the time you know people you know they come to your house a lot you go to their house a lot and stuff like that I

mean my my woman and I we've invited very few people into our house since we've been together neither one of us is particularly social um being with being with a woman that

you love is I mean it can be pretty much the same as being alone you feel kind of similar to when you're alone it's just like they're so easily accepted that it's not like you've got anyone kind of impinging on your space or anything like that because you're sharing the same space essentially and some people are just they've just got it built into them they're just gregarious by instinct or something and like like in Burma it was like even a famous hermit would always have at least one attendant living with him and there'd be he'd be like accepting visitors every day that kind of thing and I remember I was staying at a big school

Monastery that the the one reain Retreat
I spent there it was like 1500 people
living there monks and
novices and I had a cabin all to myself
it was surrounded by other cabins but I
was the only person living in this cabin
and a lot of the Burmese people were
just amazed how can you live alone like
this when I'm just surrounded by
hundreds of other people it's just that
this one cabin which got which has got
other cabins just like 10 feet on either
side of
it and I mean it was it was a little too
too many people for my tastes but the
burmes were thinking it was just like

this

exceptional like Solitude that I was

living

in so

so yeah I can't really relate to like

always wanting to be like in a social

setting like being surrounded by other

people um but I

mean I mean you've got two options I

mean you can kind of make peace with

that and just live in a group setting

like a communal kind of situation which

there's nothing wrong with that or you

can just kind of go against your own

nature which is going to result in a

certain amount of frustration and

unhappiness but if you think it's worth

it if you think you really need to learn
how to be alone then you might just
might be best off just forcing yourself
like what I did before I became a monk I
moved to a town where I didn't know
anybody and just kind of kept to myself
I didn't have people like pestering me
all the time because nobody knew me so I
mean you could do something like that
and then you'll you'll be listening to
the radio or like having watching
YouTube videos or something but yeah
it's one thing you can do is just be
mindful just try to observe your
feelings of loneliness try to understand
that so you can understand it better and

understanding it better helps you to
transcend it to some
degree but really it does seem like your
two options are just make peace with
your need for human
companionship and just live in a
communal house or something with
roommates and all that or a
commune or just you're just going to
have to like go cold turkey I guess and
just force yourself to to learn to live
alone those would be like your two
options as I see it and I don't think
you're necessarily going wrong either
way although it may be that forcing
yourself to live alone when it goes
against your nature might result in a

lot of

unhappiness um but if you think the
unhappiness is worthwhile that is
something that you really need to learn
then then then that's that's what you're
going to

do but yeah I really it's something I
can't really relate to very well and
that's one reason why in the west it's
one reason why people say that lay
teachers are often more effective than
monk teachers because lay teachers can
relate to the problems of other lay
people whereas monks are like celibate
and just like uncompromising
uncompromisingly saintly in certain

respects and they just can't really
relate to the problems of the lay person
coming to them but even though I'm
technically a lay person now I still
can't really relate to a need for human
companionship since I have been a loner
since I was

little I'm just like like I was saying
earlier on I do prefer tree the company
of trees and animals as a general rule
for most of my life to the company of
humans although I am kind of softening
up towards humans in my later
years but I mean you're kind of stuck
being who you are TR struggling against
who you are is is a rough one and
Krishna murty would warn against that

that's that was like one of his main teachings don't struggle against who and what you are because I mean chances are you're going to lose you're going to lose the struggle because you're stuck being who you

are so I'm just going to move on to xeni void's next question here can you recommend some sutas to read where the Buddha goes over how mindfulness works and how to do it properly preferably early ones that are more likely to be what he really taught well I mean the classic text on mindfulness is the Maha Sati banuta there's two sa patan suas there almost identical I think the only

real difference between the two is the
Maha or great sadip patan sua has like a
an explanation of the Four Noble Truths
in

it but aside from that they're
essentially the same sua and they're
relatively old and are probably based on
even older material like GC Pond his
theory is that the SAR batana and mahasi
batana suas were like compendiums of
these different instructions on
meditation just possibly taken from
various sources and just compiled into
like this collection of meditation
instructions on various kinds of
meditation and all of it being
mindfulness of some sort or another Sati

patana so yeah I mean the main Su to
read with regard to mindfulness how it
works and so forth is the one of the sa
patan

suas Maha sa panas and the dean nikaya
and regular sa batana is in the
majima and I'm just going to move on the
next

question from

xenoid and he says what is your opinion
on Albert kamu and the philosophy of of
absurdism I think Kimu would have made
for a good Buddhist well I mean I have
read some of Kimo's fiction and he's
often considered to be an
existentialist he was big back when

existentialism was at its peak I think
and maybe absurdism is just sort of like
a a subsect of
existentialism

um I've also read kamuz the myth of
Copus which is one of the lamest
philosophical books I ever read I I
think the whole point of the book the
main theme of it is we shouldn't Auto
terminate just out of
spite just out of spite against the
cosmos we should just stubbornly remain
alive that that was was that was like
his profound explanation of why we
should not Auto
terminate but uh I mean he was pretty
much of an existentialist even though

you might call him an absurdist you know
to exist is absurd or existentialism is
you know it's like to exist is
meaningless and we just attribute
whatever meaning we want to it whatever
we think is best
so yeah I mean some of his some of what
he wrote is kind of stressing the Absurd
aspect of life just kind of the
pointlessness of
it and I'm not so sure he would have
made a good Buddhist I think he might
have been just too skeptical and kind of
cynical to have really taken Buddhism
seriously and I've pretty much wiped out
my first beverage

here which has been failing at
lubricating my throat as you may have
noticed so I may have to crack the
second the the emergency backup beverage
very soon

here so yeah getting back to Alber Kimu
yeah I think he died in an absurd way
too I think he just died in like a freak
car accident or something but uh I do
not consider him to better a
particularly profound

thinker as existentialists go I think
there were probably several that were
deeper than him like uh kard I never
read anything by kir guard but he does
have a reputation for being kind of a
Proto existentialist who was a profound

thinker uh Carl Jaspers again I never read anything by Carl Jaspers but he seems to have gone in a good direction towards the end because he turned to mysticism you know mysticism is like the answer to existentialism unless you're this eccentric English monk named Nana Vera who lived in Sri Lanka or Salon as it was called back then back in the 50s and early 60s who thought that uh existentialism the only answer to existentialism was Buddhism but he had such a complicated just hyper rationalistic hyper intellectual understanding of terraa Buddhism that um I mean you'd have to be some sort of

professional logician even to understand
what he's

teaching and I really need to open up
the emergency backup bever

because I got like this tickle in my
throat so I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question which is from
arpad and arpad says what kind of
meditation could be practiced lying down
with pros and cons oh I didn't separate
his questions so I got to separate
them okay so what kind of meditation can
be practiced lying down with pros and
cons any kind of meditation can be
practiced and lying down you can be
mindful of your breath while lying down
you can be contemplating death while

lying down you could be looking at a casino especially if you got it on the ceiling while lying down you can be practicing any kind of mindfulness meditation while lying down just any kind of meditation that you can practice sitting you can also practice while lying down unless it's just meditation on the posture of sitting which is not a very profound meditation technique anyway but the main con the main disadvantage is that you're much more likely to be drowsy or sleepy or just flat out fall asleep because you're lying down like I mentioned in it might have been the previous Q&A if it wasn't

the previous one it was the one before
that how to avoid being sleepy when
you're meditating is just have like this
ramrod straight posture a very alert
posture helps you to stay alert and if
you're in a sleepy kind of posture like
lying down it's much more conducive to
being

sleepy so that's the main the main thing
I experimented a little bit with run
using a rosary just lying on my back
just using my thumb to work through a
rosary I experimented with that briefly
and it didn't seem to work very well I
just not really a rosary kind of person
or a Mala person I should
say so I don't think there really are

any pros to meditating while lying down
which is why lying down meditation is
rarely taught by anybody because there
are very few advantages to it and the
main disadvantage is it's more conducive
to sleepiness and less alertness than if
you are standing up or walking or
sitting straight up and down in the full
Lotus posture

so I'm just going to move on to our
pad's second

question if the five remembrances just
make me sad instead of furthering

Detachment should I stop doing them well
if you're not getting benefit from doing
the five remembrances in offhand I'd be

guessing at what exactly all five
remembrances are but it's my
understanding that they

Recollections of like your own Merit and
the the gods the the virtues of the
Buddha and so forth

and I mean they're relatively Elementary
level meditations anyway as a general
rule I don't know why they would
necessarily make you sad but clearly if
you're trying to do a meditation method
and you're not making progress and in
fact it might even be like having a
detrimental effect on you then you
should try something

else so yeah I'm not sure why the fiber
memory would just make you sad but um

instead of furthering Detachment but I mean if it's not working try something else I mean that's just common sense so I'm just going to move on to Rad's third question is what have you learned or understood through meditation that you wouldn't have otherwise well one of the main ones one of the main insights that I got from meditation is that excuse me when you stop thinking you don't just disappear you don't just become unconscious that in a way it's more you're closer to reality without thinking than when you are thinking and a lot of people especially people who

are addicted to thinking would just
think it's like your personality would
disappear it'd be like death you know
there'd be nobody there but
really if you're if you're wide awake
and not thinking anything you're closer
to reality and you're more awake than
otherwise you know it's like you don't
die nothing really disappears other than
temporarily some thinking that isn't
really all that valuable
disappears so yeah that would be like
the main

Insight that I got through meditation at
least that can be expressed into words
easily another thing that you learn very
quickly

when you meditate that you wouldn't learn if you didn't meditate meditate is just how hard it is to control your thoughts a lot of people they just they never try to meditate they never try to go against the stream and so they think I can control my thoughts you know I can think about whatever I want to think about but when you're actually just trying to focus your thoughts on just the sensation of touch at the nostrils as the air is going in and out without thinking about other stuff you realize that you've got monkey mind and I mean you realize just how little actual control you have got over your own

thoughts or what you think are your own
thoughts when really you have damn
little control over them you know you
can kind of steer
them this way or that way but you really
don't even have much control over what
you decide what direction you decide to
take so that's I mean that's a basic
Insight that people can learn very
quickly their very first Meditation
Retreat or you know their very first
attempts at meditation is that what you
think the the control you think you have
over your mind is largely

[Music]

illusory so there's probably other ones
but if I racked my brains tried to come

up with a list I could probably could
but considering the huge number of
questions we've got I think I better
move on to the next question which is
from Stell Supreme formerly known as
Libra Lam and occasionally still known
as Libra

lamb and he says how would you recommend
one to reconcile staying proactive in
life and paying respect to the
multifaceted nature of transitoriness it
covers what one is identifying with
plans they make desires or wishes they
have actions they take and their sense
of what fruitful results even are in
other words how do we find our North

Star standing on shifting

grounds well I mean if you've got a goal

that can be your North

Star but um really it's it's this is

kind of like an artificial problem to me

it kind of strikes me that way I mean

obviously things are changing and

sometimes you just take like

a what do you like a a transitory

approach it's like if you're dancing for

example I'm not not recommending anybody

start dancing but I mean if you're

dancing you're just in this flow it's

like everything is in flux really I mean

the floor remains a constant I suppose

there are some constants but still the

music is changing your body is changing

everyone around you is changing the the
flashing lights like like reflecting off
the disco ball it's all changing and
still there's just I mean you don't even
really have this unified goal while
you're dancing you're just dancing
you're just going with the flow it's
just this flux and you can go through
life that way and I think a lot of
people do it's it's overthinking becomes
a

problem I mean how many how many
conscious beings have a problem with
trying to reconcile staying
proactive and and paying respect to the
multifaceted nature of transitory iness

I mean you just accept the way things are this is the way it is and if you have any kind of goal or or like priorities then you work towards those goals or those priorities and I mean that's it I mean things will be changing other things will be staying relatively constant I mean there always has to be a balance between like stasis and change that's for me that's a good example of my understanding of dependent core

Rising that you have to have some things staying the same and other things changing if everything stays the same that's death that's stasis I mean time doesn't even pass really because there's no events to to measure time you know

there's not even a ticking of a clock
but I mean if everything's changing
you've just got chaos you know nothing
stays the same then you know it's just
all meaning is lost
so I mean we're just in this situation
this this is just the way it is and so
you do the best you can I mean it's like
the only only Stellar Supreme formerly
known as Libra Lam and sometimes still
known as libber lamb can come up with a
problem like this because he is so
cerebral in his approach to life that
he's like finding problems that most
beings in this universe it never occurs
to them to see any

problem

so let's see it covers what one is
identifying with plans they make desires
or wishes they have actions they take
and their sense of what fruitful results
even are in other words how do we find
our North Star standing on shifting
grounds I mean for the most part your
karma is driving you through this
anyway and then if you don't have you
don't have any Karma anymore then it
just stops nothing is like impelling you
through

Samara but really I'm I'm not I'm not
good at advising with regard to stuff
like this I mean it's it's a problem
that it would never occur to me to to

see as a

problem it's like you think too much and

so you're you're dredging up problems

that don't necessarily really

exist how do you do this I mean you just

do it I mean you been doing it your

whole life I

assume so let's see here I guess I

better just move on some I'm getting

questions this time that I can't relate

to very

well just because I just don't function

that way like being lonely I mean there

when I was a monk sometimes I'd miss I

have this one friend named mucus man

that I would miss more than anyone else

really him and my father I guess you
it'd be so nice to just hang out with
him I'd be sitting under a rock ledge
out in a forest somewhere just thinking
man it'd be nice to hang out with mucus
man but as a general rule I was pretty
cool just being alone so when I get
questions like how do you deal with
loneliness it's like I don't
know just just observe it mindfully that
would be like the standard Buddhist
answer right there observe it note it so
anyways getting back to
Rafel who is asking the next question he
says your thoughts on this quote of ajn
Martin and I think ajn Martin has the
poly name of

pamo and he's on YouTube I think he's German and he's he's not the only German podama because I used to know this other German monk named pamo that I thought was a John Martin at first but it turns out that it's it's a different German monk named

pamo anyways rapael says your thoughts on this quote of ajan Martin and then ajan Martin says and I quote Consciousness or wiana is one of the condas and of course is not Eternal the Cheta is eternal just remember what the Lord Buddha said the Daga after dead neither is nor is not the cheetah is not individualistic nor personal how could

the Lord Buddha talk to a man
presenting dharma to him in the form of
the Lord Buddha if there is nothing that
is eternal and everything dies away
way we grasp the term caitanya wrongly we
think every being has a caitanya no that
is not right every being is part of that
one caitanya that is eternal this world
this would be the correct view
unquote and from an Orthodox theistic
Buddhist point of view this is just
Shameless heresy and this runs a mock
especially in the Thai Forest tradition
I'm not exactly sure why but the Thai
Forest tradition has this kind of cryptic
self view where they're saying you know
there's this eternal mind that is the

one that knows and it's essentially like
want where you've got the Atman is
Brahman that you know it's like God
pervades the universe and our soul our
Atman is just that aspect of God that
just happens to be localized here but
really it's all part of this same
undifferentiated infinite consciousness
kind of stuff and it may be that Thai
Buddhism uh still has some like vestigial
lingering effects of Mahayana Buddhism
or

Hinduism that have caused so many Tai
aons to be spouting this clear heresy
from an orthodox Buddhist point of view
nowhere does the Buddha say that cheetah

is eternal that mind is eternal nowhere
it's not in the

sutas even the upanishadic approach to
reality is shot down in the sutas where
you know you've got this eternal

Consciousness or like formless Eternal
Consciousness which some pre-terod and
philosophy may have

supported but I do think it is wise that
early Buddhism adopted this idea of a
simply essentially

apophatic spirituality where um I didn't
really explain what apophatic meant when

I was answering the question about

apophatic theology it's just reality

cannot be expressed in words and so I

think early Buddhism took this seriously

like the AA waga this you do not make
assertions because any assertion is
going to be delusional because reality
cannot be expressed in words the name
that can be named is not the Eternal
name

so um and with regard to the Buddha
talking to aan man I mean that's just a
scandal in aan man's
autobiography or maybe it was his
biography that was written by ajan
Mahaba and aan man was considered to be
an arhan aan Mahaba also was considered
to be an arhan and so Tai monst and Thai
Traditions especially take this
biography very seriously and some of the

stuff in this biography is just wildly
heretical just like blatantly delusional
wrong view from an orthodox terraa
Buddhist point of view for example aan
man was having just multitudes of
Buddhas and retinues of thousands of
arahan disciples all of them Dead coming
to visit him to discuss
dhama and that's just I
mean one time I I hinted to a monk who
had had been ordained in a tradition
that I mean that sounds a little bit
psychotic and he said don't say that
Monon don't even think it because you
know it's like aan manun is just like
this axom ajan man was an arhun and aan
manun ate cheese in the afternoon so

it's okay for Thai monks to eat cheese in
the afternoon a monk was a ajan mun
was a chain smoker he was literally a
drug addict it's okay to smoke tobacco
in Thai Buddhism because ajan Mun and
if he was an arhat and he could do that
it's if it's good enough for ajan man
it's good enough for
anybody but seriously um you this idea
that the cheetah is eternal yeah I
double dog dare you to find a passage in
the sutras that says the cheetah is
eternal unless maybe it's that obscure
text that is describing Nirvana as
infinite formless unmanifest
Consciousness or maybe like in the gasa

where Mara the evil one is searching for
the the consciousness of Goda after he
passes away and the Buddha says he's not
going to find it because goda's
Consciousness has become
unmanifest so you can kind
of it's like I was saying earlier where
there's different ways of interpreting
things there's different ways of
climbing the same Mountain but the early
Buddhist way is you do not reify the
absolute you cannot put Ultimate Reality
in words it's just skillful means you
have to use
like which is the language of normies to
try to influence the minds of normies or
if you're a human you've got to use some

kind of human language just as a way of
you know just thinking things that
sometimes you just got to think things
but to assume that it's real is
delusion and for some reason the tie for
tradition has this kind of self view
which ultimately is not endorsed in
Orthodox Theravāda and is heretical wrong
view and I mean if they were like Vajras
Hindus it would be
fine and they want to think well Theravāda
is wrong here or I just prefer to use a
different Paradigm than Theravāda in this
case at least that would be honest but
for them to try to like twist and
distort

Orthodox terava teachings to saying the
Buddha taught this when really he didn't
I mean that's you know it's it happens a
lot that monks and and a lot of them are
in TI

Traditions you know they they'll try to
justify or

rationalize deviations from Orthodox
terraa by saying

well it's really Orthodox you know they
won't admit that it's not orthod o like
monks eating cheese in the

afternoon I mean the real reason why Tha
monks think eating cheese in the

afternoon is okay ajan monk ate cheese
in the afternoon he was an Arun that's
the real argument but then You' got

monks like ajan tanro trying to say that well in Ancient India people made butter differently than they make it now and really what we call cheese is actually a kind of butter and that was his justification I mean it's like just really reaching trying to just do anything you can to make what you want to be Orthodox or right Orthodox or right when the honest thing to do is just to say cheese is hardened curd I mean in in Burmese the word for cheese literally is is it's D gay which means hardened kurd and kurd is not allowable they had kurd in Ancient India not allowable in the afternoon and since

cheese is like purified kurd it's like
kurd that has some of the excess whe
like pressed out of it maybe a little
bit of bacterial culture or something
but it's almost it's more pure kurd than
kurd

is and then to say that that is really
butter I mean it's they just want to eat
cheese in the afternoon and using any
kind of arguments like it's sophistry
it's like they're trying to rationalize
what they've been taught by their
teachers they don't want to doubt their
teachers they got reverence for their
teachers they know their teachers were
wise men and so they just assume they're
right and so they will prefer what their

teacher says to what the sutas say and
if you do that I mean you're at least
you're still being honest if you
acknowledge that but when you start
saying that the teacher who's teaching
the stuff that's just flagrantly in in
like just flouting what the pudas
teach and you're just saying well the
the suit has to teach it or at least you
know the Buddha didn't say that it's
flat out
false you know that kind of stuff you
know they're trying to force fited into
Orthodoxy you're getting into the realm
of
dishonesty and I am really do not want

to just call these Aon these taii
aons who insist that Consciousness that
the cheetah mind is
eternal that they're they're all just
dishonest people I mean you know they've
got their justifications and their
rationalizations and some of them just
don't know the sutas very
well but
still again I mean if they were
vedantist Hindus or even some sect of
Mahayana Buddhists it wouldn't be so bad
because at least they'd be in in harmony
with what their own scriptures
say but the poly Texts do not say that
the mind is
eternal unless it's these really obscure

texts that really are not mainstream and just don't fit into

Orthodoxy and I don't even think that

the Tai aons are even referring to

that so I think I'm I'm just going to

discontinue this

mild rant and move on to the next

question this is from kundru and kundru

says have you read the novel Journey to

the West if so what are your thoughts on

it and Journey to the West is a novel by

Herman Hess I think in German has some

interesting name like do Morgan L

fart and uh when I was in my early 20s I

went through a phase of reading Herman

Hess novels and it included Journey to

the West I may have read it like on a Japanese fishing vessel back in those days when I was working on Japanese ships um and I don't recall it extremely clearly it was not one of hessa's novels that really impressed me all that much maybe I should read it again maybe it would impress me more if I read it again when you're reading something on a like on a ship that's like rocking back and forth in your inner ears kind of in in a little bit of uh chaotic motion or whatever and you can't really concentrate as well as if you're like alone in a cave but the Journey to the West um yeah I mean it really did not make

any like major impression on me of
Herman hess's novels the one that I
liked the most was actually Steen wolf
not sidarta like a lot of people might
suspect me being a Buddhist and all but
but uh Steen wolf was a good one I like
that one but Journey to the West no I
think it was Journey to the east well
okay so this might even be a different
novel because hess's novel is the
journey to the

East and here we've got a novel called
Journey to the West and I've never even
heard of that one unless kundru is is
confusing East with

West but I mean I have read the novel I

read it in my early 20s which was
considerable time ago more than half my
lifetime ago and uh yeah I I don't
remember many details I remember it was
towards the end he had to receive some
kind of punishment and so it was like
first the first offer him the the option
of you have to tame a wild dog and he
didn't want to do that so then his
second choice was all right if you don't
want to tame the Wild dog then you have
to let one of your teachers give his
honest opinion
of your
faults and he realized that they're
going to get harder and harder you know
if he passes one the next one's going to

be worse so he says okay I'll take that one when really it seems to me like I mean that wouldn't be nearly as bad as taming a wild dog but I mean some people enjoy taming wild dogs I think I might actually enjoy it too uh depending on the dog I guess but yeah Journey to the West i' I've never even heard of a novel called Journey to the West I think he might be referring to Journey to the east anyways I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from yugao and let's see here we've been going for yeah I hope I'm at least halfway done I hope well I would assume few of

you hope that I'm at least halfway done
too but you can look you already know
how long this thing is going to last I
don't know yet you have that advantage
over

me

so yugu says I have one meditation
question it would be nice if you could
answer me here I have been just a minute
here my mustache is getting so long and
Shaggy that it's getting into my mouth
sometimes it's still doing it I go like
this okay Yuga says I have one
meditation question it would be nice if
you could answer me here I have been
doing breath meditation and over the
past months I can enter a state where my

body feels light and filled with joy
that brings a smile on my face my
question is should that become object of
my meditation or should I go back to the
breath I really like to abide in that
nice feeling well depends on what your
your priorities are and what kind of
meditation like if you're doing like
samata meditation you're trying to
cultivate Janna then you should just
stay with the breath if it wanders
away

into like enjoying these feelings of py
or Rapture or whatever just bring it
back to the breath on the other hand if
you're doing like weasa meditation

mindfulness meditation sa

batana then whatever is the most obvious

whatever is the most

obtrusive

perception then you're you're fine with

just moving to that and then you can

understand the you just feel what the

pleasure feel feels like don't just

wallow in it

obviously but I mean you should be

observing whatever it is that is like

the primary object which is like the

most the most obvious thing in your

sensorium whatever is most obvious

whatever is most noticeable that's what

you

notice and like the pleasure you don't

just wallow in it you're like observing
it objectively no matter what it is with
Detachment so you'd have to observe the
the pleasure and joy with Detachment
which may not be easy to do and if you
really can't manage that then you'd
probably be better off staying with the
breath

anyway I think I'm just going to move on
to yuga's next

question while meditating a thought
occurred to me maybe it shared fear from
see while meditating a thought occurred
to me maybe it shared fear from many
where gate AI is used like a big data
collector of each habits and tendencies

of people it's become so correct in it
that it became a Godlike indisputable we
have preemptive arrest selective
pregnancies sick are denied medication
cause they will die anyway control the
elections big brother kind of control
can this be just a bad dream well that
kind of

dystopia I mean some people people
wouldn't even consider it to be a
dystopia but that kind of dystopia it's
unlikely I mean if computers become
that uh I mean that intelligent then I
mean I don't see why they're going to
bother with even having people around I
mean what would be the point of even
keeping people when the computer is that

advanced and just gets along fine on its own so let's see here AI is used like a big data collector so it'd be spying on everybody you know everybody would be like locked into the system it'd be like the Borg kind of um indisputable preemptive arrest that would be like Minority Report selective pregnancies again if why why even bother what be the why bother sick are denied medication because they will die anyway controlled elections well big brother kind of a control I mean elections I mean why even have elections if the computer is so intelligent it knows who's going to be committing crimes before they commit

them then it's going to know who's the best person to be the governor of this state or the president or you know the god emperor of the the entire planet or whatever so I mean democracy would be obsolete if it's completely disregarding people's desires and deciding for us what we need to do then why allow people to

vote um

so yeah I mean it is it is possible although you won't have that happen to you unless it is your karma to have it happen to

you and I do think that in my case it's just not it's not part of my destiny my karmic Destiny to become just like this

meat cell in this like cybernetic

Society yeah I think I might get cold or something or like uh in Brave New World it's like some of the the intellectual non-conformists are all just sent to an island something like that that might not be too

bad but uh yeah I think once you get to this point then yeah I don't think that they're going really going to be caring all that much about the welfare of the individual I think individuality would have been would have been like become obsolete or something by

then so anyways I'm just going to move on next question

this is from Fred and he says what's
your thoughts on Daniel Ingram and I've
I've actually answered this question
this will be the third time in maybe
five q&as so Daniel Ingram has become
kind of a he's he's trending I guess and
I've never really thought all that much
about Daniel Ingram I was told about
Daniel Ingram back when I was a monk in
Burma and so um I looked up his website
on the internet and and he's like on on
the homepage of of his website this is
like back 2012 or something he's
actually declaring himself to be an
arant and in fact being an arant is is
sort of like the foundation of these
other claims that are even more

grandiose and I mean I am skeptical of anyone who brags about how enlightened they are like in the text the Buddha brags about how enlightened he is and I don't think that the Buddha really said that stuff I think that that is like devotionalism that was added into the texts centuries later possibly or at least decades

later um so I mean I if I really thought that the Buddha was bragging about how enlightened he was I would have less faith in dhama than I have now and Daniel Ingram bragging about how enlightened he is it it really does kind of make me more skeptical and it makes

it more like to me that he is either overestimating his own attainments or is just a deliberate fraud I think either of those two would be more likely just going with

Statistics than that he really is a fully enlightened being and I saw him briefly on a video a few months ago and he was just like this

nervous person a guy who talked like a normal guy acted like a normal guy and uh I mean it may be that my

preconceptions with regard to who can and can't be enlightened are just wrong

I mean from the Tibetan Buddhist point of view I mean there's no way he could

possibly be enlightened but my own point

of view is a little more broad than
strict Orthodoxy in a terab Buddhist
sense but even so I mean Daniel Ingram
is pushing it and there are a number of
people like this who claim to be
enlightened brag about being enlightened
put it on their website that they're
enlightened and all this and then maybe
10 20 years down the line they have to
admit that they're not really
enlightened because they got caught in a
sex scandal or
something but I'm not going to just flat
out insist that Daniel Ingram isn't
fully enlightened just like I wouldn't
flat out insist that Jay Krishna mty

wasn't fully enlightened um although I think I would be more inclined to consider chrisna myty to be legit the real deal than Daniel Ingram

but who knows that's that's assuming that being a fully enlightened being even really means anything in any Samsaric

context so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from chasz is and chasz is

says questions about basic morality if ultimately we don't exist and orans know this and maybe experience it then why pretty much the worst thing you can do karmically is killing an arant why would that be that bad of

course I don't want to harm I don't want
any harm to

aans

well I do think that the way it works in
terraa is if you kill an arot then

you're guaranteed to go to hell that's

one of the the few things you can do

that absolutely guarantees that you're

going to go to hell and it's it's really

I think part of it is just a kind of

like Buddhist chauvinism that only a

Buddhist can be fully enlightened the

the fully enlightened Buddhist is like

the highest level of of human being an

arhan is the highest level of life in

the entire Cosmos really an enlightened

being is higher than any God really not
necessarily with regard to places of
existence but with regard to like
exaltedness of just venerableness
wisdom I mean they've they're like off
the scale they have transcended the
entire scale that has gods and brahmas
and so forth on

it so like I've mentioned before that
even having bad thoughts about a fully
enlightened being can land you in a
world of trouble according to Terra
Buddhism and the only way it seems to me
that this could even work would be if
there is like a subliminal telepathic
connection connection between beings so
that deep down you know this is like a

highly Advanced Saint and not just an
ordinary

monk otherwise it's your own karma is
subjective I don't see how dissing
someone you think is a monk is going to
land you in hell or dissing someone you
think is just a normal

monk is going to land you in hell um
otherwise like how is that
possible that somehow their their

Enlightenment has to affect your own
mental States because your own karma is
your own mental

States so I think there's a good chance
that

this sacredness of enlightened beings to

the point that um anything you do with regard to an enlightened being is going to have like super magnified Karma one way or the other even if you don't even know they're an enlightened being that it may be that their Vibe has an effect on you which then you know it magnifies your own Karma or something that's possible I guess but I mean we don't really exist our aans know this they don't really exist our Karma doesn't really exist I guess Orthodox terava would say our karma really does exist we as IND individuals don't but the mental states have a basis in

reality I mean it gets complicated cuz I
have to like when I'm answering
questions I try to give my best answer
but if my best answer isn't Orthodox
then I kind of have to admit that it
isn't Orthodox and also give the
Orthodox position just because I don't
want to be passing off my own like
unorthodox theories as orthodox V and in
cases like this um really I do have a
certain amount of skepticism with regard
to just the super magnified Karma that
occurs around enlightened beings when
like Ordinary People are interacting
with them even if they don't even know
that these beings are enlightened beings

that somehow there would have to be some
subliminal effect on our own mental
states where deep down we know that they
are very Advanced

Saints um without consciously being
aware that deep down at the level that
we are generating Karma that we know
that we are dissing a fully enlightened

[Music]

being so it's
complicated so and I do think that there
is a good chance that this is sort of
like the

glorification of Buddhism and like the
people who have attained the goal of
Buddhism that it's just in a way
sort of a warning to lay people you know

don't disrespect monks you don't know if
that monk over there is fully
enlightened or not so you should just be
you should be vener you know you should
venerate monks just in case you they
might be enlightened or something and I
mean I assume there is some of that
involved in
this because otherwise there's no good
Orthodox explanation for how just
thinking a critical thought about an
enlightened being is going to cause you
to burn in hell for
example especially when you don't even
know that they're an enlightened
being and there's a number of cases of

this sort of thing there's

kokala or Calia there's alternate

spellings of his name there's a sua

where he goes to the Buddha and tells

him that saruta and molana really don't

have good motives and the Buddha says

don't talk like that and then kokala

insists they really don't have good

motives and then as he's walking away

his body breaks out in boils they get

bigger and bigger and then burst and

then he

dies and all all he was doing was maybe

slandering these monks that if he really

thought they were fully enlightened I

don't think he'd be slandering

them and maybe he was even being honest

and maybe it was just his perception you know he just misinterpreted something that they did or said that caused him to say that they had bad motives but according to the text it didn't matter he went to hell aichi hell which is the lowest the bottom pit of Hell so the whole situation is complicated and it's just kind of a an entangled tangle and I've got to try and pick at it with two different picks one is my own best gu and the other is orthodox Buddhism and it's it's in a way it's very difficult and I got to try and answer questions relatively briefly because we have so

many

and

gosh yeah so with regard to before I
move on to the next question though even
though I haven't really answered this
one very well is my own best guess is
that there is a kind of subliminal
awareness that that you're dealing with
a

sage um even though at the conscious ego
level you may not be fully aware of that
that that is going to affect you but I
do think that a lot of it is just
exaggerated in the texts that these you
know zillion years in Hell or like SOA
in the DAP commentary where he sees an
arahant bathing in a public bathing

place and this monk uh had like this golden complexion and this this man sya thought wow I wish my wife had had a complexion like that his skin is really Nic looking and because of that he just immediately transforms into a female as a kind of karmic punishment so I mean did he know that this venerable monk was fully enlightened there's there's a lot of cases of this in the texts and in the commentaries too of just having disrespect for an enlightened being can just really mess you up even if you don't even know they're an enlightened being and I think I'm a little bit

skeptical of that but certainly if you think somebody is or might be an enlightened being you shouldn't be too harsh with regard to them that just like flat out calling Daniel Ingram uh a charlatan a fraud I would hesitate to do that just in case maybe he really is that you know that terot of buddhism's explanations of what an enlightened being like are is like are just wrong and that Daniel Ingram really can be a fully enlightened being well I mean I would hesitate to just flat out say that he was he's a he's a fraud or just delusional or whatever although I'm not extremely confident that he is the real deal

because I don't

know so

anyways that shaskus is is asking kind of difficult questions this time because his next one is is kind of similar with regard to its level of difficulty at least he says if I told a 61-year-old you that we are changing from moment to moment and your body will be different at 71 and your thoughts will be different and dreams and hopes and everything and in in an Ultimate Reality you don't even exist and you should just live your life but at the age of 71 you'll have this one severe two think would that information give

you peace oh it wouldn't be me anyway or
you will still feel that pain at 71 the
same as you would feel it now um yeah I
mean that's one thing that people don't
fully wrap their head around as if this
is an illusion but still it seems real
to us I mean this is an Ultimate Reality
that we're living in but it seems real
and so you should act as though it is
real if I mean if you go to hell you
won't really go to hell because there
really is no you and there really is no
hell but still it seems real so if you
don't want to seem like you're in
hell like you don't want to seem that
you exist in hell then you should behave
accordingly so that you avoid going to

hell I mean it doesn't matter if you're
happy or unhappy in the the grand scheme
of things what difference does it make
if this little speck of of of Life on
this ball of rock just out in the some
Podunk arm of the Milky Way galaxy I
mean who cares if it's happy or not I
mean it doesn't
matter ultimately it doesn't matter but
still I mean it kind of matters to us
and so you should still behave
accordingly so that you're going to you
know kind of try to minimize suffering
especially unnecessary
suffering so let's say somebody
prophesies that when I'm 71 years old

I'm going to have a bad toothache at the very least I could get some toothache remedies ready in preparation for when I'm

71 maybe take a little better care of my dental hygiene or

something but I mean why would it make any difference whether I mean

philosophically you can say it's not ultimately real but it's relatively real it's conditionally real it's virtually real and so long as we're still in The Matrix we still have to act as though it were

real but I would get some uh toothache remedies handy if I did get this prophecy that I was going to get a

tooth and so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from

Romeo and uh Romeo asked an unofficial
question that won't count as his three
what's with the smoking hot meditating
woman in the thumbnail through your
video I've already explained this in the
previous

Q&A um that my sweetheart usually does
the

thumbnails and she keeps wanting to have
these like muscular Chad guys meditating
on the thumbnails and I point out to her
that 98% of my viewers are male they
don't want to be looking at Chad guys so
she's okay and so she makes this hot

Buck some female meditating on the thumbnail and I really did not design it myself I'm kind of indirectly responsible by talking her out of doing the the Chad guy but it is kind of in keeping with um I did have a series of uh pictorials on my blog that are still on the blog if you're interested called beauties of meditation I did like three three episodes of it where I was kind of as a monk it was sort of like combining The Best of Both Worlds this this beautiful woman's sitting in meditation and I mean that was it was sort of like my ideal when I was a monk I mean I was still a man I still liked girls or I guess I should like women at

this age and uh and then just combined
with Dharma the beautiful woman combined
with Dharma is sort of
symbolized as you know this this
beautiful woman sitting in the full
lotus in deep meditation or some such
anyways that wasn't even one of the
questions

so Romeo says I recently came across two
quotes that as an admitted aversive
personality type I found eye opening the
first is from an nin who wrote erotic
novels I'm pretty sure which is we don't
see things as they are we see them as we
are and then the other quote is from
Carl Yung which is everything that

irritates us about others can lead us to
an understanding of
ourselves so then Romeo
says do either of these quotes relate to
Buddhism in any way if so how so the two
quotes we don't see things as they are
we see them as we are well obviously
that's going to apply to Buddhism
because the things as they are really I
mean from the terraa point of view all
things are is like these shimmering
little clouds of like adom like
specs then each one of those specs
really exists for a trillionth of a
second and is replaced by another
similar spec but the thing that they are
supposedly coales into isn't ultimately

real only the specs are real you know
it's sort of like pixels like dots you
got a a picture that's this a bunch of
dots that the dots might be real but the
image you form of that is just your own
perception that's your own creation and
different people like if it's an optical
illusion kind of a thing different
people might see different things Roar
Shacks ink blots different people will
construct different things out of the
same

ink and that's going to be based on
their karma their their latent
Tendencies their predispositions and so
forth so yeah I mean that would apply to

Buddhism and with regard to Carl Young's everything that irritates us about others can lead us to an understanding of ourselves well that's obviously true too because I mean it's like if you're irritated that's you that's your own doing that's not the other person's doing somebody can call you a no-good so and so if you're offended by that if that bothers you that's your fault which is one of the the blatant like naric teachings of like political correctness progressivism where you've got Buddhists trying to combine Terra Buddhism with progressivism but still they've got to adopt the aggressive idea that if you're

offended it's somebody's else somebody
else's fault especially if you're Brown
and offended it's got to be somebody
else's fault especially somebody with a
lighter skin tone than you've
got and it's just ridiculous because if
you're offended that's on you to be
offended is

immoral to be offended is you making
your own Bad Karma because you have
reacted with aversion to to something
out there and the something out there is
in all likelihood going to be ultimately
neutral it's just going to be sounds in
the air for example even if somebody
punches you in the nose and you get

offended by that it's still on you it's
on them that they punched you and you're
going to feel pain but you don't
necessarily have to feel
resentment or
offense I mean the pain is
unavoidable but the the resentment or
the offense feeling of being offended
that is a volitional act on your part
that is 100% your own damn fault and
that's an important thing to realize and
a lot of people masquerading as
Buddhists in the west just cannot and
will not get
it so getting back to Carl Young here
everything that irritates us about
others can lead us to an understanding

of

ourselves

yeah it's like first of all if you're
irritated and it's your own fault and
so if you have Insight you can see I
mean why is this bothering me why does
it bother me when he like says you know
all the time I mean for somebody to say
you know two or three times in a
sentence I mean or or like somebody who
doesn't use their turn signals when
you're driving on the road somebody
doesn't use their turn signals why would
that cause you irritation I mean it's
your own choice there's two drivers one
person is irritated when the other

person doesn't use deter signals the
other person doesn't give a
[__] you know it's it's like you two
people hear the same words being spoken
one is offended the other one isn't
offended that indicates that it's a
personal thing it's not
inevitable that this person's words or
their behavior or whatever is going to
cause suffering to others is it depends
on the level of wisdom of the others
because they're the ones who's create
who are creating their own
suffering so it can help you to
understand yourself it's like okay this
stuff bothers me and I'm going to have
to work on that because if I were

completely wise nothing would bother me I mean some things might cause pain or inconvenience or whatever but still I mean the purpose of Buddhism is to learn suffering and the cause of suffering the cause of suffering is desire or especially the desire for something to be different than it is so somebody doesn't use their turn signal and you're bothered by that it's not them not using their turn signal that has bothered you it is your own insistence that they ought to use their turn signals your own attachment to the idea that that idiot should have used his turn signal just now and it's the

same way with like somebody says the
says the word

Eskimo and then might not be an Eskimo
for 100 miles I mean there there's no
Eskimos in sight still you're going to
have some liberal with the big
problematic plastic Rim glasses getting
offended they're not Eskimos they're
Inuit

it but this person with the problematic
glasses they're just offended because
they

insist that everyone has to use the
politically correct ethnological names
for

people and person who said Eskimo I mean
they they weren't being racist at all

necessarily they were just it's just the
word they use it's just like an
objective

thing but I think I've been going for a
little too long on that one so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is also from

Romeo oh he says if not what is your
take on these quotes regardless of
whether they relate to Buddhism or not
well I mean they're they're both true
and I think uh it wasn't an if not it
was an if so I think I already answered
that question so I'm just moving on to
the next one which is from ruie and ruie
says during your Burma days were you

ever summoned to bless a construction site building commercial establishment or any dwelling in general and yeah that did happen sometimes also it happened when I was living at burm temples in America I got brought to like Asian restaurants that were just being started you get invited to houses a lot to bless the house you know you chant Pita you know if somebody gets a new house a Buddhist person gets a new house they'll call monks the monks will come and the monks will chant parita which is like blessing the house driving out any malevolent spirits and that kind of thing and then the people will earn Merit by listening to the doat talk and

feeding the monks which ALS will also help to bless the family and it happens quite a lot although when I was in Burma it didn't happen as much as when I was living in a place in a Burmese temple in America just because I was was a Hermit living out in the woods and people knew that I really did not accept H like invitations to houses very much I'd preferred to eat just alm's food I wouldn't just go to somebody's house and get food there as a general rule um I did help I did chant parita at a school that was being opened it was like a private school um yeah I've chanted parita at a few houses in Burma um but

it it I mean it did happen it's a very common thing in in Buddhist Asia that you invite monks to some new house or or like a new business to to chant parita and bless the place in fact in Thailand I've heard that even cars are that way they'll even somebody gets a new car they'll invite some monks to sit in the car and chant parita and then they might be like making little chalk marks on the the roof like the inside ceiling of the car that kind of thing as a way of help hoping to bless the car so that it won't get an

accidents so yeah it did happen

sometimes and I'm just going to move on next question this is from ofm and ofm

stand says I didn't I was I was

wondering what it stood for and so I

said ofm stands for instead of saying

ofm

said ofm said the Lan of aara Sutra is

associated with yogachara which in the

past I've heard you disavow as something

of a departure from traditional Buddhist

epistemology and practice what are your

thoughts on yogachara as an extension of

Abid dama and early

maaka well I don't think yogachara is an

extension of Abid dama because the

Mahayana Buddhist really didn't have any

use for paid no attention to poly Abid

dama that Abid dama in Mahayana Buddhism

is mainly based on the svasti Vaden
version of Abid Dharma which does not
have a single text the same as the Terra
vadan Abid dama so as an extension of
suras Vaden

Abida I'm not exactly sure because I
have no Authority on sasti Vaden Abid
Dharma but yogachara is somewhat of an
extension on majaka I have read some
history of Mahayana Buddhism where
maamaa came first and then y yogachara
was sort of like U an elaboration on
maaka and the only two changes I think
that yogachara made that I'm aware of
one is yogachara insisted on idealism
where mind is real but matter isn't real
and so yogachara

the really the yogachara view of how our Karma works and how we live in society or live in this world is it solipsism it's kind of like Le nitz's monads where I mean it's like it doesn't even matter if there's anything around you because your karma is completely creating your own world it's just through like karmic coincidence or the Infinity of the universe that your karma dovetails with the karma of everyone around you but really even if there really wasn't anybody around you you would be experiencing the same thing because it's entirely solipsistic your mind is creating your

reality that you're not really
interacting with anybody you just
perceive yourself to be interacting and
just through like I said the Infinity of
the universe karmic coincidence or
whatever that it's just dovetailing with
the these other solipsistic individuals
that think that you're interacting with
each other when really you're
not so that was kind of an innovation of
your yogachara I think was like this
solipsistic

karmic idealism and also I have read
that the yogachara Buddhists came up
with the the tree Kaya the third CA of
the tree Kaya which is you've got the
nuraya which is the Buddha it's the

three bodies of the Buddha niraya is like the physical body of the Buddha you know got Buddha the savior sage then you got the Sakaya which is like the cosmic Buddha up in a Celestial realm and then you've got the dharmakaya which is just like the the absolute you know just like the spirit of Enlightenment which pervades the entire universe which is kind of the approach taken by these Thai Forest monks that I was talking about earlier which it is not Orthodox Theravada but Mahayana Buddhism can accept something along those lines so already you had the neuronics I mean that was that's what you started with that was

the the actual physical human G Buddha
and then um early Mahayana came up with
the dharmakaya which was like their
concept of the absolute which I mean you
shouldn't really be reifying the
absolute so that was kind of a mistake
but still you got to talk about
something so they reified the absolute
called it the
dharmakaya well the the Sakaya the
celestial Buddha up in heaven that was I
have read an innovation of the yogachara
school which was the next major
development in Mahayana after mamaka and
I think it was a step backwards much
like Abid dama was a step backwards from
the suas then you've got yogachara which

is a step backward from maamaa all I
should be talking about maamaa I should
wear the majamaa F here it
is there it is maama

CZ okay

so I mean those are the two main
developments that the two main
Innovations of yogachara that I perceive
I could even be wrong with regard to
both of these but yoga was like the mind
only School whereas maamaa it denied the
ultimate existence of anything that is
perceptual anything that you perceive I
mean it's just void it's
indeterminate but yogachara then kind of
back from that and said well cheetah you

know the mind is real you know which is kind of like what John Martin was talking about so a John Martin's view is actually more yogachara I think although he'd be probably also be a materialist except the existence of materialism but his his view that cheetah is eternal is more of a Mahayana point of view than a Terra point of view ah so what are my thoughts on yogachara as an extension of Abid dama I don't think it really is at least not with regard to poly Abid dama and an extension of early maaka yeah it was a step backwards I think from early maamaa they're they probably some innovations that might be somehow good but I don't I

don't know what they would

be I would prefer majamaa to yogachara

pretty much any day of the week so I'm

just going to move on next question this

is from

Jeremy and Jeremy says it is interesting

that Buddha the arahant is not

infallible concerning all the monks that

united themselves from his first

instructions on contemplating the body

after that mishap he then recommended

the breath as a meditation object what

are your thoughts well I've considered

that in the text the Buddha was not

infallible that he did make mistakes

which you would think if he was

omniscient he wouldn't do for example my
main example um as a monk I I think
about this as in it's in the book of
it's in Vinaya the book of monastic
discipline and it's it's in the Pātim
Mokkha actually it's one of the origin
stories of the Pātim Mokkha
where the Buddha realized that there
were monks that were getting sick they
were only eating one meal a day and then
they were getting sick in like for
various reasons in the afternoon so the
Buddha allowed them to five tonics I
think Ajaṇṇasāriya calls them the five
tonics in his book on Vinaya which is
like butter ghee oil sugar
and

see butter

oil oh butter ghee oil sugar and honey

not in that order but that's the

five and uh the monks actually started

getting he he allowed it in the morning

when monks are generally allowed to eat

food and some monks were getting sicker

because they were eating it the wrong

time so then the Buddha said okay you

can eat those five tonics if you're sick

in the afternoon which is generally the

wrong time for monks to be consuming

nutriment and so he made the mistake it

was like he allowed a kind of medicinal

substance which actually made some monks

get

sicker so that was that would ently be a
kind of mistake made by the Buddha
caused by not foreseeing the the
inevitable result of the Judgment
so um my

thoughts on the Buddha like not being
infallible I mean it does make sense if
he was an enlightened being that is
human I mean he's a human being he he
wouldn't necessarily be omniscient
that's just it could be just a kind of
Buddhist devotionism glorification of
the Buddha in a way I mean he would know
reality but this samsara is not
ultimately real so You' think that if
someone is fully enlightened I mean
they're not necessarily going to know

how to speak fluent Chinese or know the
cube root of 26 anything like that
they're not going to just know
everything necessarily they won't know
how many hairs I have in my beard
so I think that being enlightened isn't
necessarily the same as being infallible
at this like phenomenal worldly
level what happens at the phenomenal
worldly level is largely
irrelevant

so yeah and then the the example Jeremy
gives here is that the Buddha was
talking about the Lo the loathsomeness
of the body and then he went off in
retreat meditated in the forest and

monks were getting so disgusted from their own body like contemplating what the Buddha was saying about the loathsomeness of the body that they started Auto terminating or actually getting this other monk I think it was a monk to he was like volunteering to to help them along and uh I think that was the first case of of Murder in the in the text that was when the Buddha made the rule against murder of it's a paraja offense warranting excommunication from the s for life if you cause the death of another human being and this first perpetrator I mean the rule wasn't laid down yet so he wasn't

excommunicated but I think uh that would be less of an error than even hoody hoodie did about the five tonics where he was making monks sicker instead of better healthier but uh what are my thoughts about what exactly I'm not sure what Jeremy is angling for here see with regard to recommending the breath as a meditation object I'm not sure how that I mean what what there is to comment on that could have just been a coincidence or kind of backing away from contemplating on the loathsomeness of the body although lomen of the body was still a major meditation theme in

early Buddhism

so I guess the main question is just

about the fallibility of a fully

enlightened Buddha or a fully

enlightened being in general which I

think is still is still

possible but I'm just going to move on

the next question here this is from

nmit and nmit says did early Buddhism

mention rebirth and Karma I heard this

Indian professors say that the Buddha

was an atheist who didn't believe in

rebirth or Karma this thing were these

things were added later well the Indian

Professor is probably mistaken that he

is thinking from an intellectual point

of view so he's stuck in intellectualism

he cannot comprehend apophatic mysticism
the Buddha was a Mystic he wasn't an
atheist or a skeptic or you could say
maybe he was an atheist just because he
wasn't talking about God that he would
refer to the absolute as nibana or
nibana datu and not as some
deity so he could have been an Atheist
to that extent but I mean he was the
Buddha

was like avoiding making assertions like
in the Tika waga He just flat out says
don't make assertions he said with
regard to himself I do not say this is
so which is what fools say mutually to
each

other so it could be that when he was originally teaching like really Advanced veteran Aesthetics he was teaching them the radical just don't have views don't have opinions don't follow dogmas you know just get rid of all of that it's all perceptual delusion in which case he probably wasn't talking much if at all about rebirth and Karma but when he starts teaching people that are less Advanced I think there's a good chance that he was teaching things like rebirth and Karma to people that weren't ready for the teachings of the ataka waga yet but like if the AA waga is typical of the earliest teachings which is when the Buddha was just teaching like

veteran Advanced spiritual practitioners
who had already renounced the world you
know then he might not have been
teaching about rebirth in karma because
he's teaching about right now you know
first second third fourth Noble Truths
that don't necessarily involve rebirth
in karma

so that is sort of I mean there a
certain amount of guesswork involved but
I would assume that when he wasn't
teaching his most advanced level of
teachings that he was accepting rebirth
and Karma and obviously if you read the
sutras there's plenty of mention of
rebirth in karma um

especially karma is important in that
for example according to the rules of
monastic discipline um if a non-
Buddhist wants to be ordained they have
to go through a probation period I think
it's like four months of probation
because you know they they don't want to
be importing their own like false dogmas
from some previous system into Buddhism
and and declaring that Buddhism they
want to make sure that they're really a
Buddhist now and not just an AAA who
wants to dress like a Buddhist so
but Hindus or vdic brahmanist
in those days didn't have to go through
the probationary period because they
were Karma vadens you know they already

believed in in Kama and this kind of
stuff so that was close enough to
Buddhism that they could be accepted in
they could be ordained without probation
the probationary
period so I think I mean there's no
proof one way or the other whether the
Buddha really did teach rebirth in karma
or whether it was added later but I
think there is a good chance of it I
think it is probable more than 5050 that
the Buddha really did teach rebirthing
Karma and the the sutas are just full of
the Buddha teaching rebirth in
karma so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from

rakasa and rakasa says can you talk
about your interpretation of the movie
The Seventh seal I just read your blog
post on Fight Club and you mentioned
seventh seal as one of the movies dug
into in order to better understand it I
couldn't find another post or video
where you go into depth on it
specifically so I apologize if You'
already done so elsewhere I don't think
I have and the Seven seal is a profound
movie I I saw it many years ago back
when I was still a monk it's an ingar
Bergman movie it's all in Swedish with
subtitles so I I would consider watching
it again but I have to watch it alone
without my sweetheart cuz she doesn't

like foreign movies with subtitles she
wants to be able to see the movie
without having to always look down at
the bottom with the
subtitles

so let's see the the seventh seal it's
mainly about a man who desperately wants
to believe in God but he cannot find
proof of God it's like the it's the
seventh seal is a movie about the
problem of the Silence of God he will
not

prove himself existent you just have to
take it on faith and he was the the
protagonist in the movie he's he's like
a crusader who comes back from the

Crusades he's gone from Sweden for for a long time he comes back to Sweden and the Bubonic plague or some kind of plague is running rampant and he's seen all these atrocities in the name of God in the holy land during this Crusade he comes back to his Homeland and it's just being wiped out by this horrible plague and there is the the good family where their name is Mary and Joseph and they've got a baby which is obviously symbolic and the movie is probably the most famous thing about this movie is this Knight who comes back from the Crusades um as soon as he gets back to Sweden death is on the beach saying

it's time for you to go you know you got to die now and and he the the Knight challenges him to a game of chess and so like one of the most iconic scenes from the whole movie is this Knight who desperately wants to believe in God playing chess with essentially death and they play throughout the throughout the the the uh the movie and

uh there's like this one scene where this this couple

Mary and Joseph who are really nice people and they're like some of the best sign of goodness that that this Knight has seen in fact they're like the best

evidence of the existence of God and
genuine goodness in this world and he's
sitting there on the like out in this
field with them and the the Lady Mary
has picked some wild strawberries and
they she serves in this bowl of wild
strawberries with milk
and he's just I can't remember the exact
quote I'm sorry I can't but he's just
says you know this is the closest I've
come to certainty you know this is this
is the best sign of goodness in this
world it's me sitting here with you
eating these
strawberries and then there's this other
scene where they're just passing through
some town and there's a woman who's

going to be burned as a witch and he desperately wants to know if there's she she supposedly talked to to the devil or something like that and so he wants to know if there's a devil there's probably a God too so he goes to her and and asks her have you really spoken with the devil and she just says look into my eyes and you'll know and he looks in and all he sees is

fear but um I mean it's been a long time since I watched the movie it's been a long time since I've tried to really understand the movie but I mean the main theme of the movie is just the problem of the Silence of God and how you have

to find your evidence for God in this world despite all the the ickiness that you can still find it if you look hard enough and he was looking real hard he was that was like he was driven he had to find some some sign of justification for his faith before he finally loses the game of chess to death and and has to

die so let's see

here I guess that's good enough so I'm just going to move on next question this is from mooners and we're already two and a half hours this is going to be at least three hours long I have a feeling I apologize but what can I do I got to answer your questions it's my job it's

why we're

here answering

questions so this next question is from

mooners and mooner says if comma is

morally subjective and dependent on

mental states does it open the way for

moral relativism like we see today no it

doesn't open the way for moral

relativism like we see today because

it's based on human

psychology and there's just an empirical

fact that certain actions are going to

cause certain Mental effects on another

person it's like murder for example if

you murder somebody then it's going to

cause certain effects on you just really

drastic radical effects on your mind
which are going to
then manifest at some point as the
fruition of
karma so moral relativism is it's all
just a social construct but it's not all
just a social construct that there is
such a thing as human nature and it's
just um a law of human psychology that
certain acts are going to have certain
effects on your mind as a general rule I
mean there's it's it's it's not going to
be completely cookbook you know just the
same for every single person but there
are going to be significant
Trends and there's going to be like a
certain spectrum of you know what the

effects going to be depending on your
you know how the action connects to your
mental States and so
forth so I mean moral relativism is just
based on the idea that morality is
purely a cultural construct whereas
Buddhism doesn't have that idea morality
is based on just human psychology and
like whatever takes you closer to
Enlightenment is good and whatever takes
takes you farther from Enlightenment is
bad
and it's not just purely a cultural
construct so I guess I'm just going to
move on to next question which is from
apocalypse

chow and this is kind of a strange one
would you kindly explain the metaphysics
of Dawn of the

Dead and Dawn of the Dead He's Got His
characteristic bullet points cuz this he
used to be called schuline or skul and
um one bullet point says there's no more
room in hell and then so the dead will
walk the earth well that's just kind of
in that's just really fasile because
hell is never going to run out of room
there's there's always plenty of room
for

hell so or room in hell I should say so
the dead will walk the earth yeah I
don't know it's it's just sort of comic
book

met it's it's I don't know how mythology
kind of stuff it's like I mean I never
saw Dawn of the Dead I was never really
into zombies much until I saw the movie
World War Z which actually was a good
zombie movie I like the movie World War
Z and it really impressed upon me the
the the hard fact that fast zombies are
way worse than slow
zombies but also I did watch um The
Walking

Dead and I mean clearly it's you can't
take it very seriously I mean it has to
be a metaphysical magical kind of a
thing that somebody their body is broken
so that they die but still they can just

keep walking around and and they don't have to eat they don't even have to breathe somehow their body is still functioning even though it's completely like half rotten and and dead I mean there's no way any kind of virus like some virus developed in a a bioweapons lab that somehow leaks out it can happen sometimes that that it would cause zombies like in The Walking Dead because I mean it just reality just doesn't work that way the only way it could possibly happen it would be it was if it was some kind of Supernatural event that was causing these bodies to reanimate even though I mean they're so broken they couldn't possibly work

so let's see the metaphysics of Dawn of
the Dead there's no more room in hell so
the dead will walk the earth yeah it's
just silly because hell is I mean
there's always more room in hell they
they pack him in real
tight no they really don't even have to
pack them in tight there's just there's
never going to be uh
any standing room only in
hell everyone who's worth worry of hell
can wind up there regardless of how many
beings are already there already an
infinite number of beings
there so I guess I'll just move on to
apocalypse child's next

question in one instance Jesus performed a slight of hand where he transferred the inner demons from one person into a herd of swine which were then driven mad and then drowned what are the pig's

karmic momentum

which burned off someone else's Karma

well the burning off of somebody else's

karma really wasn't the pig's own Karma

I mean that was irrelevant to the pig's

own Karma the pigs just had this bad

karma which allowed them to have a demon

um enter their body and then they just

immediately run into this Lake and and

and

drown yeah I mean that's it's a weird

story in the Bible that's that's Legion

this this the Buddha not the Buddha
Jesus crosses over what the the lake of
Galilee or something and there's this
group this tribe of people called The
gadin Who live on the other side or
maybe it's just the town gadera or
something anyways there's this this
crazy man living in a cemetery who's
just shrieking and cutting himself with
rocks and when Jesus asks him his name
he says my name is Legion for we are
many which implies that he was possessed
by a great many malevolent entities
so then Jesus drove these evil spirits
out of Legion I don't know what his name
was after that and they all went into

this herd of pigs who then just immediately rushed down into the lake and drown so the pigs just had bad karma to get suddenly possessed by a demon and drowned I mean it didn't last very long you know it was probably more merciful than having their throat cut by a a butcher

so yeah I mean the pig's Karma didn't have necessarily anything to do with the karma of Legion it just dovetailed well enough that Legion had the karma of having these Le these demons possessing him

temporarily driven out and then these pigs just happen to have the convenient

Karma of being receptive to being possessed by a demon and then they drowned but there wasn't any I mean the the karma of the pigs wasn't necessarily to absorb the demons that were driven out of somebody else it was just to get the demon and drown so I guess I answered that one so apocalypse now's third question if the world ends and everyone else dies should I just try to live as long as possible I haven't read enough scripture to know where everyone would go but I guess wherever they arrive will just become hell not necessarily always it seems like a waste to just leave after

reaching the highest promotion possible
most superlative man strongest smartest
most handsome largest penis with
dominion over the Earth well if everyone
dies except you then I mean how are you
going to know that you're the only one
left you know if you it's like an Omega
Man situation then um you know there
might still be a few other people like
there's a movie a movie made in New
Zealand back in the 80s I think called
the the quiet Earth where this guy
thinks he's the only man but it turns
out that there's a few other people like
maybe one in 10 million people are still
alive and so he eventually meets up with
like two other

people

um so I mean if I woke up one day and I was the only person I mean it would be quite a shock I have to admit but I don't think I would immediately Auto terminate um you know I might be looking around see if there's anybody else um I mean you can still just live a life of solitude why not I mean like we were talking about earlier you know you shouldn't from the Buddhist point of view you shouldn't Auto terminate unless you've attained the goal and if you're the only person there you'll have plenty of solitude for practice and so forth so yeah I mean the Buddhist thing to do

would just keep just practice dhama you
know just make continue making progress
for as long as you're still alive and
and able to make
progress and uh if everyone else
disappeared I mean why why would it
wherever they arrived just become hell I
mean they were here and this this wasn't
hell there are an infinite number of
Worlds infinite number of places they
can go they'll go wherever it is
appropriate for their karma to land
them so I think I'm just going to move
on next question this is from game fap
and game fap says what is your gaming
experience
like I feel you would have been a big

Doom guy back in the day um my gaming experience well you have to bear in mind that I became a monk in like 1991 and I remained a monk until 2021 so like the MMOs like the Golden Age of like World of Warcraft and all that Doom that was when I was a monk and I had no experience and no exposure to that at all it was like I remember when I was a kid our family got this really cool video game called pong and it was it was really a good game cuz you could play three different sports on this one video game you could play tennis hockey or

handball and

uh actually things even got better than
pong gradually over time and by the time
I was in high school we would
occasionally skip school and drive 50
miles to the town of Olympia where they
had a big mall they didn't even have
malls in aine back then not yet anyway
or if they did it was a rudimentary kind
of mall and we'd go to this the mall had
this place called The Gold Mine which
was an arcade and you go into the arcade
and play play video games so that was
that was what gaming was like when I was
like in high school is you put in a
quarter and play a video game like
Pac-Man I got really good at Pacman I

was like relatively drunk one night when I was in college and I got up to the fifth key in Pac-Man and for those of you who don't know what Pac-Man is I mean there's like this fruit or something that appears on a screen and if you eat that it causes the monsters to turn blue and run away and you can eat them instead but at the at the end there's seven keys that looks just like a house key or something if you get through all seven Legend has it the the the monsters all surrender they got like white flags and you win and I was like drunk in college at a like a roller rink or something I got up to the fifth one I

was just in the flow just a few beers
that well I probably had more than a few
but you just get into this like
spontaneous flow under under alcohol
sometimes like I was good better at pool
when I was drunk too and I got to the
fifth key and and died that was by far
the closest I ever came to winning
Pac-Man but uh after getting out of oh
even when I was a monk when I was in
America on the
internet that there were certain video
games that I would play they were flash
games so I never got into the these
immersive MMOs I never really got into
that probably the best video game I
played on the internet was it's called

World's End and I think it was made by Polish people because the people have like Polish names and stuff I think there's even like a this guy named kurva in the game and um it was then for some reason Google just decided to abolish Adobe Flash from its platform all these games just hundreds thousands of games you could play they just poofed out of existence so I can't play World's End it was it's created by some company called mezzanine stairs if you ever get the chance it's it's worth playing it's like a turn-based strategy game which is what I prefer I don't like games where you have to go

fast so nowadays there's only really two games that I play one is I kill zombies on my phone it's The Walking Dead no man's land is the name name of the game and I'm I'm

becoming almost Invincible on that and also there's this other really good video game called

Sudoku it's not really big on special effects but the numbers are very realistic I mean those numbers look like real numbers on the screen there and that's it I mean the whole MMO thing World of Warcraft and all that I never really got into just partly just because I was a monk back when all that stuff was going on and also I'm just not into

having to move

fast I like to carefully think out what I'm going to do strategize come up with a winning strategy and and play that way so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from dhama River and

this is a easy one what's your opinion

of Shanti daa and I have no idea who

Shanti daa is no clue so I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is

also from dhama River he says I once

heard you say the following quote quote

most Buddhists especially in the west

are not trying to wake up they're just

trying to sleep more comfortably unquote

it was during a group video call I think

Brian Rue was one of the people on it honestly this was the quote that made me look you up on the internet and watch more of your videos it's one of the greatest and most badass quotes I've ever heard from anyone in the world I agree with you can you please elaborate a little a little bit more on it I just want you to expand your message which I believe it's extremely important in these modern times thank you so he wants me to elaborate on this quote most Buddhists especially in the west are not trying to wake up they're just trying to sleep more comfortably and it is true and um I don't think that I actually came up with that on my own I think that

is a paraphrase of some of the stuff
that Paul low has taught in the past
that he would say that like people are
practicing spirituality as a kind of
cope for not really wanting to be
enlightened that if you really want to
be enlightened you'll be enlightened
it's just that you have like these
aversions for fear of annihilation and
so forth and so you compensate by just
having these spiritual practices that
you do that kind of helps you to feel
better about not really deep down
wanting to be enlightened so you can
just sort of Play It spirituality and
remain unenlightened and which is

essentially remaining
asleep and I mean especially in the west
people just want to feel good about
themselves I think a lot of people who
practice meditation it's it's like
stress relief kind of stuff or like the
one Buddhist group that I was
interacting with as a monk in the west
the main Western Buddhist group that I
mean they would just kind of Glide
around with these Blissful Smiles on
their face when they're in the Dharma
Hall and if anyone would bring up
something you know somebody raises their
hand and says what what what should a
person do if they're like the victim of
incest and it's like the leaders of the

group would just shut it down
immediately was like someone had just
dropped a brick this like we'll talk
about that later and then they just get
back to you know something Blissful so
that everyone can feel comfortable
feeling good about themselves they
didn't really want to deal with anything
unpleasant and so I mean if you want to
become enlightened you have to be able
to deal with anything you know you have
to you have to be able to deal with
anything that life throws at you you
can't just avoid the unpleasant
uncomfortable stuff because you're never
going to learn how to deal with it and I

mean most people in the west are just too lukewarm they're not willing to do the really deep harrowing stuff that you have to do if you really want to like cook all those seeds and get everything straightened out and cleared up and and so that you can become enlightened and so I mean they just kind of compensate for being lukewarm and you know meditate and some some people use meditation as a kind of substitute for Narcotics you know they get like this nice feeling that they they meditate for the nice feeling rather than having to face any skeletons and any closets that kind of thing that they kind of see Dharma as just feeling good and you know

they don't want to contemplate death or anything like that a lot of people are like

that and like I've said before even Buddhist monks I think a lot of Buddhist monks they I mean if somebody invented the the enlightenment pill where you were guaranteed to become enlightened by taking this pill they would just run from it in

Terror cuz they just don't want to become enlightened deep down you know they might say you know I want to be enlightened but you know not just yet sort of like St Augustine praying to God you know save me from my sins but not

yet so let's see

here just trying to sleep more

comfortably yeah I mean it's basically

it it's I mean a lot of people they just

don't even have a concept of

Enlightenment they're so locked into

their intellect they just have to see

everything percep

and they they want reality to be in in

accordance with this human ape

psychology they think that that the

world really is human ape psychology and

not just this projection of human ape

psychology onto a world or onto you know

the outside whatever it

is

so where do I go from here

but I mean it it is fairly clear I mean
most people do not really want to be
inlighten even most Buddhists do not
want to be really be inlighten even most
monks do not really want to be
enlightened you know they they want a
better rebirth you know they want to
make some progress but they don't want
to do anything totally radical so that
their personality dissolves anything
like that I mean that's
scary so I guess I've elaborated on at
least a little bit a little bit of
commentary
anyway and so I'm just going to move on
the next question this is from

Wayne and we're actually getting close to the end here so we're doing pretty good now it's three hours so we're not we're not going to be less than three hours but we'll be less than three and a half hours unless I just start digressing wildly which can happen at any

moment so anyways the next question is from Wayne and Wayne says have you read the Zen teachings of bodhi Dharma by Red Pine what are your thoughts on true nature oh wait this is three questions damn we got way more than 50 questions once I start separating these questions you know getting one question mark per paragraph Okay Wayne says have you read

the Zen teachings of bodh Dharma by Red
Pine no I have not the only thing by Red
Pine I ever read was the poems of
Hanan which was kind of a disillusioning
kind of kind of thing Hanan
was he was a Hermit who lived in a cave
in China medieval China and he's
considered to be like a Zen master he
was kind of a Dost and into zen at the
same time and according to the Legends
he was like this zen master but you read
his poems and it turns out that he was
like a mandarin like like a a bureaucrat
an official who happened to be on the
wrong side of like a civil war there was
like a coup or something and he wound up

being red listed and when you were red listed that wasn't good that meant that you know your your head was going to wind up Landing in a basket or something and so he went off and become became like a Hermit mainly to hide from the authorities and in some of his poetry he's like moaning and complaining about how you know he's got to live out in this cave instead of being like this high ranking official he couldn't have been a really high ranking official anyway because he was like lame and back then in order to be like a high ranking Mandarin bureaucrat you had to be like physically perfect in addition to having mastered the Chinese Classics like

confucious and all that had ma Mastery
of like horse writing and archery and
all this and he was lame he couldn't he
could be nothing more than like a middle
level bureaucrat he complained about
that one time he saw some of the the
emperor's wives that were you know out
frolicking in the forest one day and
he's just like pining over
them so it turns out that I mean he
wasn't the the mystical magical Zen
master that tradition makes of him and
it's probably that way with a lot of
these Chinese Zen Masters that they've
just been glorified through a kind of
Mythology and that was like one of the

main things I learned from Reading red
Pine's translation of the poems of
Hanan but I mean I didn't even really
answer the question well I guess I did
at the very beginning he said have you
read the teachings of the Zen teachings
of bodh Dharma by Red Pine and no I
didn't so I could have just said no and
moved on to the next one but then it's
like the closest thing I can to
answering the question like well I have
read this other thing by
him so I'm just G to move on to to
Wayne's next question what are your
thoughts on true
nature true nature I mean is that like
in Zen like according to the legend the

six patriarch hen n when you know
according to the legend he takes the the
bll and robe of the patriarch and the
patriarch tells him to just flee because
nobody's going to tolerate this
illiterate Barbarian cook who's not even
a fully ordained monk being becoming the
next patriarch but there was this one
this one monk to doggedly hunted him
down and he's going to take that bow and
robe back to the Monastery or it
supposedly belonged and hhan asked him
this question he like before your mother
and father were born what was your
original face and that was like this
Coan that hit this Monk and I mean it

was like it hit him hard and he couldn't
answer it and then he realized that Hing
really was the sixth
patriarch and so maybe this the true
nature is the same as the original face
and I mean you can't really have
thoughts on it I mean it's it's a Zen
Coan true nature I mean the true nature
is just I mean if it's not even correct
to say it's infinite formless
Consciousness because you cannot reify
the ultimate you cannot reify the
absolute anything you say about it is
going to be invalid which is I mean most
people just don't get this including
most Buddhist monks I
think so TR true nature I mean it's

indescribable

for

starters but I mean if you want to call

it as a kind of makeshift infinite

formless Consciousness go right ahead

and that would be the true nature of

everybody they all share the same true

nature just as in the upanishads

everyone shares the same self or

Aton so I'm just going to move on to

Wayne's third question is it equivalent

to Spirit awareness or Universal

consciousness oh so this is sort of a

followup on the second one true nature

is it equivalent to

Spirit awareness or Universal

Consciousness I mean you can call it all
three it'd be Universal Spirit Universal
awareness you know it'd be like the
element of awareness that's what

Consciousness is is

awareness so you could call it all three

I mean you can call it whatever you like

you can call it bleian if you want to and

calling it bleian might actually be just

as valid as calling it anything

else but

um yeah I mean apophatic apophatic

mysticism is the way to go which I mean

you cannot express the highest truth in

words the the name that can be named is

not the Eternal name the very first

words of the D

Ching okay so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Arin and Arin says what are the top three qualities that practicing as a strict Monk um gave you I I uh she dictated it so I had to include the um and what she meant was um what three qualities help me to become a functioning Layman after I stopped being a monk so what are the top three qualities that practicing as a strict monk gave you in order to help me to transition smoothly into being a lay person and one of them is a kind of Detachment that I mean a monk is supposed to see the world as just stimuli you know it's like when you look

upon the world you're it's like you're
seeing images on a on a movie screen so
there's always this

Detachment and so first I was seeing
images on a movie screen with regard to
being a monk and then I started seeing
images on a movie screen with regard to
being a lay person and so I mean it
really didn't affect me very much not
that I even ultimately exist but still
there's like this Detachment from just
this

world that causes me to be able to make
transitions more easily than someone
whose life is just totally an upheaval
and they're melting down and so forth so
that would be one of the qualities like

that that practicing as a strict monk
gave me another one would be
austerity and um maybe I shouldn't say
it but a certain amount of aestheticism
can actually be very helpful in like
dealing with uh a woman who's being
unreasonable for
example that it's just you're used
to just harsh reality and like going to
work having to work for a living getting
up early in the morning which I don't do
anymore because I work nights but having
to get up at 6:00 in the morning and I
mean it's like an aesthetic practice
having to work all day it's like an
aesthetic practice and I mean I just got

used to that I mean when you're when I
was a monk you know you just I'm just d
ripping with sweat in the the blazing
hot wastelands of central Burma sleeping
on a concrete floor with a piece of wood
for a pillow all this kind of stuff it's
I mean being a lay person is actually
pretty cushy by comparison in a lot of
respects so that would be another
quality so first I've got like
Detachment and then austerity and then
what other three qualities practicing as
a as a strict
monk oh boy what would be the third one
I mean an increased amount of meta for
my fellow human I guess would help that
I really being uh like a a solitary

renunciate

um in a way it kind of helped me to appreciate my fellow humans better you know it gave me like for example being a monk where you're trying to perfect yourself trying to purify your mind and you see that that is a tall order is not easy to do so that it causes me to have more Christian charity and acceptance of the common person who really doesn't have much of a chance other than just being kind of a [__] so it's like even if I was trying as hard as I could to be a saint and I just stayed being stuck who I was essentially because that's the way it is you me you're just stuck being

who you are it's very difficult to just stop being who you are and start being somebody else schopenhauer had a lot to say about that so it caused me to just have more patience and sympathy and and meta you know benevolence towards human beings in general which helps me to fit into this world better than before I was a monk and just kind of like despise the human race in

general so I guess those would be the three and then arin's second question what are the top three habits as a monk that turn turn turned into that made it more difficult for you to adjust as a late person so three habits as a monk that made it more difficult for me to

adjust as a late person o well I mean

just the

Solitude

um the Solitude aspect caused me to have

fewer social skills I guess you know

being a Hermit is not very good for

developing social skills and so there's

that you know it's

I've having to take take a crash course

and like just being polite I

guess maybe that might be one of the the

habits as a monk another habit is just

um when you don't have to work for a

living you can just I don't know if you

call it lazy but I mean you just you're

at leisure most of the time and then all

of a sudden having all this stuff you have to go into like survival mode and you just got to do all this stuff and take care of everything and that was that was kind of difficult that was kind of a shock to the system where when you're a monk I mean you don't have to worry about much of anything first of all everything's very simplified and you're not even allowed to cook your own food it's people just give you your food and

so yeah I mean that would probably be just the habit of not having to do very much and then all of a sudden having to you like support myself and my woman and you know pay

bills that kind of
thing so that would be that would be two
and then the third habit that made it
difficult for me to turn back into a lay
person

man see the third habit that well
shouldn't mention that one I
guess H I can't really think of a third
one other than one that's kind of
unmentionable

something to do with being celibate for
30 years and then
suddenly suddenly not being celibate
anymore it caused a certain shock to my
system I think and it wasn't just
physical sh it was more of an emotional

thing it's like when you know this like
sexuality is like this no mustn't do it
no mustn't do it and then all of a
sudden it's okay to do it in fact it's
kind of like my husbandly duty that it
really required a a major shift from 30
years of conditioning to all of a sudden
you know doing this thing that I'd been
wanting to do but just like nope can't
do it can't do it can't do
it it was it was like this weird it's
like neurotic conditioning and so forth
that had to be overcome in order to
really come close to being like normally
functioning and I'm not saying that you
know there was anything really outwardly
horribly abnormal but it really took

some adjustment so to

speak and I'm not going to go any more

details than that

God so anyways then there's the last

question the very last question which is

from PSA and PSA says what's today's

beverage what's the flavor and are the

contents of it healthy for you or is it

all chemicals well with regard to

chemicals everything's a chemical water

is a

chemical water is dihydrogen oxide so

many people are killed every year by

water anyways my first beverage the

primary

beverage was about maybe 40% organic

coffee I don't know what country it came from but it came from a country where there's like little brown people speaking in foreign languages they're like picking the coffee beans by hand and uh probably like spreading it out in the the Sun and everything and then the other 60% was was milk it wasn't organic milk I'm sorry to say that store was out of organic milk when I went there please go easy on me I would have got the organic if they had it but it it's guaranteed not to have any of those like hormone injection stuff that they give to the cows to make them give more milk so at least there's that so that was I mean the primary

beverage was lots of it was like coffee
and milk probably a little more milk
than coffee and the second one is this
which it's got some chemicals in it but
then again water's the
chemical and I'm happy to say that
uh just this one can has got 50% of my
daily requirement of panthnic
acid ah and the flavor I don't know what
flavor is Red Bull I don't
they just invented some new flavor maybe
it's just like pantothenic acid flavor
or
something yeah I don't know exactly what
the flavor of Red Bull
is so that's it I'm done my golly and

like I always say at the end when I
should be saying at the beginning if you
have any questions no more than three
per episode

please and I do count question marks you
want if you want to ask one question

that's got like five question marks in
it that's that's a no no that is

transgressive so if you have any

questions that you think I can answer

about Buddhism meditation early Buddhism

terraa especially pre terraa meditation

monasticism philosophy in general

spirituality in general I mean the

farther you get away from Terra Buddhism

the less likely it is that I'll be able

to give like um an educated answer

anything remotely resembling an
authoritative answer but still you might
be surprised sometimes
so uh ask them in the comments below if
you please and uh smash the like button
don't just press it smash the son of a
[__] if you liked it if you didn't like
it then don't do it that would be kind
of dishonest I guess and uh subscribe if
you haven't
already and be happy and now I got to
press the stop recording button here

alrighty then hello and welcome to
question and answer number
1030 I am your host poo basa and this
may be the shaggi you ever see me
because the cold weather is pretty much
over and I think my woman might give me
a haircut tomorrow but I'm still kind of
intermediate I'm like ambivalently
poised between getting my beard trimmed
shorter or just growing it long with
like a braid and like a Muer bead
hanging at the bottom of it I get away
with that [_] cuz my ancestors at least
a lot of them were
Germanic
so you'll find out at the next Q&A I

suppose and so I'll just take a sip of
my chosen

beverage which is not from my sticks cup
as you can see because my woman doesn't
like sticks very much anymore she says
he's becoming a lull cow partly because
he's wearing like a pirate hat sometimes
in his videos now and also that's just
the whole New Orleans thing not New
Orleans New

Orleans and just kind of like dumping
his wife and all that stuff she's women
it's like a lot of people especially
women I think they cannot really
differentiate the person and and like
the Productions of that person you know
it's like Bill Cosby is all of a sudden

not funny anymore even though he was a fairly good stand-up comedian back when I was a kid or also Woody Allen not funny anymore just because of their kind of sexual Kinks so to speak Michael Jackson you know his music I mean people still listen to Michael Jackson's music apparently because the whole him doing inappropriate things with white children was uh not really conclusive and a lot of people don't believe that he did it so anyways I guess I should just start answering questions and it's going to be a moderate amount of questions it's going to be like the middle path

between the extremes of not nearly
enough questions and way too many
questions and the first question is from
ch

is who interestingly now goes by the
name of

Julie so I do hope that after his
transition he at least had the common
courtesy to his woman to to at least
convert to being a

lesbian and tash is says I mean

Julie if non-material beings such as
ghost or human Souls exist which are
believed in many religions and they can
see hear and think without a body then
why people need eyes to see ears to hear
and brain to think and dreams or

otherwise we call them dead we are
living in a material world and
materialism seems to explain things in
this world we are living right now
thoughts well I think we can just kind
of ignore other religions and just kind
of go with Buddhism especially Terra
Buddhism because that is really the main
perspective of these videos that I'm
making and according to terab
Buddhism um ghosts are not non-material
beings ghosts have a physical
body much as we have a physical body
it's just that the matter of which they
are composed has a different subtlety
than ours

going with more modern lingo it's like
the the physical matter of which ghosts
are composed their bodies anyway has a
different frequency or vibratory rate or
whatever and with regard to human Souls
I mean from the Buddhist point of view
they don't
exist so really any kind of
beings if if they can see and hear as a
general rule they've got physical eyes
and physical ears even though they might
be invisible from our point of view
nevertheless they're just at a different
subtlety of matter and they still have
eyes and ears like according to the
legend the Buddha after his just
immediately after his Enlightenment he

was thinking who should he teach Adam to
First and the first people that came to
mind were his two teachers who taught
him

meditation and then he realized they're
in formless realms they won't be able to
hear me say anything and so then he had
to uh find somebody else which turned
out being his five athletic companions
before his

Enlightenment so you do have to have
physical sense organs in order to have
um sense contact and sense Consciousness
and sense perception going with Buddhist
philosophy so I'm just going to go on to
what tasas is or Julie's second question

which is why you make a special point on
not telling lies when you occasionally
drink beer and maybe once in a while
kill a mosquito maybe well I haven't
really

killed a mosquito in quite a long time
just because I'm not really exposed to
mosquitoes much here I mean when you're
living in the tropics I killed more
mosquitoes ironically as a monk than I
do as a lay person because as a monk I
might be living in a cave with no screen
door mosquitoes coming in and I mean you
just sit there and get bitten and
actually killing
mosquitoes it didn't happen nearly as
much when I was a monk as killing like

biting flies because a mosquito just itches when it bites you plus maybe you get malaria but like a horse fly or a smaller like a Sandfly kind of thing I mean it hurts and they come in swarm sometimes and I just never had the patience to just sit there and be bitten by horse flies it just it just wasn't going to happen there was this one kind of fly I not sure what it's called maybe a Sandfly it was sort of a salt and pepper kind of a grayish modeled color and it was longer than a house fly not nearly as big as a horse F they they would come in swarms and I would use my sweat I was

getting really good at I had like a
little washcloth that I'd use largely
for wiping sweat but it was also
necessary just as a flail to keep biting
parasitic insects off of me and I got
really good like you got one on your arm
here you kind of hit hit it from like
the other side so it has like this
Whiplash effect and goes really fast
when it wraps around and I was just
getting too lethal to be appropriate as
a monk I mean at first you know it's
like you almost kill it and it flies
away and that's
fine but anyways I try to compensate my
demerit from killing these insects by
feeding them to ant lions because the

place where I was living under this Rock
Ledge where I had no mosquito net or
anything like that I was just a Sitting
Duck for any parasitic insect that came
along um there were a lot of these ant
lion pits and those of you who live in
places where it rains a lot may not know
what ant lions are but it's a kind of
insect that digs this cone it's like a
funnel shaped pit in sand or dust and
things follow into it and it grabs them
and eats them and so I'd feed the the
nice little ant lions with uh the
victims or me I mean I was kind of the
victim I was striking out in
self-defense so I did get a little bit

of Merit to kind of compensate for the
demerit of of killing them little
bastards

but I have I have to admit I have
occasionally fed live food to those
fishes back there and I'm not the one
that's killing them but still I mean
when you're dropping brine shrimp live
brine shrimp which when I was a kid were
known as sea monkeys when you drop them
in there the fish they they just kill
them all off it's it's like brine shrimp
genocide kind

of but what getting back to the question
here see I'm just digressing all over
the place I haven't even started
answering the question

really why you make a special point of
not telling lies when you occasionally
drink beer and maybe once in a while
kill a mosquito well I mean telling the
truth is

important and I mean I've gotten myself
in trouble by just brutally brutal
honesty I

guess um you know everyone else is
expect like job applications or
something everyone's expected to just
lie but I don't do it and uh I mean it's
just it's just better it's there's more
Integrity in drinking a beer every once
in a
while and U maybe killing mosquito once

in a while and just owning up to it then pretending that you don't CU that's dishonest and you're still drinking the beer and killing the mosquito anyway so by lying about it you're just adding more demerit to the pile I guess so I think I'm just going to move on to Julie actually trasa is third question which is did you learn the most popular polish word on a first day on a Polish ship um yeah this is with regard to a statement I made on the previous Q&A where I worked on a Polish ship when I was 21 years old the sagita which is Polish for Sagittarius there was a Polish fishing Fleet off the coast of like I mean they would fish off the

coast of like Oregon for hke at the time
and the fishing fleet was named after
constellations so I was on on the sigita
with Captain bouic

kumka and uh yeah it was it was like the
cuss word just the interjection of
choice for Polish Sailors is

kurva and one time I asked the technolog
who is one of the officers on the ship
you know what does that mean and he just
kind of awkwardly says it means um

change but I don't see how change would
become like the favorite cuss word of
Polish Sailors so anyone knows what

kurva literally means just put it in the
comments below and and I'll I'll finally

finally figured out after all these
years but wasn't the first day but I
mean it happened pretty frequently when
stuff would go wrong you'd have all
these police Sailors on the the back
deck of the ship

saying so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from the
savatours

and I'm not sure if the savatours is
really more than one person or it could
just be one person pretending to be more
than one person just to kind of increase
their clout or something and the sabur
says what is mind

so what is mind it doesn't matter and
what is

matter never mind it was just too hacked
of a joke for me to pass up but what is
mind I mean it's sort of like energy in
physics like

Consciousness I mean mind would be

Consciousness and mental States I

suppose going with English

words so yeah mind would be a

combination of Consciousness and mental

States like perception and

volition so if you want to know what

Consciousness is it's getting it's

getting into like

energy to a physicist where it's

practically an undefined term I mean you

just have to get down Dig Down dig down

until you get down to sort of like the
Bedrock of words that I mean you can't
really Define them in other terms
because I mean you have to have sort of
like the the basic fundamentals
of words that I mean they don't really
have anything beneath them and like
energy in physics I mean that's just the
the basic you know that's that's what
physics is all about is the study of of
energy and so in a sense it's kind of
ironic but also kind of appropriate that
it's practically an undefined term I
mean you can say it's like the capacity
to do work or some such but with regard
to Consciousness I mean you can say it's
awareness

but I mean you could also say it's
energy I mean personally I think
ultimately energy and Consciousness are
the
same

so empty space you know According to
some physicists anyway empty space
contains both zero energy and infinite
energy and so I mean you can say the
same thing about empty space contains
zero Consciousness and infinite
Consciousness kind of a thing

but what is mind I mean it's it's just
one of these words where um I mean you
can everyone knows what mind is pretty
much because that's really the only

thing you can know for sure if you can
know anything for sure it's your own
Consciousness because anything else you
know you know indirectly through your
own

Consciousness but I guess like a really
simple

like um what's the word I'm trying to
think of I can't even think of the word
I'm trying to think of

now uh it's not

sufficient insufficient like an

insufficient brief explanation would be
awareness

so yeah but I mean technically from a
Buddhist point of view mind or cheetah
would be Consciousness and conscious

ious is sort of
like ter Terra Buddhism has real
difficulties trying to explain
Consciousness because they can't really
have it as the substance of mental
states which in my opinion it is because
they have to put it all at the same
level of reality so they've got
perception and Consciousness being
equally real at the same level of
reality and nibana and all sorts of
things that's everything is just at the
same level of Ultimate Reality
and uh yeah I mean it's like the
substance of thought would be another
way of defining mind or Consciousness or

I mean if you want to use mind in the broader English sense it would be both Consciousness and mental States and I think I better just move on to the next question this is from S papal laa and S papala says what's the longest time you have meditated and I assume he means the longest time I ever just sat in meditation without getting up and that was fairly early on in my career as a beu when I was able to sit in the full Lotus for two hours straight so it would be somewhere in the neighborhood maybe plus or minus a little bit of two hours and the thing is my legs have never been extremely flexible and I was

never able to sit in the full Lotus
without Agony for much longer than two
hours but but I mean with regard to just
meditating in general if you're doing
intensive meditation you're meditating
all day you know it's like you sit for
an hour and then you're mindful of the
desire to stand up you're mindful of the
actions involved the physical actions of
standing up you're you're mindful of you
know the changes in your vision as
you're standing up you know you're
mindful of all these things then you
start doing walking meditation and so
it's
unbroken like some Seattles they talk

about if you want to start a fire you
rub two sticks together and it's not
going to happen if you rub two sticks
together for a while and then just set
them down and then a while later you
pick them back up and rub them together
some more and then you set them down and
a little while later you come back and
start rubbing them together again you're
never going to get a fire so you have to
keep rubbing the sticks which means that
even when you're not sitting
cross-legged with your eyes closed
you're still meditating you're still
practicing SA batana mindfulness of
walking mindfulness of seeing
mindfulness of whatever it is that

you're

doing and with regard to that kind of meditation then yeah pretty much all day when I was doing really intensive meditation like at a Meditation Retreat or like a self- retreat out in the forest just going for it full blast then pretty much the only time you're not meditating is when you're sleeping or if you're just you know your mind wanders away and you you just start thinking about something or you have to interact with a visitor or something and then maybe the the meditation or general mindfulness will you know kind of evaporate but with regard to sitting

cross-legged which was in the full Lotus
it was about two hours and so I'm going
to move on to the next question this is
from Jo do and Joo says how were the
Pyramids

built and I'm going with the standard
like archaeological
theory that the Egyptian pharaohs had
armies of thousands of slaves and that
the building blocks of the pyramids were
pulled with ropes over rollers however
many miles it took to get there and they
do have theories now that the pyramids
like the Egyptian pyramids especially
we're not talking like Aztec Pyramids or
prehistoric Chinese pyramids we're
talking Egyptian Pyramids like the Great

Pyramid or the Great Pyramids of Giza
that originally they were sort of in a
spiral they were they were built with
like a spiral Spiral ramp going around
the outside so that the Rocks could be
pulled up to get them up to the top
they'd be going up this ramp that went
along the outside of the unfinished
pyramid and I guess there is some
evidence that that is the case based
on whatever it is you know sort of like
what is it
ultrasound or something or was is it
deep sensing sonar I don't know what
it's called but you know they can see
the structure of like a spiral ramp

going along the outside of the the
pyramid going up towards the top so yeah
that would be my main
hypothesis I think space aliens had
nothing to do with it technologically
advanced um

atlantans after Atlantis sank under the
ocean I don't think they had anything to
do it um if it wasn't armies of slaves
using Stone AG or copper age or very
early Bronze Age

Technology then maybe it was priests who
were channeling the power of some God
who was able to help build these
pyramids but I really do not think that
space aliens or atlantans had anything
to do with

it and I will just point out once again
that I think in all probability Atlantis
was just a

garbled um a garbled Legend accounting
for the the minoan civilization centered
on

Crete and that Crete ceased being like the
the local power in the Eastern
Mediterranean largely due to the
eruption of

Thera um like an ancient volcanic island
about 70 miles from Crete which may have
wiped out the Cretan Navy and also
blanketed the the island of Crete with
enough volcanic ash that the crops died
so that their civilization was hurt

badly enough that Myan Greeks or dorians
could then invade cre and take it over
and just turn it

Greek so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from xenoid
and Zenith void says what are your
thoughts on this excerpt from the book
Blood Meridian on the nature of war and
he kindly left a YouTube link in which
judge Holden is giving his theory of war
and zenith continues here judge Holden is
seen as one of the most evil villains in
fiction often compared to the devil the
Gnostic demiurge and its archons Mara
Etc I like cormic McCarthy's
paraphrasing of heraclitus's quote war
is the father of all things in this

speech by the judge and yeah this in the
speech by the judge the judge finishes
by saying war is

God and I mean it was too long of a
speech for me to really like address
everything he says but really what he
does say about war has some dark wisdom
to it is it's like war created the human
race I mean the judge doesn't say that
I'm saying that you know it's like
Darwin the like Darwinism accelerated
through War that's one reason why the
human race evolved as fast as it did you
know up in the the last you know 100,000
years or
so is that I mean war was fueling that

that instead of being attacked by
leopards and bears we're being attacked
by Barbarian tribes and that sort of
thing and it was just the strongest
succeeded and like in the in western
civilization you start off with the
Greeks and then you had the Romans after
that and both of them just they were
militaristic civilizations that turned
kicking ass into a science that's one
reason one of the main reasons why the
Greeks and the Romans were as successful
as they were is because they were using
like Western
Ingenuity as in as ways of like
improving the efficiency at which they
could just like slaughter their

enemies so I

mean judge Holden is kind of glorifying that and justifying that and you know saying that you know it's sort of like the force of Darwin or even like God to him in like shaping mankind I mean he wouldn't care about people kind he would mankind for him and you know it's like it's sort of like darwinian Evolution compare combined with like honor and like the value of Life at least the value of this the winner you know the value of Life To the victor you know that sort of thing is just to him I mean that's the me that's the purpose of life sort of like Conan the Barbarian

paraphrasing Genghis Khan you know what is best in life to defeat the enemy to see them driven before you and to hear the lamentation of the women and I mean there is a kind of dark wisdom to that because that kind of element added to a civilization makes that

Civilization just ass kicking and so they're more likely to prosper and then of course they get real prosperous and then they start getting decadent with like compassion and human rights and all this and then things start to collapse or at least Decay and then some other warlike barbarous tribe just kind of sweeps in and takes

over so I think really
civilization once you take away the
militarism then you start getting into a
state of like castrated
degeneracy just I mean it's almost
inevitable and so I mean it may be
better to have a certain amount of
militarism Guided by ideas of justice
and honor than to have castrated
degeneracy so I mean judge Holden was
kind of an extremist on that score I
don't think he might have cared all that
much about Justice it's just might makes
right but still to have a certain amount
of militarism like Trump is trying to
return the United States to

after you know a

Democrat um Administration has the main purpose of the army being promoting gay rights and this sort of thing around the world handing out food packets that kind of

thing like uh who is it heg Seth says I mean the main purpose of a military is lethality either the the ability to kill your enemies or else just be scary enough that your enemies are just aren't going to mess with you

anymore so it's a kind of harsh worldly wisdom that is pretty much unavoidable so long as you are living a worldly life and I'm just going to move on next question also from

xenoid and xenoid says what do you think of this Friedrich nche quote under peaceful conditions the warlike man will attack himself I think some warlike men will attack themselves just in a way just sort of abuse themselves through like over drinking and and just acting crazy and getting in fights biker bars and that kind of thing although a lot of other warik men warlike men under peaceful conditions will just sort of they will attack other people like my father when he was a younger man I mean he was he liked bar brawling you know you'd go to a bar for three reasons get drunk pick up a women and fight somebody

I mean that's he liked fighting when he was a young man I mean he' pretty much outgrown that by the time he became my father but still there are guys like that and uh so under peaceful conditions the warlike man won't necessarily attack himself he may just become like a biker or a gang member or you know just fighting amongst themselves but maybe n had something else in mind that I'm not thinking of maybe he was thinking on a higher plane than that so anyways I'm anyways I'm just going to move on next question this is from xenoid also can you explain the symbolism of kie killing Shiva and I assume he's referring to the pictures

you can find um

occasionally in New Age homes for

example especially new age female homes

of you know colie who's like dancing on

the the body of Shiva she's got like the

necklace of human heads you know she's

got like blood dripping everywhere like

the tongue sticking out and the fangs

and all that and apparently that came

from a

Legend

um where the the Davis and the asuras

you know the gods and the Titans were

having one of their Wars and somehow kie

just started fighting

she just went into a kind of Berserk

frenzy and just started killing all the
the the demons or the the asuras and
then after they were killed she just
kept killing and killing until she was
just going to kill everything I mean she
had momentum going she was on a roll and
so the other gods go to Shiva and say
look she's your consort you deal with
her you got to stop her so he goes and
she kills him too but then I mean
killing him kind of caused her to
realize whoa well I think I'm overdoing
it somewhat so then she breathed life
back into into Shiva and Shiva was all
better again and I think part of this is
just the standard Indian system going
back into vidic Times of whatever God

that you're worshiping is the highest
God a manifestation of the highest God
so colie in this case was just
demonstrating herself as like the
Supreme deity who can even kill Shiva
and then restore Shiva to life maybe
with some feminine
lifegiving like the stereotypical you
know Miracle of giving life of of women
thrown
in because the females are the ones who
bring life more than males do at least
uh you know bi biologically I guess
and kie is just kind of interesting to
me because it wasn't until early modern
times that Ki was becoming a kind of

cosmic deity who actually had some good aspects you know now she's like the Slayer of defilements the Slayer of demons that kind of thing but I mean there are mentions of Kali goddesses in the Ptolemy and they're pretty much demones you know they're like cousins of Mara and so Kali was a kind of demonist who haunted battlefields up until maybe like the 1600s in India I think it was like in Bengal especially that she started being reformed and turned into a kind of cosmic good goddess with like a fierce aspect in slaying evil kind of a thing but the symbolism like killing Shiva I think my best bet my best guess

is that colie

worshippers you know who who she's like

the the the big one you know she's just

demonstrating her superiority like in

the bagavat Gita you've got Krishna

declaring himself to be Shiva in

addition to all these other gods like

he's Brahma he's Shiva he's he's all the

pantheon of gods he's everything so to a

Vite you know it's like that's showing

that Vishnu is greater than Shiva

because shiva's just one of the aspects

of Vishnu and it's kind of the same deal

here where kie is is supreme because

she's even killing Shiva and then

restoring Shiva to life and uh I mean

that's my best guess although a Hindu who knows more about the Legends and all this might know better than me on this case with regard to this case so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra 1 and occasionally still known as Liber Lam and he says have you ever had NADA and in parentheses he's got inner sound in meditation and so I I don't fully understand this that NADA is Spanish for

nothing but why he would equate NADA with inner sound I don't know um but NADA just nothingness yeah I mean there's a certain amount of nothingness that has arisen in my meditation sort of

like it reminds me of St John of the
Cross his Ascent of Mount Carmel the
ascent of Mount Carmel is just NADA NADA
NADA NADA NADA NADA just nothing nothing
nothing nothing nothing nothing nothing
till you get to the the peak of you know
the

highest highest realization that a human
being is capable of
experiencing but when Stellar Supreme
identifies NADA with inner
sound then yeah

I can't really relate to it I mean I
have meditated in which um you know you
can hear like your the your pulse in
your inner ear you know it's like you

can hear your own blood pressure

essentially you know you're your mind

gets so silent and you're in like you

know silent cave and so I mean you can

hear like the blood rushing through your

inner ears which then has some effect on

the eardrum

presumably but uh it hasn't been

anything metaphysical that I'm aware of

I haven't heard any Celestial music or

anything like

that so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from covac and sead

zida and seac and sead zida says please

explain the samba

Kaya and I'm No Authority on the samba

Kaya um it's a Mahayana Buddhist

concept and it's one of the three bodies of Buddha the three Kaaya of the Buddha first youve got the nuraya which is just the physical body of godma Buddha the sage of the shakya clan then you've got the Sakaya which is sort of like a Celestial Buddha in like a kind of Heaven realm and then you got the dharmakaya which is sort of like the essence of buddhahood which is sort of like omniscience or infinite Consciousness that pervades the entire universe and I have read that early Mahayana only had two bodies they had the nuraya or the physical body of the Buddha and then they had the

dharmakaya and I have read I don't
remember where I read this possibly in
AK Waters Indian Buddhism
book um that it was the yoga charara
school which arose after the maamaa
school it was sort of like
a um I wouldn't call it a reform of
maama but it was sort of built upon
maaka philosophically and I think it was
kind of a step backwards from maaka
personally but the yoga charara School
according to whatever author I was
reading was um it was it was them or
they who came up with this samboa Kaya
concept I mean it's certainly not a an
early Buddhist concept it's uh you know
it arose centuries after the time of the

Buddha according to scholarly
authorities and it was the third of the
three bodies of the Buddha to get
traction become famous become like
official Mahayana Buddhist
Doctrine so I mean if you compare the
three bodies of the Buddha with like
three versions of God in in like
Christianity like the nayah the physical
body would just be like Jesus The
Carpenter's son living in
Nazareth and then the samboa Kaya would
be sort of like Christ in glory
enthroned in heaven with the angels
fluttering around him and that sort of
thing and then the dharmakaya would be

just like God Almighty who is just
pervades the universe and doesn't really
have a physical body that sort of
thing so I'm just going to move on to se
of action sead Z's second question
which is have you ever felt like if you
read through the sutas or other profound
texts somewhere you would find what you
were missing and immediately find the
key to nibbana for some reason I have
this hope and I don't know why well when
I was young maybe you know when before
I'd read everything now I've pretty much
seen everything there is to say on the
subject of like becoming
enlightened although occasionally after
you know I've stopped looking

then you know I'd stumble across or just
karmic coincidence would just land a
book into my hands that was just right
what I needed to read like for example
um there's a book by Paul low called in
each moment and I was going through a
rough time as a monk because I was just
like struggling against my own
defilements you know it was like I was
trying to be a perfected Saint just like
the text say you know a monk should not
feel anger a monk should not feel lust
monk should not feel hatred a monk
should not have
preferences you know and it's like
trying to live up to that it's like

you're trying to be somebody else you're
not you're trying to be not yourself
it's like you're you're you're like
rejecting your own nature and just like
trying possibly in some cases trying to
use like camar Rouge tactics against
your old defilements just destroy your
defilements and it results in a lot of
like
frustration and
hysteria and
just sometimes it could even get to the
point of self-loathing
and it really was not working or helping
all that much and then I get this book
in each moment by Paulo who's saying you
know don't be against your own nature

don't be against even if you are against
your own nature don't be against your
own against this you know just accept
the way things are which is kind of like
a chrisna mury kind of teaching too and
it just happened to be the right thing
at the right time it was just what I
needed to read but it wasn't like I had
this feeling that if I just get this
book or some book it's going to help
because I figured I already read
everything but every once in a while
you'll just get this nudge you know an
unusual Direction you know it's like it
might be saying stuff that's not so
different what you've already read

before or heard before but it's just
hits you at the right time from just the
the right angle to nudge you in just the
right way to make some improvement you
know to make uh you know like like a
growth spurt a spiritual growth surge
kind of a

thing so have I ever felt like if I read
through the sutras or other profound text
somewhere I would find what I was
missing and immediately find the K toana
at this point it's I can pretty well
appreciate that um I mean you're not
going to find the secret of reality
written in words just I mean genuine
knowledge is not in words the the name
that can be named is not the Eternal

name which is I've said that like three
videos in a row at

least the name that can be named is not
the Eternal name

so um it's not so much the words or what
you like what this or that suta says I
mean if you haven't read it before you
haven't been exposed to that information
then

maybe but generally wisdom literature
once you you're familiar with the that
genre that I mean it's very it becomes
more and more unlikely that you're going
to come across something that's just
going to go wow I never never considered
that before because I mean once you've

read the like the the mystical
Literature Like the higher more more
advanced dharmic texts of various
religious systems you've read Krishna
myty you you know you've read all this
stuff then eventually you get jaded and
it doesn't have much of an effect on you
anymore you've already you've already
read the same general stuff over and
over

again and in Terra it's even more that
way because it's more limited you know
this I mean doctrinally you're not going
to have all these extreme views this
this whole spect it's going to be a much
bro much more narrow

Spectrum so yeah when I was young I felt

that way I suppose but the more
experience you get the less you feel
that way but then like I was saying
every once in a while you just you just
might out of the blue due to your own
Karma just get hit with this teaching
that just hits you the right way and
nudges you in the right
direction so I'm just going to move on
to see of action Z's next question how do
I come to terms with friends moving on
like TIG it makes me not want to meet
new people in the first place because I
know what is to eventually come well I
mean that's impermanence I mean Sab Sab
Sara anicha everything that has a

beginning has an end Neo I mean that's
just basic Buddhism I mean it's just
something you bear in mind I mean I mean
it seems like

that seac and sead Zona has a certain
amount of clinging to others that uh you
know he does he wants it to be permanent
or something and I mean anything that
has a beginning has an end it's just
something that you I mean it requires a
certain amount of dharmic maturity or
something to just really accept that as
just that's just the way it is and it
could be that I mean you really take
that to heart and it might inspire you
to just go alone like the Horn of the
rhinoceros and become a renunciant

recluse which is something that I did
for many

years um or on the other hand you might
think that human interaction is worth
the the fact that it's it's not going to
be permanent everything that has a
beginning has an

end like I mean this reminds me right
now of um my my woman's mother's

boyfriend has a son who I mean he's

apparently I mean maybe I shouldn't say

this but I mean his his body is wrecked

he's got like like stage four cancer and

he's had a number of Strokes after being

diagnosed with that and he's got blood

clots and all sorts of things going

wrong with him and I mean there's a good chance he's not going to be here a week from now and I mean as a father I mean I never met the guy but I mean his father certainly has and that's just

what you may have to face in life if you interact with other

people that yeah I mean they're going to be taken away from you sooner or later I mean that's just right there in the the poly

texts like read the the Sal Su of the suan that you know just as just as all fruit you know it eventually falls from the tree or just as anything made of clay is eventually going to get broken that it's the same way with the life of

Mortals

and lamentation is useless because
that's just the way of the
world so I mean you got two choices you
can if you don't want to have to deal
with the impermanence of human
interactions then you just go alone and
become a renuncian recluse or just a
recluse or whatever and I mean otherwise
if you think that there is still value
in it I mean eating I mean it's like why
bother eating ice cream I mean it's it's
going to be gone you're going to eat it
all and then it's going to be
gone I mean does that mean you shouldn't
eat ice cream I mean it's good while

you're eating it and then you run out I
mean the Bowl's empty you know oh
well Le you can get more ice cream and
you can get more friends
too so I mean it's just a matter of
personal choice I think the traditional
ancient early Buddhist approach is well
it's all impermanent so you're better
off just not wallowing in it not getting
any attachment to it at all but still I
mean there is a difference between
having a friend and clinging to a friend
so you can have a friend and appreciate
that friend and enjoy that friend's
company derive benefit from that friend
and then when you just go your separate
ways you know there's no moping and

lamenting about it it's just that's just
the way life is

anyway yeah and you're going to find TIG
again I mean he's already been kicked
off our server twice once as an American
apparently and once as an Ethiopian so
TIG takes many forms and he may come
back as say Japanese next

time and then you can be friends with
him until he's kicked off again and then
he'll come back possibly as uh Uruguayan
and you make friends with them again and
enjoy

that don't cling because clinging is the
cause of all suffering clinging and
attachment and desire and

craving and

delusion and I'm just going to move on

next question this is from

PSA and PSA says are you secretly a

vigilante superhero with a double

identity fighting crime and bringing

Justice to the world when no 's looking

and that should be an obvious no because

there are certain people in this world

if I really was a

superhero that I mean they wouldn't be

in their position right now because I'd

I'd mess them

up so I mean it could just be that I

believe in karma and it's like well you

know if I take out this James Bond super

villain type person who is causing all

kinds of havoc in the world
that uh you know he' make Bad Karma for
me so I'll just let him keep doing that
but then I wouldn't be much of a
vigilante superhero if Buddhist ethics
prevented me from harming any
being so I mean I it's just I got to
deny it anyway because otherwise I
wouldn't secretly be the Vigilante
superhero
anymore
so yeah I can't just blurred out you
know in reality I am Wonder
warthog next question this is from yuguo
and yuguo says I met a person who does a
Goa meditation they told me that you

should not know anything about Buddhism
and learning dhma is useless I was
baffled I tried convincing them that
right effort is important but failed and
he thoughts and then parenthesis he's
got they told me that it comes from
meditation right effort well goink
meditators are like the Jehovah's
Witnesses of Buddhism that a lot of them
are just
fanatical and they have like a similar
attitude or at least many of them do as
Jehovah Witnesses where is if somebody
leaves the
group you know they stop being going a
meditator and goes follow start
following some other

method they're just considered dead
they're just shunned which is what
Jehovah's Witnesses often do also
and I mean they are just a lot of Goa
people are just totally convinced that
they have found the way and that you
don't need to do anything other than the
goink method I mean I knew this Canadian
monk he didn't last very long I met him
in Burma and he was a going
meditator and he gets ordained as a monk
just because he wanted to live in a
certain cave and only monks could could
stay and meditate in that cave so he
became a monk so he could meditate in
this cave and do his goink Retreats his

10day goink or what are they called

they're not called

Retreats I can't remember what they're

called but anyways sometimes I'd be

trying to teach him some kind of dhama

and he'd get this look of just like just

he he it's like he could hardly stand me

telling him just basic fundamentals of

Buddhist ethics and philosophy it's like

I don't care about that WKA G is my

father I'm completely satisfied with

this teachings I don't need to know

anything else and I mean how many goka

meditators become enlightened Goa wasn't

wasn't enlightened according to his own

confession well I did read in like a Goa

pamphlet once this is like the words of

SN Goa himself that um I mean if you if you need to swim it's good to to like have PR practice in swimming you ought to know how to swim swim and not just have like a degree in swimology without ever having gotten into the water so that I mean to that extent sure personal practice is more important than reading stuff in books but still I mean the Goa method is like very much stripped down and simplified probably oversimplified and it does not seem to be a method that really can take you as far as some other methods can so those are my thoughts I guess but I

mean try and talk sense to a Jehovah's Witness and see how far you get and try to talk sense to a Goa meditator who is just absolutely persuaded Goa G is his spiritual father you're better off not knowing anything else about Buddhism other than what Gua G has taught then I mean it's pretty much the same situation so I mean just even knowing just like the three marks of existence that kind of thing I don't I assume Goa teaches that but I don't know what kind of emphasis he puts on it but even even Goa system had the entire poly toptica printed but they had like the stuff that was emphasized by Goa printed in red ink and the rest of

it P printed in Black Ink so so you
could know which parts especially to
study

anyways I'm just going to move on to
Yu's next question which is what is the
reason that in the west all bad things
that happen are attributed to Karma and
all good to God it's baffling to me that
people think karma is only responsible
for bad stuff well that's just kind of a
it's like a colloquial use of karma like
Instant Karma especially where you do
something bad and then something bad
happens to you you know it's like you
can see videos like on rumble or
something Instant Karma where somebody

pulls a gun on a guy and then the guy just pulls out his own gun and shoots him that kind of thing or some guy tries to rob a tries to carjack somebody and then the guy in the car just runs him over that kind of thing Instant

Karma um so I guess it's mainly because of that sort of thing although sometimes you'll hear about Karma you know some there's a good person something good happened to them and some people will say yeah that's his karma too it's just that it's just more commonly used with regard to the Instant Karma kind of thing of somebody's doing something bad and immediately gets you know gets smashed because of it and in the west

now all good isn't attributed to God
definitely because there are so many
atheists that just aren't going to do
that plus really religious people will
tend if they're in a religious
contemplative kind of mood will accept
that you know whatever happens to you is
the will of God although that's more of
a Muslim thing now than a Christian one
I

think so yeah I mean I haven't really
noticed the same I mean there's a
certain Trend in that
direction but I really don't think that
in the west all bad things that happen
are attributed to Cara and all good

things are attributed to God you know
some people don't believe in karma or
God so I mean the majority of people
aren't going to be attributing bad
things to Karma uh and probably most
things I mean even Christians unless
they're feeling particularly spiritual
at that moment will just think that good
things that happen is just good luck or
you know your own doing or or
whatever natural natural phenomena
taking its course taking their
course so yeah I I don't entirely agree
with the
generalization that in here in the west
all bad things are attributed to Karma
and all good things are attributed to

God but uh it is more likely that karma is considered a Bad Thing mainly just because of like Instant Karma videos on like YouTube and Rumble and bitshoot and and

X so I'm just going to move on next question this is from

nmit and nmit says almost all of my friends are more successful than me make more money than me this really bothers me any idea on how I could deal with this well I mean it's it's fairly superficial point of view maybe it's a traditional cultural point of view that success is equated with the amount of money you make which isn't true at all

especially from a spiritual point of view I mean from like a a Biblical Christian point of view it's the exact opposite you know it's the poor who are going to go to heaven and woe under the rich for they already have their consolation

so yeah I mean it's it's a superficial point of view possibly like a a cultural like an Asian point of view where you know the doctor is more respectable than the

carpenter but uh I mean nmit seems like a relatively like

philosophical relatively spiritual

person who should be able to acknowledge the plain

fact that I mean true success is not
measured in
dollars or whatever the unit of currency
is in your
country I mean that's just that is
really just superficial and you
shouldn't even play along with that kind
of thing
just if you're happier than them but I
mean if it bothers you that they more
make more money than you then I mean
that's one of the reasons why you're not
as happy as you could
be so I mean I'm not rich I drive a
forklift for a
living and uh I really don't care you

know it's like we I'm I can live fairly
comfortably I can support my woman
fairly comfortably you know we can eat
restaurant food sometimes we're not in
debt well I guess we still making
payments on the
Jeep but still the house is paid for I
technically although you don't really
own property in America because of
property taxes it's like you're still
renting you don't pay your property
taxes they just take the house away from
you so
anyways how you deal with I mean
you're you're better off well I don't
know from Many religious points of view
including early Buddhism you're better

off not being rich I mean in Buddhism I mean the the most serious practitioners of Buddhism are the monks and they're forbidden even to touch money under almost any

circumstances I mean you're penniless literally I had zero money for 30 years so it's just a matter of perspective I mean there's nothing necessarily

wrong with having most of your friends having more money than you maybe you should just find poorer

friends golly but seriously I mean you should if you look at it philosophically you should realize that real success is

not measured in

money real success is measured in wisdom

or goodness or happiness not in money

and a lot of rich people are just messed

up people Mich Michael Jackson he was

sort of a role model for a long time he

was just one of the richest most well

most famous people in the world he was

rich could buy pretty much anything he

wanted to buy a chimpanzee buy a castle

whatever and he was a messed up

miserable person Howard Hughes one of

the richest people of his day he was a

messed up individual a lot of rich

people are messed up in fact I mean like

a

a relatively destitute Burmese villager

has less unhappiness in his life than
the average multi multi-millionaire or
billionaire in the
west just because they have fewer
desires second Noble

Truth all suffering is caused by desire
plus the other things that I mentioned
several minutes
ago

so I guess it seems to me nurman has
enough understanding
really to comprehend and agree with what
I've just explained so I don't really
see what the problem is other than just
habit so be mindful of it when
this unhappiness arises and then you'll

understand it better and stop
reinforcing it and I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from thermal squid and thermal squid
says why should we strive for
enlightenment if we can be properly
suspicious that terms such as
enlightened beings refers to nothing or
are otherwise
unquantifiable I have hit a wall here
and can't escape a kind of skepticism or
nihilism about the reality of something
like Enlightenment despite the fact that
I'm arbitrarily certain that other
elements of the Dharma are reliably true
for example that the world is a denser
mental State and that Consciousness is

undesirable Etc however I cannot make much sense of the advice that striving for enlightenment which is implied to be impossible or nebulous is both samsaric or hindering and also the object of our urgency well let's see here yeah enlightened beings I mean that's that's an oxy [__] in a sense because ultimately there is no being and it's part of the problem that thermal squid has it seems to me based just on this question just disregarding all the other stuff that he is written or composed texted printed whatever is I mean he's just stuck in his mind he is addicted to

intellect so I

mean you cannot know Reality by thinking

about it you cannot know reality

intellectually and Ultimate Reality is

just off the scale that doesn't mean

that it doesn't exist within the context

of

delusion which we are in I mean the

samsaric reality is just pseudo reality

this isn't ultimately real so it's like

if you can't bring Ultimate Reality into

this

delusion then what's the point why go

for this Ultimate Reality because we're

in this world of delusion we're stuck in

this world of delusion at present why

should we even try because you can't

prove that Enlightenment can exist
within the context of
delusion but you got to transcend the
delusion and the reality is always there
and there's no one that that's well I
mean there's some people I guess but
still I mean Buddhism is largely based
on the
idea that even though a person may not
become enlightened I mean they you have
to kind of say that just because it's so
mind warping to try to deal with reality
and delusion or like reality and pseudo
reality at the same time because you try
to mix them together and it doesn't work
you just wind up with confusion more

confounded or is it confusion worse

confounded but there is reality I mean

that would be hard to deny

and this isn't it that would be a little

harder to deny I suppose but still it's

definitely

deniable so I mean it's like if I can't

drag like highest truth into the context

of falsehood what's the point of trying

for the highest truth I mean that's that

seems to be what's going on

here so let's see here let's just read

this a little more more here I have hit

a wall here and can escape a kind of

skepticism or nihilism about the reality

of something like Enlightenment despite

the fact that I'm arbitrarily certain

well I mean yeah I mean just forget the theories forget like the the attempts at intellectual comprehension of what cannot be intellectually comprehended I mean what you don't I mean skepticism I mean that's that's actually good skepticism is a good thing in the classical sense of suspending judgment because when you suspend judgment adoria can arise or it's like essentially mysticism and some people just are not mystically oriented so I mean I do sympathize with people that do not have a mystical bone in their body because really that's the way you you know

reality is through mysticism not through
any kind of intellectual Endeavor unless
maybe you're going to be like a hardcore
maama philosopher who who uses just
brute force of intellect to demolish all
beliefs which then just leaves silence
and Clarity and emptiness behind through
which reality can
shine H okay so let's just skip down
here however I cannot make much sense of
the advice that striving for
enlightenment which is implied to be
impossible or nebulous within the
context of delusion yeah it is
impossible I mean within the context of
samsara Nirvana really may just have no
meaning because I mean delusion cannot

contain Ultimate

Reality and recognize it as

such so striving for enlightenment is

both samsaric or hindering and also the

object of our urgency well striving for

enlightenment it's it's in a way one of

the main reasons why striving for

enlightenment is effective is eventually

you realize that it doesn't work but you

have to fully realize that not just

intellectually I mean you have to really

deeply see the truth of it like the the

the smaller discourse of voidness where

the monk gets into deeper and deeper

meditative States until he gets into

what is arguably the highest possible

attainable meditative state and then he realizes that's not Enlightenment either it's like no matter how high you go that's not it and so then he just it's like something clicks or he just kind of gives up and boom he's

there but I mean you can't shortcircuit it you can't just give up right off the bat because then really you haven't had the necessary liberating

insight and I'm just going to check and see if we're really recording yeah good we've been recording for over an hour in fact let's see Y and the battery's charging and everything this is good it's

good so I guess I have addressed thermal

Squid's first

question I hope at least to my own

satisfaction sort

of so I'm just going to move on to

Thermal squid second

question which is as follows if we can

only use folk terms for mental states

with language or abstraction never

capturing reality what is the criteria

for Liberation well I mean you have to

put that into words wouldn't you which

isn't going to work but he continues I'm

sure I've asked something like this

before it's not a question of right

perceptions or right view but there

seems to be no real grounding to the

reality of something like a liberated
being the predic the predicaments of
various interpretations and contentions
surrounding meditative States seems
inevitable and that by and large they
are totally unresolvable because mental
states are not qualifiable or able to be
mapped having Insight that the intellect
is established seems to not actually
help us here we might say that an
enlightened being is free of suffering
but this seems to be ripe with potential
for confusion a being may appear to not
EXPER suffering yet their internal
world could be radically different Etc
outside of the consensus of agreement on
what certain words mean or their

relationship to reality truth would then seem to be totally irrelevant or even impossible yeah truth is kind of an oxymoron because truth implies

statements and statements that are representative of reality and statements do not represent reality

so in a way truth is an oxymoron you're better off dealing with reality than truth if that makes any

sense well let's uh I guess the question mark is up here at the Top If we can only use folk terms for mental states with language or abstraction never capturing reality what is the criteria

for

Liberation I mean it'd be awareness of reality that's my interpretation it'd be if you you are fully enlightened then you're always aware of reality sort of like from a using Christian terminology a person who is the like the most advanced Christian would be someone who was constantly aware of the presence of God and does the will of God you know like the Divine puppet that St John of the Cross talked about who has mortified his own self-will and just acts in accordance with the will of God and I mean it doesn't matter what the Paradigm is if it's intellectual and

made out of words it's going to be
inadequate I mean you have to do the
work you have to
like uh attenuate your own delusion
sufficiently that you get more and more
of an awareness of reality shining
through

you that like the more foolish you are
the more opaque you are spiritually and
then the more advanced you get
spiritually the more transparent first
you got like the translucent phase like
like a shower curtain that kind of thing
the frosted glass of the bathroom window
and then you get more and more
transparent so that truth is just

shining through you

unhindered and I mean trying to

understand it in words just isn't going

to work I mean there's like makeshifts

that that are adequate for the time

being adequate for your

purposes but I mean you just go with

logic I suppose there I mean it would

seem to me

logically pretty solid that there is

reality there is some Ultimate

Reality this may not be it but but it's

there and also it does seem to me that

there is one content thing in itself that

we have direct access to and that is the

content thing in itself of our own

Consciousness so through practicing

meditation if you're doing the right
kind of meditation you get access to the
content thing in itself of Consciousness
which is like direct insight into
reality not based on any kind of
philosophical

cogitations I mean that's that's just
running in circles it's just an exercise
in futility the only real
positive benefit of like intellectual
philosophizing as an attempt to
understand reality is one it's good as a
[—] detector you're able to
identify faulty reasoning and two it can
result in something like maamaa where
you can just tear apart any belief

leaving Clarity and silence

behind so did I answer the question what

is the criteria for Liberation awareness

of reality knowing knowing reality

almost said knowing the

truth knowing reality just firsthand

without having to think about it without

having to theorize about it without

having to put it into words of any

kind and some people delude themselves

into thinking that they're there when

they're not there yet but that is one of

the

hazards and nevertheless I mean knowing

Ultimate Reality is like the most noble

thing you can strive for it seems to

me I mean you can try to feed and clothe

and house the entire population of the
Earth and even if you succeeded still
you're just putting Band-Aids on onto a
problem and you're not really
penetrating through to just the
Transcendence of the entire illusory
problem

so I mean even if you can't be sure that
Enlightenment exists still I mean you
should be

open-minded not just you know nihilistic
towards the idea not just label it

[—] and move on to something

else that to know reality to know the
highest truth so to

speak is a good thing and you should be

striving for it even though there's
clearly no guarantee that you will be
successful

well striving for it is is Good Karma
anyway but that's you'd have to believe
Buddhist philosophy or some similar
philosophy to take that part

seriously and I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next question

here which is do we have the power to
say one way or another and uh I'm not
sure what he means by one way or another
so I'll have to read the the subsequent
commentary here if these two former
questions are answerable or result in
Paradox then it seems that openness or
interpretive

eclecticism are actually degenerative

I'm going to have to back up if these two I gotta really pay attention to questions like this Liber Lam is like this sometimes too if these two former questions are unanswerable or result in Paradox well I mean I have answered them even though kind of a paradox if you're trying to take two different levels of truth and put them just on the same you know just paint them on the same canvas I mean that doesn't work so let's see if these two former questions are unanswerable or result in Paradox then it seems that openness or interpretive eclecticism are actually

degenerative because we can more or less say or believe anything or be suspicious about anything in regards to the spirit or its function if we tell others or motivate others to see for themselves or conclud for themselves we have a series of idiosyncrasies and something robust of which we can commit to or have faith in in that way I see dogma and Orthodoxy as inescapable without losing the plot entirely if we don't have the power to say one way over another I don't see how skeptical doubt could be overcome at all this process of spiritual or immaterial induction has no real ending so I got to try and teach is the actual meaning of this just kind of

coales it into language that I'm comfortable with that that works for me so I think one of the main points that he's trying to make here is if you just try to be eclectic and not follow some established traditional system and somebody like Renee gwon would insist that you have to follow an established tradition that coming up with your own your own approach I mean it's just worse than useless according to him although I don't necessarily agree that I do think that most people are better off following an established tradition that the established tradition that has been tried and tested for

centuries is probably going to be a better system than the average dude can come up with on his own but there's always going to be outliers there's always going to be like gifted or inspired people just intuitive people people who just are not conformists they're they are not followers they've got to do it their own way so if they've got to do it their own way then that's just the way it's going to be and I was kind of like that I mean I followed Buddhist tradition mainly through vinia or monastic discipline that was the strict tradition that I adhered to for decades at least more than two decades not the full 30

years because I was kind of slacking off
towards the end after I came back to
America

especially

but still I mean to have that kind of
structure with regard to my practice
that was very useful for me but I just
could not

believe everything in Orthodox Tibetan

Buddhism like Abhidharma I reject

pretty much the entire third pitaka

of the three pitakas the

pitaka

so let's

see did I did I already answer the

question let's

see if these two former questions are
unanswerable which I'm I at least I
think I kind of answer them or they
result in Paradox and the Paradox is
there only if you try to force fit more
than one level of reality onto the same
level which is what most people do
including the ancient Abid dama Scholars
but that's neither here nor there then
it seems that openness or interpretive
eclecticism are actually degenerative
and for a lot of people they are but not
for everybody like if you're just a like
a Mystic by Nature then Dogma can get in
the way see because we can more or less
say or believe anything or be suspicious
about anything in regards to the spirit

or its function if we tell others or
motivate others to see for themselves or
conclude for themselves we have a series
of

idiosyncrasies not something robust of
which we can commit to or have faith in
well it depends on the individual that
there's all different kinds of folks and
some people they just are followers they
are dogmatists and so of course somebody
like that would which would include
almost all medieval Catholics for
example most modern Burmese terraa
Buddhists very dogmatic just medieval in
their thinking but I mean the more
westernized and modernized you are the

less likely you are and especially
certain personality types to just
believe anything you're told you know
the Kalam masuta warns against this I
mean the entire Tica warns against
this

so yeah I mean for thermal squid this
seems to be more of a problem than it is
for

me and it's partly because thermal squid
is apparently addicted to intellect that
his approach to truth is through
intellectual comprehension or at least
he's got to have a firm grounding in
intellectual comprehension before he can
really move forward with confidence or
some such and I don't think it works

that

way that I think he is overvaluing
intellect even though a lot of people
they just that's all they know there's
there's intellect and then there's just
like you know emotional [—] so of
course intellect would be preferable but
that is still

insufficient that you've got to do some
meditation and get past the thinking
once you learn how to stop thinking when
you're wide awake not thinking anything
then you can get insights into just how
futile it is to try to understand

Reality by thinking about

it so it may be for some people this is

just this this is like a game changer
this is just a rule just what is it it
just breaks the the deal you know it's
it's a deal breaker you know it's like
well if I can't have like complete
confidence

intellectually in the validity of the
entire system then I'll just follow some
other system I'll just do something else
so I mean that's one of the hazards I
mean there's there's always going to be
a certain amount of filtering going on
and some of it's kind of tragic
filtering you know where just the
circumstances of your personality or
your physical health or your position in
life just prevents

you from really moving forward
spiritually and some of it is fixable
some of it may not be like if if you got
like some serious degenerative disease
or something it might I mean you might
just be stuck in this life that I mean
it's just not it's just not going to
happen in this life and Enlightenment
doesn't happen for the overwhelming
majority of
people but that's not to say that it's
it's not worth striving for because even
striving for it's going to wind up with
improvements in the
situation even if you don't get all the
way there you're going to be making

progress which is preferable to not making

progress anyways I suppose I should just move on to the next question which I trust will be easier to understand and this is from ruie and ruie says for you what would be the percentage of wheat and chaff in the cannon and also what's your view of the fashion even sponsored by some fully ordained mendicants of dag groups segregated by race and sexual orientation dhag groups for black and brown people dhag groups for queers Etc isn't developing a carapace against hypersensitivity a good chunk of the practice well this is actually two questions so I got to separate these

okay so I'll I'll deal with the first question first

for you what would be the percentage of wheat and chaff in the cannon and it depends on what your criteria for deciding between wheat and chaff are like i' I've said before it's like at at one extreme you've got like verbatim quotes of the historical goab Buddha and then you know like one step away from that is you've got like paraphrases of what the historical gab Buddha said you know not in exactly those words but you know it's a fair paraphrase of what he said you know the gist of it is

there then another step F farther from
that is something that the Buddha really
didn't say but would probably agree with
you know he'd say yeah that's all right
yeah you can follow that and then you've
got like another step from that is like
ambivalent stuff that you know he
wouldn't even talk about you know or and
then at the Other Extreme would just be
stuff that the Buddha would just
vehemently denounce this is not dhama
don't follow this and there are some
teachings that would belong to that
extreme especially in Mahayana but
there's some of that in terraa too
Mahayana just took the ball and ran with
it so you got just this full spectrum in

Mahayana you got somewhat narrower

Spectrum in

Terra so with regard to what the Buddha

would agree with and consider to be

useful as wheat and all the rest chaff

you know like all the miracle Stories

the talking animals you know this kind

of stuff plus the stuff that the Buddha

would just say no that's that's not good

like like aspiring to be reborn as such

and such in a future

existence no the Buddha would not have

advised that and with regard to I mean

if even with regard to certain

philosophical

beliefs yeah like you know

well I won't go into details but there are like some cookbook like descriptions of how Karma works like if you do this it's going to result in 100 lifetimes of this result kind of a stuff that I really don't think the Buddha would have taught that I don't think the Buddha would have been advising people to worship him that kind of thing so getting back to the the question what would I consider to be the percentage of Wheat and chaff and the cannon let's let's go with uh 20% wheat 80% chaff so I mean that would rule out jica stories Abid dama all that kind of stuff I mean that would rule out half right

there so I'm being fairly fairly
charitable and conservative in saying as
much as 20% would be stuff that the
Buddha would endorse even if he hadn't
taught it in those words that he you
know he would endorse this
message and and you it might be less
than 20% but it wouldn't be much more
than 20% I'm pretty
sure in this position has put me at odds
with like most monks like when I was a
monk you know I was still of the the
opinion that you know 20% maybe even as
little as
10% and I means some people are just say
if you don't believe in it why even a

monk why do you call yourself a Buddhist
if you don't believe in it but I mean it
was the AA waga is don't believe
anything and vinia just says you know
follow these rules and following the
rules I mean it doesn't matter whether
the Buddha really taught it or not
doesn't matter if it represents Ultimate
Reality or even empirical truth you know
it's just helpful to follow the rules
and aside from that I was free to be
skeptical in the classical
sense so yeah let's just go with 20%
wheat and I'm just going to move on to
ru's second question and also what's
your view on the fashion even sponsored
by some fully ordained mendicants of dag

groups segregated by race and sexual orientation dag groups for black and brown people dag groups for queers isn't developing a carapace against hyp sensitivity a good chunk of the practice well I wouldn't say carapace carpas is like a beetle shell you know it's like a hard shield and really you're it's better off like like the da Ching says the sage should be like water you know it's like water is more safe against a spear thrust than a carapace is the spear can just thrust right through that carapace and just break a big hole in it whereas you stab the spear into water the water just gives

way and then when the spear is pulled back out again it just closes back up and it's fine again so that would be the better way is just it's not being like insensitive or shielded is just being able to accept anything that comes along but with regard to like um let's see where where is it segregating by gender you know it's I mean that's pretty standard actually I mean the Buddha segregated the sa by gender assuming that the Buddha really did allow bhikkhus to be ordained that's a little bit controversial a little bit debatable but let's taking it at face value you know what the sutas what the sutas say then the Buddha segregated the

sa male and female just because when men and women mix celibacy stops happening you get you wind up with scandals that kind of thing Temptations at the very least so that kind of segregation I mean that's got a longstanding precedent and it's still kind of that way in like in Burma where you'll have men on one side of the dhal and women on the other side of the D when the monk is giving a talk that kind of thing or in in like meditation Retreats that kind of thing you'll have men and women segregated like Pond dama in rangon when I went for a retreat there it was the men had their meditation Hall and the women had their

own meditation Hall and there was almost
no interaction which makes sense with
regard to race I mean what would be the
point I mean this
really the whole segregation by race and
sexual orientation is more of a
post-modern western thing based on
identity politics and really Buddhism it
discourages identity in
general the identity is
delusion so really a lot of these woke
that's the that's the word they use now
it used to be politically correct or
Progressive or whatever that these
Dharma groups in the West that have
special meditation groups for queers
special meditation groups for for people

of color mainly black people I guess
since the Asians are like Southeast
Asians you know they got their own
groups I mean it's it's just sort of
Western delusion infiltrating dhma and
trying to take it over you know it's
like cultural Marxism you know getting
its tendrils into Dharma so that it can
use Buddhism for its own purposes its
own political
agenda so yeah I think that's a dumb
practice and I am sorry to say that this
morning or earlier today I did see a
dhama video my my wife was playing a d I
don't even want to say the monks
involved but they're considered to be

relatively based but it it appeared that they had just pretty much sold out and they were endorsing you know special queer meditation group and that sort of thing or at least sort of accepting it as part of their their monastic agenda as you know teaching for Lay people and so

forth so

anyways let's see what's my view on the fashion even sponsored by some fully ordained mendicants like the ones I I was listening to today abdom group segregated by race and sexual Orient yeah it's I mean with regard to gender just for

biological problematical reasons you're

better off segregating men and women um
maybe even to some degree by age because
you teach children differently than you
teach adults you know sort of like
Sunday school and in Christianity you
know the kids all go and you know color
in the Jesus coloring book while the
parents are listening to the the boring
sermon you know that kind of thing might
be

appropriate but uh a special

queer Dharma group that kind of thing

that's just strikes me as you know

cultural Marxism infiltrating

Dharma and I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from Romeo and

Romeo says can you speak in general about the jota tales of the Buddha's past lives okay well the jota tales it's one of the the books of the kudik Naya and it's probably relatively late technically the only canonical part of the jotras is the verses and then the stories in Pros are considered to be a kind of commentary although they're generally printed together because you can't really understand the verse without knowing the story too and in most cases the story came first and the verse is itself the kind of commentary that is kind of ironic but Jah is like the birth stories it's stories of the Buddhist previous lives sometimes as

animals sometimes as

humans

um let's see can I speak in general

about

them yeah and I mean the jata stories

most of them probably were pre-existent

I mean they existed already before

Buddhists came along and converted them

into the Buddhist past life stories I

mean I think many if not most jata

stories begin with you know like once

upon a time when Brahma was reigning in

Varanasi you know it's just it's sort of

like the standard Once Upon a Time in

Western stories his Brahma that was

reigning in Varanasi you know he was some

legendary King in the distant past and probably these were like the ponchet Tantra or like asap's fables that had already existed in Indian folklore and then the Buddhists took them not the Buddha himself probably but Buddhists in general early Buddhists took these stories that were pre-existent most of them and then just added like a Buddhist beginning and ending you know so you've got like the the wise rabbit who sacrificed himself to the god Saka you know Saka king of Gods because Saka king of Gods came disguised as a as a mendicant the rabbit had decided he was going to offer food to a mendicant if you saw one that day and he didn't have

any food that that mendicants like
because mendicant don't like rabbit food
apparently and so he was just going to
offer himself you know this kind of
thing and it's like he had a friend
there was like a monkey and an otter
something like that who who did come up
with stuff they were going to offer you
know the the three friends the rabbit
the monkey and the otter all decided
they were going to offer food to a
mendicant

and you know etc etc and so at the end
of the story the Buddha says well I was
the rabbit and you know Sara was the
monkey and and Ananda was the the otter

or whatever I don't remember the names and so it's you just take this story like would be found in the Ponchet Tantra or like Asap's fables and then it's just at the end the Buddha just identifies the main characters in the story with himself and you know some of his chief disciples or great disciples and it just turns into a kind of a Buddhist moral story um and then it was to some degree the Jataka stories that gave rise to the whole bodhisattva concept that that was sort of like Proto Mahayana was the the the composing of these Jataka Tales because it was making the Buddha more and more glorified above

the average enlightened being until finally the Buddha like striving to become a Buddha was considered so much more like praiseworthy and Noble and glorious than just becoming an ordinary enlightened being the Mahayana Buddhists just started saying well becoming an ordinary enlightened being is just inferior and you shouldn't do it

so yeah I do think it's like a later addition that the Buddha himself wasn't teaching these Jataka stories and uh I don't think that they really added much of value other than sometimes you can learn cultural stuff from reading these

jica stories plus if you're just interested in talking animal stories you know just for entertainment value then there's that too but I was never particularly interested in jica stories to tell you the truth I mean I read a few as practicing poly or just for various reasons you know like two of the uh the parita the protection chants that are among the most common protection chants in Burma are based on J jota Stories the quail Joda and the peacock Joda and I mean just the quail jota you got this baby quail who is living in the forest with its parents and then there's a forest

fire and this baby quail who has human intelligence makes a solemn asservation of Truth a solemn proclamation of Truth truth cuz I know how to pronounce Proclamation correctly and I can't remember exactly what the proclamation of Truth was but it was the power of speaking that truth averted the forest fire and the forest fire just went around where the quail family lived and then the Buddha at the end says you know I was that quail and I mean Burmese people can accept this at face value yep the Buddha was a quail with human intelligence in a previous life life who had psychic

powers I had one monk who was had a degree in mathematics or wait he was he had a degree in physics and he was a mathematics teacher at a high school before he was a monk and I would be telling him about the jica stories and talking animals and so forth and he's finally starting to come to my point of view and he's saying but I mean when the Buddha was a parrot I mean parrots can talk so maybe the parrot ones were true but yeah I think the overwhelming majority of jica stories are fiction so that would be part of the chaff that I was mentioning earlier so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question which is are

there any of these tales that especially
resonate with you or you feel contain
the most wisdom an aspiring Buddhist can
learn from and no I really the the jica
stories are not your best source of
wisdom in the poly
topica that they're essentially talking
animal stories fairy tales and I mean
you can get like a moral story like a
like you know there can be some kind of
ethical message like in an asap's
fables but still there's really not a
whole lot of profundity in the jota
stories so there's not a single jota
that really stands out to me as
something that I would consider to be

profound the baby quail jica huh

no so I'm just going to move on to

Romeo's third question can you recommend

a simple compact version of the jota

tales similar to asap's fables that I

can purchase well to tell you the truth

I would steer you more towards the dhap

commentary you're going to find much

more of value and much more of Interest

unless you're really into fairy tales

and talking animals but if you really

want to know what India was like in the

Buddhist time and get some like

well-known Buddhist stories that that

most educated Burmese Buddhists would

would be very familiar with that most

westerns have never heard

before then yeah go for the DAP
commentary there's like a classic one by
Berling game I think it's called
Buddhist Legends by Berling game that is
public domain you know it's an old book
you can download it for free off the
internet with regard to the jica Tales
um there is a book of jica tales that
have like Poly on one side and English
on the other that that's the book I was
using when I was studying ply just sort
of reading the the jica in poly and kind
of referring to the English sometimes
when I was just learning poly but aside
from that really I I I cannot really
wholeheartedly endorse jica

stories but I mean if you you can look it up on the on Amazon something like that I'm sure you can find um like a bridged versions of the jica stories but again I would much more highly recommend the dapot

commentary so I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is from Puda

Brahman and I suspect that Puda Brahman is the same person that used to be called skolin or schuline and then changed his name to apocalypse CH because they're all into these bullet point things so anyways pollut Brahman says would it be fair to say memories are rooted in

familiarity and inversely if a person is committed to avoiding pain and seeking pleasure then they're avoiding learning deluding Joy I think maybe he means like diluting Joy like in chemistry you're diluting a solution rather than deluding Joy I'm not sure that's just a guess but I mean this is sort of a double question would it be fair to say memories are rooted in familiarity um I guess so I mean sort of you know it's they're rooted in kind of chain of Association like Memories it's my theory on how memories work is it's it's largely like emotional or like a feeling you just a

certain word or a certain image will
trigger this feeling which then sort of
through I mean going with
neurophysiology through like synaptic
connections then connects you to this
other memory or this you know this
stored stored
info so I guess to some degree that
would be
familiarity I
guess and let's see here and inversely
so you get like the the crypto second
question If a person is committed to
avoiding pain and seeking pleasure then
they're avoiding learning and deluding
or diluting
Joy man well let see yeah I mean if

you're committed to avoiding pain and seeking pleasure yeah I mean that's one of the two

extremes I mean seeking pain and avoiding pleasure would be the other extreme so I mean you just live your life naturally you try to do good but I mean you're not like avoiding any kind of unpleasantness at all costs you know within

reason you just kind of take what comes then that's your best way of learning because your karma is going to throw at you exactly what need to experience and trying to avoid pain or even discomfort or inconvenience and

seek out pleasure and convenience and comfort then in a way you're kind of stunting your growth because you're avoiding a lot of the karma you know you're just sort of like holding it at Bay holding it back preventing it from happening when it's going to have to happen sooner or later and it may just have to wait for something to break before it can just flood in so avoiding learning and deluding joy yeah well with regard to the Joy yeah it would be more of a delusional kind of Joy it wouldn't be as wise and spacious kind of joy as you know like feeling Rapture and meditation that kind of thing just being able to accept

whatever happens is a better kind of Joy
than trying to control control
everything so that you can prevent
anything uncomfortable from happening
then yeah that's a very
fragile like a kind of a an inferior
kind of Joy although that is what almost
everybody is going for because people
just naturally want to just seek out
pleasure and avoid pain which is just
it's just built into us it's like
instinct animal instinct
but by doing that I mean your your
happiness is a very fragile thing so a
certain amount of philosophy and
spiritual practice where you can be

happy with anything I mean as a monk
when you have no money you got no family
ties you got no home you don't know
where you're going to sleep that night
what you're going to eat that day you
know your your stomach is empty you're
dripping in
sweat and maybe you got diarrhea besides
and you're still
happy then I mean it's happened before I
mean it's happened to me plenty as a
monk where you know you're sleeping on a
concrete floor with a piece of wood for
a pillow just because that's the most
comfortable way of being I have to
admit because I mean it's just so hot
you want to be just on a cool concrete

floor just because that's the coolest
place there

is but still I mean you can be happy you
can be happy with an empty stomach you
can be happy sleeping on concrete just
if you accept the situation this is just
the way it is and it's fine I can accept
that I'm not very comfortable I can
accept that my stomach is
empty you know I can accept that I have
zero money then it's not a problem
doesn't matter what it is if you accept
it it's not a problem and it doesn't
matter what it is if you won't accept it
it's a
problem but I'm not sure if I even

answered the question and since he kind
of snuck in this second half of this
question is kind of a fourth question
I'm just moving on to the next question
and he's saying would you kindly this is
still uh what's his name again PUD niwa
Brahman who I think is probably scolin
who's just having a little
fun he says would you kindly give any
insights into the movie Under the Silver
Lake which came out in
2018 and then the bullet points are
nobody fully got it every frame is coded
in symbolism there's something there but
no one understands and I really can't
give many
insights into the movie Under the Silver

Lake cuz not only have I never seen
under the Silver

Lake I'm not sure if I've even heard of
it before I don't know what it's about I
have no clue as to what under the Silver
Lake is about although I have seen
movies that are damn hard to understand
like possibly the most difficult movie
to understand it's obviously symbolic
but I just I I saw it only once maybe if
I watched it like eight times and like
was studying it on the internet like
I've done with other movies I get it but
STI what is it sticy New
York I think that's what it's
called sticy New York which is kind of a

play on SKC but it's s
sticy and that's a weird movie and I
mean the guy's like he's sitting there
reading the paper and he's getting like
years older just while sitting there
reading the paper that kind of thing is
going on or malland
drive that is I I actually kind of
understand malland drive but I had to
like study up by reading theories
interpretive theories on the internet
just to try to figure out mhall and
drive but that's understandable and even
the Matrix most people can can watch The
Matrix and not get that it's a symbolic
movie the whole movie is a kind of
parable or like reading Lord of the

Flies by William Golding I mean college
educated intelligent people can read the
novel forget the movies the movies
sucked I mean they just completely did
away with the symbolism but you read the
novel which is a which is like an
apocalyptic Parable almost everything in
the novel is symbolic of something else
they just they just think it's a like a
book about kids on an
island they don't get it it's about
human beings on planet
Earth so anyways getting back to under
the Silver Lake I have no clue I've
never saw the movie I don't think I've
ever heard of the

movie

so but I do like symbolism and it's it

has caused me to be

kind of intrigued kind of maybe I'll

watch under the Silver Lake although I

might have to talk my woman into

watching it with me she's got her own

tastes you know she watches like chick

chick flicks and stuff that I mean if

there's no explosions I mean what's the

point of watching a movie if there's no

explosions you

know anyways I'm just gonna move on to

puden yawa

Brahman third or fourth question

would you kindly explain the Bermuda

Triangle and

unfortunately um I watched a documentary about the Bermuda Triangle several years ago and there's something some peculiarity of the ocean floor there it's kind of shallow water there with sort of like a a chalk floor that causes the radar to like bounce off of it irregularly to cause like false signals and so forth I don't know if that would have anything to do with ships disappearing but it could be responsible for a certain planes to like crash into the water and just disappear under the water that kind of thing but um I'm approximately a skeptical of the idea that aliens are abducting

entire vehicles from that area as I am
the aliens built the
pyramids so I I would assume that some
of it is just
coincidence that there's like famous
cases of ships and airplanes
disappearing in that
area that there could be some
peculiarity that's causing you know it's
some sort of
strange um what's the word not
geography geological like some some
geological anomaly or something there
that messes with like instruments and so
forth that causes things to mess up
something like that I consider to be
more likely than anything paranormal or

of alien

origin so I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is kind of has sort of a long intro to it before he gets to the actual question and this is going to be less than 3 hours trust me oh all you got to do is look at the time and see how long it's going to last I don't have that 1 luxury I don't know exactly how long it's going to be we're getting up close to two hours because I'm digressing wildly anyways Dharma River says I'm extremely surprised you don't know who Shanti DEA is he was a bit of a rebellious and solitary monk who caught

a list of criticism by the other monks
because of his who caught a lot of
criticism by the other monks because of
his unorthodox methods the monks even
tried to set him up for failure at point
and it backfired on them big time sounds
like Donald Trump there his story is
also very similar to the Buddhas both
well that's not Donald Trump both were
born to great wealth and were supposed
to become Kings and renounced it in
order to pursue Liberation I strongly
recommend you read his book bodh satvara
vatara a guide to the bodh satva way of
life so it's he's obviously a Mahayana
figure I think you will like it he
teaches the do in a beautiful poetic

style I don't know if you enjoy damama
taught through poetry and now we get to
the question how about millera or long
Chena do you know any of them if yes
what do you think of them thank you well
I have no idea who long chimpa is
although his name sounds Tibetan but
miler a there we go we finally hit upon
somebody that I have some familiar
familiarity with so um I read Evans
wentz's translation or at least the the
the Edition that he
edited of the songs of millera which
included um an autobiography of millera
which I found much more interesting than
milla's

verses and I mean poetry is fine like
most of the sutin is poetry you know
it's like the ataka waga is composed in
poetry and that's like my favorite
spiritual poetry would be the AA waga of
the

sutin so when he says I don't know if
you enjoyed dama taught through poetry
well I mean poetry was like a common
vehicle of dhama teachings in early
Buddhism like I said almost the entire
suttin is composed in poetry lots and
lots of poetry almost all of the
protection chance the the paritas are in
verse lots and lots of verses some of
the most profound texts in Terra in in
poly Literature Like The udana always

has a verse the sagata waga which is the first um the first section of the samut nikaya all all verses terata terata all verses so there's a lot of profound teachings in poly that is composed in poetry and for me that's my favorite kind of spiritual poetry would be I mean I think the babad Gita also is in in in verse the English translations are not so much inverse but I'm pretty sure the babad Gita is inverse um maybe the upanishads I'm not entirely sure because I mean when you read an English translation it's it doesn't have meter and rhyme to it anymore anyway or not even meter I don't I don't think ancient

Indian poetry did rhyme
milera though and like the poems of
Hanan I read I read those but milera his
bio his autobiography was fascinating
much more so than his verses I mean just
you know praising Buddha and dama and
all that it's fine but I mean his life
was I mean he was really into it you
know he starts off his his he's got like
the cruel Uncle who I mean he his father
dies and then his father's brother
essentially swindles his uh him his
mother and his and I think he had a
brother out of their their property and
so the mother being vindictive sends
young milera to some sorcerer to learn
black magic so he can get revenge on the

evil Uncle which he does you know he destroys the evil uncle and his family by Conjuring up some huge scorpion like creature that just attacked the house and caved it in while they were inside of it something like that if I remember correctly but then Mila he has got you know the the seeds the roots of wisdom and so you know he decided to change his ways and he becomes a a good Buddhist I don't know if I think he was ordained I'm not entirely sure but at at one point he's living out in a cave you know in Tibet somewhere and he lives out there by himself until his clothes just rot off and he's mostly living on

Nettles and so he's eating Nettles every day living almost entirely on a diet of nettles until his body turns green and he's so there's this Naked Green Man probably very hairy living out in the woods and people just assumed it was a monster they were just scared shitless of Mila at one point that the pot where he would cook his Nettles he dropped it and broke it and there was like this scum of dried nettle residue inside the pot that remained intact and pot-shaped I remember that part from the from the autobiography but just reading about his life was much more interesting to me than reading the songs that he composed and that's the way it was with Hanan

also I derived much more memorable
useful knowledge and entertainment from
just reading the biography of Hanan some
of which was included in in his poetry
you know some of the Poetry would
include autobiographical information but
that was more interesting to me than
their take on Dharma or
Dharma so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from
hv20 Canon and hv20 Canon says what is
the nature of your opinion with respect
to the channel theory of Sam Sara and I
don't think I've ever seen any any
single
video on a channel called theory of

samsar I'm completely unfamiliar with it
sorry about that but at least it made it
an easy question to answer that didn't
take very long so I'm just going to move
on to next question and we're getting
towards the bottom here this is the
second to last question and this is from
Wayne and Wayne says what are your
thoughts on the wiui Maga
is it at a reliable read it seems to be
more organized and easier to read than
the poly Canan thoughts so my my
thoughts on the wisi Maga first of all
it's not really like a
synopsis of the suas that the sutas are
Buddhism the wiui Maga is Buddha gism
Buddha Goa is the composer like the

editor compiler

composer of the

the almost said the aaga the uh wiui

Maga and Wii manga is largely a manual

on what is considered to be samata

meditation although a lot of it seems

pretty hypnotic to me like the emphasis

on Cina discs where you're just staring

at this colored disc

until I mean you just meditate on that

and meditate on it and meditate on it

until you can see it as clearly with

your eyes closed as when your eyes are

open and then you start manipulating it

making it bigger and smaller and you

know messing around with this kind of

stuff and I mean that kind of thing
really wasn't interesting to me very
much I mean kind of as a way of becoming
literate with regard to what Terra
Buddhist Orthodoxy is about
but um a lot of it I mean is most of it
is not particularly useful like the
first chapter is good which is just the
value of morality the second chapter is
interesting because that is the overview
of the 13 dangas or optional aesthetic
practices so that was interesting like
the first two chapters that was only the
only required reading when I was a young
monk my teacher told me to read the
first two chapters on the value value of
of morality and the

dangas but there's also um just kind of anthropological stuff and cultural stuff you can learn like um there is uh like an overview of the 32 parts of the body and so you're learning like early medieval Sri Lankan beliefs about how the body works like for example they didn't know that the heart was a blood pump they didn't know that the blood was circulated by the heart they thought that blood was circulated through a kind of splashing effect produced by the liver that the heart was the Org the organ of thought that thought arose in um like one of the chambers of the heart in the midst of some some blood and your

personality type would determine what
color the blood was one personality type
you'd have sort of like a a pale pink
blood in this chamber of the heart
and almost the only really um like
empirical statement that was based just
on

observation was that if your spleen
protrudes from your body you die that's
included in the wisi Maga um like the
brain they had he was hard pressed to
find a use for the human brain the brain
is considered to be bone marrow
inhabiting a large Hollow bone and if
you get sick like you get a cold some of
it melts M and liquefies and comes out
your nose in the form of snot that kind

of thing is interesting some of the stories about early like Sri Lankan monks you know some of them are are supposed to be edifying but it's they're pretty extreme stories you know it's like there was one monk that the the king of of Sri Lanka or Salon or whatever or Lanka I guess it would just be called Lanka back then that the king would come to visit him and sometimes his one of the queens or the only Queen would come to visit him and no matter who came to visit him the monk would always say long live the king and then finally they asked him why he always

says even if the queen comes to visit
him he says long live the king it's
because he does he never looks up you
know he doesn't know who he's talking to
as though he couldn't really tell by the
sound of their voice or some such there
was another story I think it was about a
monk who had these beautiful murals
painted all on the ceiling of his cave
and he never noticed him once because
he's always looking downwards you know
this is all supposed to be edifying you
know like role models that you should do
if you want to follow if you want to be
a good monk there's the story of the
monk who lived in the forest and thieves
Bandits tie them up with living Vines

you know they just there's some Vines
growing they just grab them without
uprooting them or anything tie him up
take whatever stuff he had which
probably wasn't very much leave and then
when they're leaving they like kick over
a lamp or something and start a forest
fire and this monk is so strict in
following vinea that he's not going to
harm a living plant by getting himself
untangled from these vines that he's
tied up and so he voluntarily dies in
the forest fire rather than break the
vines and hurt the plant in order to
become free and save himself and then of
course he becomes enlightened at the

moment of death so you can get stories
like that but but it's not really a
synopsis of the sutas it's the sutas are
Buddhism and the commentarial tradition
is Buddha gism which is like a later
attempt to really systematize the
information in the sutas into a unified
like more or less
self-consistent Theory or system and it
doesn't always work
so the wui manga it's it's not canonical
you know it's it's like the the central
text in the commentarial tradition you
know it's like the Hub of the
commentarial tradition all the other
commentaries are like spokes coming out
from the Hub kind of a

thing I mean it may be of value for some people to read it and even some serious monks like Western monks especially just won't bother because they want to know what the Buddha taught and not what Buddha goat

Tau and so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is the very very last

question and this is from count nine and count nine says you mentioned in one of the previous Q&A last year the story of a monk who mainly spent effort to memorize the scriptures in a pointless way unless unsatisfied with his spiritual progress also blamed by his

companions he changed approach let's see
eventually evl do I guess it's
eventually he finds a teacher an
enlightened child monk as other
potential candidates hesitated to teach
him as he was a monk who was more senior
to them the junior triggered a
breakthrough by using the parable how to
catch a lizard the name of the Elder
sounds for me like Potala H
unfortunately my hearing is sometimes
bad could you please give me the exact
name and where I could find it in the
scriptures I will honestly try to use it
not for the purpose of memorizing it in
a pointless way and he's got a smiley
face I tried to find it by my own

including the use of AI unfortunately
without success as I always got lost in
the ocean of available Buddhist
information okay so this is the story of
potila p o t t h i l a

that name again p o t t h i l a and I
think the the t's have dots under them
but don't worry about that and it is
found in the DAP commentary it is the
commentary to verse

282 of the

dapot so you will find the story as a
commentary to verse

282 in the DAP commentary

and this is another case of I was asked
previously what the Buddha taught to

children and I was thinking in terms of
lay children and just completely spaced
off the fact that there were according
to the text according to tradition
enlightened children that were ordained
as novices that some children became
enlightened I think including the the
enlightened child novice in this story
as soon as the razor touched their head
to shave their head to become to become
ordained you know it's like before
you're ordained you have to get your
head shaved as soon as the razor touched
his scalp he became enlightened so he
was so ripe for enlightenment that I
mean he he was just waiting for the
Buddha and waiting to be ordained and

boom that was that was all it
took and yeah it is a good meditation
technique I used to call it third gear
you know it wasn't the highest
meditation technique that I practiced
occasionally but
it was it was a fairly Advanced
meditation technique where according to
the story potila you know he's
memorizing all the text he's very
learned and the Buddha keeps calling him
pointless potila Tua potila I think is
in the PO you know it's just like empty
empty potila you it's like here comes
pointless POA there goes pointless po
potila I should say

potila pointless potila and I do think
that I've I've got the whole story
translated in uh in one of my books I'm
pretty

sure anyways so I mean because he's so
learned and he's respected in on the
Saga he's a senior Monk and he's very
learned with regard to the text which is
an anachronism because in the Buddhist
time there were no texts yet there was
no Abid dama to master anything like
that so um finally he you know he asked
the Buddha why do you keep calling me
this and the Buddha says it's because
you're not meditating you're spending
all your time studying this intellectual
stuff so then poila takes the hint and

he goes off looking for someone to teach him and for some reason he walks hundreds of miles if I remember correctly finally gets to this Monastery and goes to the senior monk there and says please teach me how to meditate and because he's a senior Monk and he's well respected and everything that you know he doesn't want to teach him even though everybody at this Monastery is enlightened Everyone's an Aran this Monastery and so he just keeps going down the roster until finally his last the last one that he hasn't asked yet is this nine-year-old enlightened novice and so the enlightened novice you

know tells him all right if you want me
to teach you first just Wade out into
that pond so without without hesitation
POA just starts wading out into the pond
and so then the kid calls him back you
know he had proven that he's willing to
do what he says even if it sounds
ridiculous so then he gives them the the
meditation instruction it's like and
it's all in the like a aimile it's like
let's say you've got a termite Mound
that's got six holes and there's a
lizard inside that termite Mound and you
want to catch that lizard so what you do
is you block off five of the holes and
then you watch very carefully that sixth
hole so that when the lizard comes out

you can grab it and it's a simile for
how to meditate by sort of blocking off
the the five sense doors of seeing
hearing touching smelling tasting and so
the only sense door left is the mind so
you know you're sitting there in
isolation with your eyes closed you know
you're not tasting or you know anything
like that and you're just watching the
Mind intently and when a thought arises
you catch

it and that's how you meditate in so you
catch the thought the thought just kind
of disappears because you can't think
and note the thought at the same time
it's like the same part of the brain

assuming this going with
neurophysiology that by noting a thought
the thought
stops so if you note it immediately the
thought will start to arise and then
just disappear and then you if you get
really good at it you're just sitting
there in
silence intently you're you're in the
state of
intentness and you know as if any
thought even begins to arise you just
catch it and it and it disappears again
but this all might be unnecessary
information because all he's got to do
all that count n has to do is just look
up the DAP commentary verse 282 like for

example I already mentioned Berling game
Berling games Buddhist Legends is is
public domain now and it's you can
download it for free off the internet I
am sure I think i' I've done that myself
in fact

so that's it we're done we done I didn't
even open the emergency backup beverage
for this

one so let's see we're little over two
hours that's not too

bad okay then and like I always should
say at the beginning and almost never do
if you have any questions you think that
I can answer especially about like early
Buddhism terab Buddhism in particular

Buddhism in general like Indian
philosophy even more more in general
Eastern philosophy even more more in
general philosophy just completely in
general that kind of thing meditation
monasticism Burma me personally Etc just
include them in the like put them in the
comments

below no more than three questions per
episode please and if you do like these
q&as some people do

takes all

kinds so if you like these q& a feel
free to smash the like button don't just
press it smash the son of a [__] and uh
subscribe if you haven't already and if
you please be happy

alrighty

then hello and welcome to question and

answer number

131 and I'm not fully prepared yet just

a second I gotta enlarge the size of my

questions

here get it up to like

42 so I can see it from a

distance okay now I think maybe I'm

ready are you

ready got my emergency backup beverage

with the little paper umbrella which

signifies my

class take a sip and we got lots of

questions and I'm kind of starting late

haven't even bothered to move my camera

over to that desk over there which is
where I usually do it so I got like the
bookcase and the altar and stuff in the
background not this time those of you
who watch my videos just to see the fish
gliding around silently in my aquarium
in the background you're out a luck CU
you're not going to be able to see it
because it's like over that way my
aquarium

is and we got lots of questions we got
like 60 Questions possibly the largest
number of questions ever on a Q&A and I
will conscientiously do my best within
reason of course to keep this thing less
than three and a half hours
long but who knows cuz I'm already

digressing I'm already talking about
stuff that isn't the
questions and before I start answering
questions I seem to vaguely recall
somebody somewhere asking me a question
about moth men and it just sort of
slipped through the cracks and
disappeared questions do this sometimes
if you ask a question and I don't answer
it there's a good chance that I just
didn't see it or just kind of skipped
over it somehow inadvertently it does
happen
sometimes so don't think that if you
asked a question I didn't answer it that
I was offended that because it was such

an inappropriate question or some such
no I mean if you're deliberately being
offensive or something I might not
answer a question like that but that
doesn't happen very often so if you
answered a question or if you asked a
question in good faith I don't answer it
just ask it again and chances are I'll
see it the second time um sometimes
people will ask questions like on under
old Q&A videos where I don't look for
questions that kind of thing it happens
sometimes so anyways anyone's C about
curious about Moth Man moth men plural
moth
people if we're not if we're not going
to be so

patriarchal um but I don't know anything
about Moth Man really just very very
little

so I think I'm just going to move on to
what is technically the first question
and this is from

Newman and Newman says how does
intention work in Terra Buddhism for
example can someone will of their own
intention to agree and adopt the
teachings of the Buddha or is there some
kind of Grace mechanism that causes the
intention to pursue Enlightenment to
arise in the
postulant and for some reason this this
reminds me of an essay written by

William

James about I mean you can't just believe whatever you want to believe it's just not a viable option to just believe something because you think you ought to believe it I mean it doesn't work for me it didn't work for William James there could be some people out there who just kind of they're somewhat invertebrate in their approach to life and they can just believe what they're told to believe I mean like in a predominant like Medieval Europe you just had to be a Catholic and back then it was you really didn't see any option it was like Catholicism was just considered to be

true and so even if it didn't seem true to you there was some other aspect of your mind thinking well you know everyone believes it so it's got to be true it's just there's something wrong with me and not seeing the truth of it and so they'd Fall Away along but with regard to Theravāda Buddhism in a non-Theravāda Buddhist culture can you will of your own intention to agree and adopt the teachings of the Buddha I don't maybe some people but it doesn't work for me I mean you have to be persuaded you have to think that it's true or at least you have to consider it to be more true than your other

options so yeah it's not really a Grace
mechanism it could be a Karma a karmic
preparation thing where you just have
the karmic
predisposition to accept
dhama but still I mean it has to strike
you as true and
worthwhile in order for you to accept it
and believe it I mean you can kind of go
along with emotions without being
completely persuaded I mean I'm not
completely persuaded of much of anything
really but still I mean it does have to
seem like a viable
option and so um I'm not sure exactly
how intention fits into this I mean
Newman asked how does intention work in

Terra Buddhism that's the question
that's the question mark comes after
that how does intention work in teral
Buddhism in which you might say that you
know intention is like Karma itself you
know volition is
karma D that kind of thing but then his
example that follows that is uh what I
just addressed and uh I think I
addressed it well enough for such a long
Q&A as this may turn out to be so I
think I should move on to Newman's
second question which is if someone with
wrong view for example belief in God or
God's essentialist metaphysics Etc
practices meditation as understood by

Buddhists in which initiation isn't necessary is it effective in the sense of CD developing or psychic powers powers in general or propelling one towards Enlightenment although they don't currently hold the Right View necessary for it at that time well when you're meditating you're pretty much suspending wrong view I mean if you're if you're sitting in meditation like on the breath for example and you're philosophi and holding on to like theological views or essentialist philosophical views you're not really meditating so while you're meditating your wrong view just evaporates if you're meditating properly

for the most part I mean you might think that the breath is real when you're breathing and that kind of thing which is kind of technically still wrong view but um it's it's a matter of degree I guess and still people who have really wrong views can make progress in dhama Golden example St John of the Cross believed in God Almighty believed Jesus died for his sins believed Mary was a virgin was was furthermore essentially an arant um and he may have become an Arun himself despite these dogmatic views because the more progress you make in meditation the more detached you are

from Mere thinking and the mere thinking which contains these wrong views becomes less and less essential to your spiritual practice less and less essential to your understanding of reality so St John of the Cross started off as a devout Spanish Catholic in the 1500s and continued being a devout Spanish Catholic I mean he's he's a Catholic saint now he's the M mystical doctor of the Catholic church but his practice was extremely Advanced and his teachings became more and more similar to Buddhism but I mean he couldn't just deny the truth of Catholic teachings because the Inquisition was breathing down his neck and he had already almost

died in prison

as for a kind of religious

persecution not because of his views so

much in that case but because he was

part of a reform movement of the the

carite order of monks and nuns and so

the unreformed carmelites got revenge

and accused him of these trumped up

charges and he wound up in prison and

almost died he might have died if he

hadn't escaped

well that's neither here nor there the

point is that St John of the Cross was

much more advanced than most Buddhists

are despite the fact he believed in an

eternal and Immortal Soul God Almighty

Jesus as God's only begotten son who
died for our sins etc etc Mary virgin
enlightened virgin

Etc so yeah I'm I'm not one of those
fundamentalists terraa Buddhists who
think that you have to
believe Orthodox terraa Buddhist
philosophy or you're just lost you don't
have any chance and probably you're
going to wind up in a lower
realm I don't I don't subscribe to that
so you can have wrong views still become
enlightened because the the wiser you
get the more progress you make in your
meditation the more detached you are
from views you just don't identify with
views anymore even though they're still

there as a kind of cultural
artifact so I mean that's one reason why
I'm so open-minded with regard to
members of other religions for example
being fully enlightened because you just
eventually detach from the dogmas the
dogmas do not contain the essence of
dhma

anyway they're they're they're a raft
made of rubbish that you use to cross
the flood and then you let it go and you
get to the other side because it's not
something that should be really clung to
due to any

inherent like profound
truth it's skillful means as the

Mahayana Buddhists call it and so I'm
just going to move on next question this
is from Gnostic
rocker and Gnostic rocker says what is
your view on the following observation
by scholar of religious cultures and
nationalism Ernest G. Gellner and so Ernest
oh wait he continues Gnostic rocker this
is Gnostic rocker still not Ernest
Gellner yet in Gellner's 'Nations and
Nationalism' he theorizes that in
shamanistic pre- agrarian cultures men
profess to worship nature River and
Mountain Spirits but in reality they are
worshiping themselves he
theorizes that in agrarian cultures men
worshiped dreaded bowed down to and

feared God but in reality they were
fearing and worshiping the auster power
over life and death that the Kings held
period in nationalism gilner informs us
men worship race Bloodlines ancestors
and what they understand to be unique
genes but in reality they are fetishes
fetishes how do I say this
fetishizing
fetish turning into a fetish and
worshiping themselves from what I have
observed of life gilner seems to have a
point is there if there is some truth at
all in the above analysis regarding
subconscious or hidden obscured
motivations in men then what are terava

or Mahayana Buddhist subconsciously
worshiping or devoting themselves to
well first of all I don't think that
gnosticism was entirely right I do think that
throughout history there have been
people worshiping God that were really
worshiping what they consider to be God
and not just themselves although I will
say that all religions are idolatrous to
some degree because what you're
worshiping is a creation of your own
mind it wasn't necessarily made by human
hands but it's made by human
ideas so in a way you know anything that
you worship is going to be a production
of your own mind I mean you can say
you're worshiping God you're worshiping

ultimate truth you're worshiping you
know the dharmakaya Nirvana supposedly
something that has that is eternal that
existed before you but your
understanding of it is a creation of
your own mind and that's really what
your

worshiping so I mean to some degree it's
not nearly as political or
like uh what's the word I want to say
socialistic but not with regard to
socialism as with regard to sociology
sociological you know it's not so
political or sociological as Gilner is
saying where deep down maybe they have a
an inkling that they're really

worshiping

themselves um I really think that most

religious people are sincere that

they're not just sort of you know

worshiping themselves through the back

door so to speak but at the same time

like I said all religions are somewhat

Idol

in that you are attributing Holiness or

sacredness to something that is

artificial created by humans not So Much

by human hands as by the human

mind and that's pretty much unavoidable

unless you're just going to be a kind of

atheist you can have the choice of being

an

idolator or an atheist but you'd have to

be a humble atheist that isn't
worshiping
atheism as some kind of highest truth
so getting down to the question
though let's see see gner seems to have
a point if there is some truth at all in
the above analysis regarding
subconscious or hidden obscured
motivations in men then what are terado
or Mahayana Buddhist subconsciously
worshiping or devoting themselves to
their own understanding of
Dharma because Dharma itself I mean if
you don't conceptualize it you're
oblivious to it unless you get into a
really deep mystical state which most

people

don't so yeah in a way you'd be

subconsciously

revering your own best understanding of

dhma like this concept of Buddha and

dhamma that you kind of project out

there which is really in here and that's

the way it is with all religions and I

do not think it's nearly as political as

gilner is saying and so I'm just going

to move on to Gnostic rocker's third

question which is I have read lau and

jangu but little of the iching professor

Richard Wilhelm in his Princeton

University analysis of the iching posits

that the iching is a Chinese dialectical

resolution between two opposing visions

of being the Indian Buddhist view that
all existence is no more than illusion
and the Chinese philosophy of existence
which regards existence as real a thing
in itself a numon behind that illusion
of becoming thus the iching
resolves the contradiction of these two
opposites and like the above everything
we know moves in opposites have you
studied the iching and what did you make
of it in the light of the above I never
really studied the iching I I knew this
girl in college that had eing she didn't
have the yo stock she had to use coins
or something I did my my reading you
know you just kind of throw the coins

and then you look at the the pattern and
you look it up in the book and it gives
you like this little thing about the
king is going to be successful if this
or that you know something something I
don't recall the details so I haven't
really studied the iching or especially
like not the metaphysics like the
metaphysical underpinnings the the
philosophical suppositions of the iching
you know it's I'm just considered to be
a kind of fortune telling device that
the philosophy of it I don't
know I don't know really you know what
kind of metaphysical assumptions are
made in the iching whether it's largely
Buddhist or doist or confucianist or

anything like that sorry about that but
uh really the eing is not a kind of
Dharma that is studied as a Dharma
really by most people you think of
Chinese religion iching generally isn't
on the

list so this is like a fourth question

oh man oh no this is a third

question okay Gnostic rocker you're off

the hook because I guess you did just

ask three questions here third question

have you ever mentioned to your fellow

workers that you are Buddhist if so then

how did they react I never do tell

colleagues nowadays since when did so in

the past I Was Made fully aware of how

far away most western people and indeed most East Asians also are from understanding Eastern religions I wonder what happened in your case if you told colleague since you were a monastic for so long in conditions most westerners wouldn't understand yeah I mean I'm working among blue collar workers in the Bible Belt of the United States and the place where I'm working at now it wasn't until

yesterday that I mentioned that I was a Buddhist to anybody I mean there a few friends few people you know they're just talkative I don't know if they're really curious or just talkative you know they'll be asking questions you know

where are you from and this kind of thing and so you know I I'd have to mention now I spent a lot of time in Asia and it's like why and I just kind of like deflect and and just wouldn't say that I was a Buddhist monk because I might as well has say that for the past 30 years I was with Elvis on a UFO with aliens or something although yesterday this guy he asked me what religion or nationality are you and I I was like well do I get to pick I mean is it one or the other I'm a I'm a US citizen I'm American and he said he was too and then he informed me that he was Jewish which is kind of

surprising you don't expect to see you
know like a a light brown haired Jewish
person who doesn't look Jewish driving a
forklift in South Carolina you know
they're all supposed to be like doctors
and and lawyers and movie producers and
that kind of
thing so

anyways um then he he did pursue this
and asked me what religion I said well
I'm more terraa Buddhist than anything
else and then he's the reason he asked
is cu according to him my mannerisms
remind him of this really cool guy that
he knows who is a Mormon so I guess he
was sort of fishing to find out if I was
a Mormon too because I act like this

Mormon friend of his or remind him of
this Mormon friend of his and uh so that
that's as far as it went and I don't
know if he would ever pursue it because
again you tell a bluecollar worker
in the Bible Belt of the United States
South

Carolina about that you're a Buddhist or
we a Buddhist and you know it just
doesn't you know it's like tilt on the
old pinball machine it's like they don't
know how to process the information
although the very first place I worked
here in South Carolina everyone knew I
was a monk cu the manager was like we're
going to have a monk working here you

know before I even showed up a lot of
them were skeptical they just thought it
I was just making it up and that I was
really in prison for 30 years or
something anyways I'm just going to move
on to this question this is
from it's spelled QX
ztk so

K says I am curious about dependent
origination I get the links from sense
to clinging but from ignorance to six
sense bases it is hard for me to see the
causal Connection in each step
especially name and form to six sense
bases also from clinging to aging seems
confusing cling to becoming seems
especially odd to me and should we view

both as

undesirable presumably Buddhists and not

and not anti-natalist as far as I know

but I may be wrong so presumably

Buddhists are not

anti-natalist as far as I know but I may

be wrong some of this seems to fit into

the common criticism that Buddhism is

anti-life I am somewhat sympathetic to

that argument though many other aspects

of Buddhism keep calling out to me

making me unable to ignore it perhaps

you can clarify for

me well this is kind of more than one

question in a way it's a complex

question anyhow but with regard to

dependent

origination as I've pointed out time

time and time again

I do not consider the 12 links to be

original teachings of the Buddha that if

you look in the text you can find Proto

dependent core rising of like precursors

prototypes of the 12 link theory for

example the kalaha sua of the ataka waga

of the suata or the central portion of

the Saka pauta and the Dian Kaya contain

like Proto picha samatas like the the 12

nidana Theory and really I have to agree

with that the 12 nidanas don't make very

good

sense like for example between feeling

and and craving there ought to be like

perception or something in there but
there

isn't and also there's two two terms
that mean the same thing like let's see
a Sanara towards the beginning of the 12
nidanas and also bwa towards the end
both mean essentially comma so I mean it
could shortcircuit it you just skip over
the whole middle go from one comma to
the next because they mean the same
thing and just there you go you know you
just got rid of the whole central part
of it through a short circuit if you
will but uh let's see from ignorance to
six sense bases it is hard for me to see
the causal Connection in each step so so

AIO SAR which is I mean if you go with
Orthodox

interpretation

that it's like this is referring to the
Past P the previous existence previous
ignorance resulted in previous making of
Karma and then and then it results in
like Consciousness which is rebirth
linking Consciousness in this life life
and then you've got like um namarupa
which is mind and body according to
Orthodox interpretation the six sense
bases um yeah so it's like the first
three steps or the previous existence
according to the Orthodox interpretation
and then it results in this
existence and um name and form to the

six sense basis

well when you have a mind and a body you

know let's say you've got got the

fertilized egg would be the simplest

name and form presuming that this the

fertilized egg has some tiny little

speck of Consciousness to it and then

gradually it develops into the six sense

bases you know you got the six senses

including mind as

sixth so that's doesn't strike me as too

difficult to understand if you're

willing to accept the the Orthodox

interpretation of what I consider to be

an

and probably not an original teachings

of the Buddha also he says from clinging
to aging seems confusing cling to
becoming seems especially odd well I
mean partly you're dealing
with like

English like makeshift interpretations
like clinging the word in poly is oad
Don which literally means uptake and it
also could mean fuel like like firewood
in the Buddhist time in like
colloquial poly or the language similar
to poly that was spoken in the Ganges
Valley where the Buddha lived aon could
mean just firewood but it means
uptake and so you got first you've got
like
craving thirst which causes you to take

up and cling to things and then the B
which is usually translated as becoming
or whatever that's Karma it's like the
force of existence it's like the
momentum of your mental states that
keeps you going through some Sara so
it's like the clinging to stuff it it's
like the fuel for your
karmic journey through Sam
SAR so that's not too difficult to
understand if you think about it in
terms of the original poly and don't
rely too heavily on makeshift English
rendering
of the
terms but again I really do not think

the Buddha originally taught dependent
core Rising as 12 links it was more like
you know this being that is this
becoming that becomes you know this this
not let's see I'm I'm forgetting the the
short version but it's essentially you
know this not being that is not you know
this being that is this not being that
is not

I mean that's like the condensed version
of the of the short version and it's
just sort of like
conditionality it's not this
sequence of things and some famous
Western monks like Nana Vera especially
I think interpreted the whole 12 links
to be authentic but simultaneous not

like a linear sequence you know he he
keeps pointing out it says this being
that is not this ceasing that
is but it's it's just kind of an
academic

argument you can study you know the
Orthodox interpretation of it which is
helpful but still logically it's not a
very elegant theory in my opinion it
could be fixed up more than it already
is and it's already apparently a fixed
up version of earlier attempts or or I
mean the earlier attempts aren't even
identified as *ptia suop* it was just like
you know what causes this and then the
Buddha answers and then they say well

what causes that and then the Buddha answers and then well what causes that and you wind up with this chain of this causes this causes this causes this and that somehow uh evolved into an interpretation of dependent core Rising because as the Buddha correctly predicted right after his Enlightenment almost nobody understands dependent Core rising and so it just like crystallized into this 12 links and then monks just memorize that and think that they understand it when really they still don't and even the longest sutra on dependent core Rising the nidana Sutta of the D Kaya even that doesn't have the Standard 12 links it's even that is it

was like an early prototype but then it got worked on even since the composition of that sua so that you've got like the Streamline 12 links and probably in my opinion perception should have been thrown in there but 13 links is less auspicious than 12 I guess

so I guess the next question

see G separate these I don't like having them clumped together so it's like next question is presumably Buddhists are not anti-natalist as far as I know but I may be wrong some of it seems to fit into the common criticism

that Buddhism is
anti-life I am somewhat
sympathetic um okay P perhaps you can
clarify for me well I mean the first
Noble truth is if you exist you're going
to suffer and the best thing you can do
is try to stop suffering so it is kind
of anti-natalist to that extent and the
early like the vdic brahans the
followers of vidic brahmanism in the
Buddhist time accused the Buddhist of
being destroyers of life because or at
least partly because the brahans had
this idea that first you should be a
householder and have kids before you
renounce the world whereas the Buddhists
are saying renounce the world as soon as

you can preferably before you have kids
so um vidc brahmanism was more conducive
to the sustaining of Indian Society
whereas in Buddhism it's sort of like
mod modern Western Christianity where
most people just aren't very good
Christians I mean there actually is an
epistle in the New Testament saying that
if you are single when you become a
Christian you should stay single and if
you're married when you become a
Christian you should stay married
because Jesus is coming any time now and
I mean how many Christians follow that
there's so much in the New Testament
that in order for it to become like a

secular Mass religion it just stuff

needs to be

ignored so it's it's kind of that way in

terata Buddhism where at least there's

it's sort of stratified so if you want

to really be serious about following the

system correctly you renounce the world

you go off into the forest and meditate

whereas the lay people who considered

themselves to be Buddhist they realized

that they're not practicing Buddhism

entirely correctly in a way Terra of

Buddhism was set up as a kind of

spectator sport where the monks and nuns

are like the pro athletes and the lay

people are just like fans supporting

their favorite

team and in the west people resent that
and to some degree a lot of Western
Buddhists so-called resent renunciation
and like people who do renounce the
world because it somehow makes their own
lukewarmness and mediocre practice seem
not good enough somehow
so in a way Buddhism kind of is
anti-natalist you know it does teach
kind of what Ecclesiastes teaches in the
Bible that you're better off just not
being
born and if you are born which most of
us are then I mean the thing to do is
just get off the wheel just stop just
cut it out knock it off for crying out

loud so it's kind of anti-life the whole
purpose is to transcend
this dim glimmery fever dream of
samsaric
existence into something
better better than mere samsaric
existence which is also called Life by
by some people but it's not ultimately
real you know you're transcending an
illusion it's not like you're just like
pissing on life on Earth it's just there
is a higher reality than this fever
dream generated by life on Earth so to
speak and I should just move on next
question really we got lots of questions
I shouldn't dwell too long on any
question in particular unless I just

happen to feel like it cuz after all
this is my

show next question is from Romeo and
Romeo says were you a fan of The Beatles
well the Beatles were before my time
they broke up in

1972 I was I was a kid wasn't really
sophisticated in my musical tastes I'd
be listening to kgh in Aberdine which
just played top 40 stuff if I hear the
radio at all I didn't own my own radio
probably yet at that
time

but I would say the top three rock and
roll bands I mean Led Zeppelin and the
Beatles would be the top two and I'm not

even sure who who number three would be
so I do think The Beatles are one of the
two greatest rock bands of all
time so I don't know if that makes me a
fan or not I'm just sort of
acknowledging my just based on my
own

analysis of you know the qualities of
rock and roll bands then I would
consider the Beatles to be in the top
two along with Led

Zeppelin so Romeo's second question and
he does kind of have four questions here
although they're kind of all along the
same lines if so can you speak about
what you liked about them well they were
they were groundbreaking Pioneers they

were very Innovative they just transformed rock and roll and pop music you know just on their own practically especially after they started taking acid and grew their hair long and also they were just good musicians I mean you listen to a classic Beetle song like say Strawberry Fields Forever I mean it's really sophisticated music it's not just some Garage Band just banging grinding and pounding out some song and but there some Garage Band types were really good ACDC they were simplistic you know the stuff they played could be played by some Junior High School band without much difficulty

but still The Beatles were they had a
certain sophistication in a in ability
in in addition to like inspired
Innovation so that's that's what I liked
about him my guess like within Me
Without You is that is that how it goes
Within Me Without You with sitar you
know that was I think that was one of uh
H I can't remember his name the bass
player George Harrison you know he he
was allowed like two songs per album
George Harrison got to write two songs
per Beatles album with John and Paul you
know doing the rest kind of
collaborating on the
rest and so George Harrison did most of
like the Hindu inspired spiritual kind

of songs like within Me Without You with the sitar music um but I think I'm kind of rambling at this point so do you have a favorite Beetle favorite albums or favorite songs um it's kind of interesting before I became a monk when I was still like a quite robed like a postulant you know a monastery attendant at the monastery where I was ordained just one day washing dishes in the in the kitchen building I was trying to come up with a beetle song to represent each person at the monastery like there was this abrasive Jewish guy who a lot of people didn't liked him I liked him though and he was Happiness is a Warm

Gun um my theme song was nowhere man
it's not exact one of my favorite songs
though it just seemed to fit me at the
time but again Within Me Without You is
one of my favorite Beatle songs also my
favorite Beach Boy song of all time is
back in USSR by The
Beatles so favorite albums I don't know
if I have a favorite album I mean
Sergeant Pepper is classic I mean that
was one of those Innovative just
completely groundbreaking kind of albums
sort of their like Rubber Soul and
revolver before that
were good The White Album was getting
kind of Bleak at
times but yeah I mean I wasn't I'm not

really into Beatles music before they grew their hair long and started taking hard drugs you know when they became hippies that's really when they blossomed in my opinion they were already really famous before that but there you are so if not what didn't I like about them the the main thing I didn't like about the Beatles is Paul McCartney who was not really a rock and roller he was more of a pop musician and so in my opinion most of the real dud songs on their albums like she's leaving home on Sergeant Pepper just an insufferably bad song in my opinion they're almost all written by Paul

McCartney so I do think that Paul McCartney was uh little too much of a pop musician not enough of a rock and roller to really have the Beatles be like

Led Zeppelin where just everybody in the band was like topnotch in what they did up until John Paul Jones started preferring keyboards to bass that was the beginning of the end that was driving D John botom to drink really hard

probably so I'm just going to move on next question this is from ruie and ruie says hello poo did you do you know when the term Yogi first appeared in a teravan context well Yogi definitely is

a poly word in addition to a Sanskrit
one it's used a lot in terraa in in
Burma Yogi means like a meditator
especially a female meditator like a lay
meditator is called the yogi in fact
Yogi Yan or Yogi color is kind of a dark
brown and that's the the women the the
Burmese Buddhist women who just sort of
dedicate their lives to medit meditation
and keeping precepts and all that
they'll often wear this dark brown color
which is Yogi
color but it is true
that in uh the oldest suas the word Yogi
isn't used excuse me um yoga is found in
Old text you know it means like the Yoke

like yoga K is a a term that's found in very early Buddhist text which just means like rest from the Yoke you know it's like release from bondage kind of a thing but yoga as like a spiritual practice came later I mean as a as a word meaning that in poly in the text I have read that one of the oldest mentions of the word Yogi is in the terata so that's canonical it's relatively old but it really takes off it's used a lot like in the wisi Maga the commentarial literature that kind of thing it's it's well established as a term by then but it's not found in the the oldest sutas like the strata the strata of the sutas um but like I say it

has it is in the

terata and it means um Yogi it means

just like a spiritual practitioner

especially a dedicated relatively

Advanced

one and so I'm just going to move on the

next question this is from

avenity and avenity says I have some

basic knowledge of Buddhism but it's

kind of all over the place could you

make a Buddhism for dummies video or

something so that I could get a grasp on

how all the aspects of the Buddhism

philosophy fall into place that would be

neat and yeah in fact I could have done

it this weekend but I wound up doing a

video right before this one with Auto
excelsor and a guy named Satori D about
like artificial
sentience like programming real
Consciousness into a computer and uh I
don't know if I'm going to upload it
onto my own channel probably not but you
can probably find it on the Autos navaka
Vada uh channel on bitshoot I think he's
started a a navak cavada channel on
YouTube also he's he's going more
mainstream now that the mainstream is
somewhat less censorious and
insane but um
yeah Buddhism for dummies video or like
intro to Elementary Buddhism 101 yeah I
I might do that next weekend um if I'm

not completely distracted by having to
do other things but it is a good idea
and I think I'll do

that so I'm not making any absolute
promises but inshah I will do it and
relatively you know maybe even next
weekend

so I'm just going to move on the next
question which is from covac and cod
zida and his first question which is
more of a

command let's call it a request is
explain this map and he's got a map of
Burma and Burma is divided up into this
Patchwork and each patch on the map is
like who is in charge of that area of

Burma the Hun you know the official
Burmese government is less than half of
the map of Burma and then you've got
these other groups like The People's
Defense Force the kachin independence
Army the aracan Army etc etc it's just a
veritable Patchwork and Burma has pretty
much always been this way since
Independence the the names have changed
like for a while um after Burma got
independence that there was the Quan
Tang I think they're called they were
the followers of Chang Kai Sheek in like
after they got driven out of China after
China became Communists under Mao there
was a large number of these Chinese
soldiers just set up their own little

country in Northern Burma for
years and so Burma has always been this
way I mean ever since Independence
they've been at war with the Kins anyone
who watched that fourth Rambo movie
would

know so yeah um that's that's
essentially what it's about is that
Burma has always been ineptly run the
Burmese just cannot organize very well at
all that in my opinion one of the worst
calamities ever to befall the country of
Burma was independence from the British
Empire although the Burmese just don't
see it that way for some peculiar
reason explicable only to themselves

perhaps so that's that's what the map is
it's just the various areas of Burma
that are under the nominal control of
various I mean the government plus
various Insurgent groups and Burma has
pretty much always been this way since
they got independence from the British
Empire and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is also from
seacan CAD Zuna and he says I saw a
brutal comment on YouTube What Would you
advise this person and so what follows
is this
person and their
comment and this person
says the older I get the angrier I feel
about some of the stuff my parents

taught me growing up I was always the straight A student never got in trouble didn't drink or smoke and only started dating when I turned 18 because of all the negative messages and threats of punishment they said they'd dish out if I ever did now I'm in my 30s and my mom keeps telling me about all the stuff she and my dad got up to when they were younger and they would have killed me for doing they laugh about it but I push so much of myself down to make them happy and it turns out they were already doing those things themselves I don't know where to go from here but life feels really Hollow and I don't trust

them anymore well for starters he just seems like a whiner to me that may sound brutal in and of itself but it's like different people react to the same circumstance I mean that's just kind of standard you know everybody parents are always like trying to teach their kids don't do the [__] I did when I was young you know they might not put it in those words but it's like they've learned from their mistakes they're trying to pass off this wisdom secondhand to the kids so the kids don't have to make the same mistakes and some kids just resent that I mean there are so many people who they're like traumatized throughout life because their parents got divorced when

they were like nine or 10 let's say or
they they find out that they were
adopted and then they're like oh I was
this accident you know I was a
mistake and it's like other people they
find out that they're adopted their
parents get divorced like my parents got
divorced when I was like eight or nine
years old and it's just that's just the
way life is you know you just accept the
way things are and so I mean suffering
is always

self-inflicted so this person isn't
unhappy because their his parents
assuming it's he his parents you know
made him or like they they strongly

urged him sometimes with threats of punishment to be a good student and not get in trouble and do the right thing you know it's like I forgot how the the sentence started but I mean it's like what's wrong with that really you know it's it's it's self-inflicted suffering oh yeah now I remember he's not suffering because his parents did this he's suffering because he just won't accept the situation and that's just the way suffering is it's not the situation that makes you suffer it is your own choice to reject the situation to refuse to accept it it doesn't matter what it is if you accept it it's not a problem and it doesn't matter what it is

if you refuse to accept it it's a
problem I mean it could be somebody
loving you and you think well that's I
don't want to be loved by this person
and so you suffer because you're like
pushing against the way things are not
that you have to live with that person
just because they love you but still I
mean you don't have to be
against you don't have to
just I mean this is I mean Buddhism one
101 that even most Buddhists don't
really fully
comprehend is really the second Noble
Truth all suffering is caused by desire
and generally desire for things to be

different things to be different than
they are if you if you desire something
to be different than it is you
suffer and it's your own choice
ultimately you have the choice but most
people are so driven by just knee-jerk
reflex just habit
that they don't even acknowledge that
they have a choice maybe they're living
in a culture like Western consumeristic
culture where it's just
assumed that if you're going to be
inconvenienced or uncomfortable then
you're going to suffer it's just people
just believe that and it's false you
always have a choice unless you're just
so semiconscious that you fail to see

that you have a choice

it may be that your karma is such and

Karma is like habit energy it's just

going to drive you in the direction of

being unhappy just through habit because

it's your Habit to be unhappy about

certain things but still if you're

mindful at least you can observe the

unhappiness with Detachment which then

robs it of its motive force it robs it

of its momentum and then it can just run

its course you can observe it

dispassionately if possible and you're

not making new Karma that is just

reinforcing The

Habit so it does take some

work but I

mean I I knew this woman I mean she was relatively well versed in in buddhis she she taught she taught English to the Tibetan Monks at daram Salah in India for a while and she was telling me once that she had a very indulgent father she had very indulgent parents who just made life easy for her and she's been processing that she's been trying to overcome this you know for X number of years it's like

what I mean my parents got divorced when I was nine I mean I didn't like it much but then you know there's certain perks to it I mean you get two different sets

of Christmas presents two different sets
of birthday presents every year I mean
there was certain certain advantages to
it so it's it's mainly a matter of
attitude whether having parents making
you behave yourself even though they
didn't behave themselves very well when
they were your age I mean you can resent
that if you choose or you can accept
that if you
choose and if you accept it it's not a
problem so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from xenoid
and xenoid said if the Buddha has
completely rid desires why does he still
do anything rather than lean back

against the bod tree and wait to pass
into Parana this makes this makes me go
along with the interpretation that when
he achieves Enlightenment he completely
disappears from samsara and that
everything anyone else sees of him after
that is the fruition of their karma
Alone um yeah I mean trying to second
guess the subjective mental states of a
sasam Buddha is already a Fool's errand
I would say say but still I I think
there is a lot of sense in the idea that
once a person is fully enlightened
there's really nobody there and that
what they do and say is a reflection of
the kic
fruition of the people around them more

than of

themselves or you could just say that an enlightened being kind of like St John of the cross's conception of a Catholic enlightened being that according to St John of the Cross once a person has reached the stage of perfection which I mean shouldn't really exist in Christianity because nobody's worthy you know it's only the grace of God that gets you into heaven and all that but according to St John of the Cross there is this stage of perfection where the renunciant mortifies their own self-will until they just don't have any self-will anymore and they are totally motivated

by the will of God they become like a
Divine puppet in Buddhism you you can't
really have that because there is no
yahwe up there who is like the Creator
God like the the capital G God so in
Buddhism you might just say that an
enlightened being just automatically
does the right thing you know it's just
he just does the perfect thing and if
the perfect thing just happens to be you
know postponing death in order to teach
people

dhama then that's fine I mean according
to the text the Buddha did have
compassion a

new and also he taught his own disciples
that they should go out and teach dhama

for the benefit of the people for the
benefit of of this
generation he was the teacher of Gods
and Men or Lords and Men I should
say Lords and Common Man is a
alternative translation to
that so let's see here but yeah again I
mean the Buddha's mind is going to be
off the scale it's not really going to
be
analyzable through some saric
means and so you're better off just not
even trying to go
there and so I'm just going to move on
to Xenith void's next question which is
along the same lines here is the Buddha

always happy or does he feel nothing at all I think this is the main hang up for people when you introduce them to Buddhism because they assume happiness and suffering necessarily need to both exist for there to be any happiness while listening to biku's translations of some pudas I heard it mentioned that a monk should have no likes or dislikes not liking anything seems to imply never being happy however monks of various religious Traditions are happier than everyone else this seems like something you just have to experience for yourself to understand well in Buddhism you do have the duality of like Suka and Dua you know happiness and unhappiness that

they're like a dualistic pair that
just kind of come together you know this
you get one you get the other also it's
two sides of the same coin but there's
like a deeper kind of Happiness which is
just contentment of just transcending
the whole

Duality and the Buddhist mind also is
going to transcend the whole

Duality so even if he does appear to
have mental state he justes appear to
have like emotions feelings even
preferences like the Buddha seem to
prefer quiet to noise for
example

then it's it's just sort of like this

it's just sort of like empty it no longer has any karmic motive force subjectively

and um what else was I going to say

I mean it's just he has it's there but it has been transcended and so it's it's kind of there I mean it was never really there to begin with it's all just

this like conditional quasi reality

anyway and I I'm just gonna have to move on because we got lots of questions it's

like 60 Questions this time which is

possibly the most questions ever on a

Q&A and so I just got to keep driving through this

so zenī void's third question people

often question Christians and Muslims if

God can defy the laws of logic and do things that we think are impossible such as simultaneously existing and not existing can the Buddha do things which are impossible I found this video reading Julius iola's analysis of Isa which implies that he can although I've also heard versions of this story where the Buddha simply moves up to a higher Brahma World rather than completely disappearing however completely disappearing then later reappearing is obviously the more profound of the two if he really completely existed samsara before his bet with Baka Brahma shouldn't he also be able to return to

samsara after death as many mahayan
believe sorry for the transgressive
fourth question I will save it for the
next q yeah this I don't know if that
was a transgressive fourth question at
least I've just got three clumps of of
words three paragraphs here
maybe there's he slipped in a a question
mark that yeah I guess he does have two
question marks in this long complicated
question so can the Buddha do something
impossible no nobody can do anything
that's impossible because the word
impossible means nobody can do
it so I mean Christian God can't do
anything impossible because the very
fact that he's doing it proves that it's

possible so yeah I mean the Buddha can do things that are paradoxical like kind of existing and not existing at the same time sort of you know I mean he's sort of here but he's also like transcended and is off the scale at the same time in Nirvana and samsara simultaneously I mean it's kind of paradoxical but it's obviously not impossible if that is he managed to do it because the very fact that he managed to do something proves that it's not impossible where I mean this whole thing about going up to Brahma's realm I mean Brahma is still in samsara he's just in a heaven realm and the fact

that that he's called Baka Brahma is
proves or

indicates that it's a kind of religious
propaganda making fun of baka Brahma

because Baka literally means something

like a crane you know kind of bird and

brahma's usual bird that he's associated
with

is the Ruddy shelu which looks like a
wild

goose

hamsa in in pan Sanskrit it's hamsa like

paramahamsa Yogananda paramahamsa means

ultimate Goose or more correctly

ultimate Ruddy shell duck why a shell

duck if there any ornithologists who

watch this I would like to know why a

shell duck is called a duck and not a goose because they're big like a goose got a long neck like a goose Hong like a goose why is it a duck maybe it's just sort of like a kind of parallel

Evolution where this family of ducks just grew into into geese separate from the main line of geese or something but that's neither here nor there Baka

Brahma I mean he's identified with like a crane which sort of like an asap's fables is sort of indicative in in like Indian folklore as being a foolish kind of bird

so the Buddha goes up to Baka Brahma and it Baka Brahma makes a fool of himself

in the sutta and it's still in
samsara so there's really no Paradox or
impossibility involved at all the Buddha
just goes up into a heaven realm comes
back down again no

problem so but if he completely exited
samsara during his bet with Brahma
well I don't know I mean if he made a
bet with Brahma it's been a long
time since I read the sutta so maybe
you're asking this question I think it's
you're asking yeah

you're asking is maybe he remembers a detail of
the sutta where the Buddha leaves Samsara
but he would just be going into nibbana
temporarily but he would still have his
body and everything so he would just

sort of maybe his Consciousness would vacate the body and then reenter it but the whole sua is probably fiction because it's pretty clearly religious propaganda making fun of vaded conceptions of Brahma as some supreme god whereas the Buddha goes up there and makes a fool of this same supposedly supreme god

so yeah not only many mahayan believe that the Buddha can come back after death but a lot of the Thai Forest tradition aan man especially believe that Buddhas like from pre eons can somehow just

reincorporate just generate a new body
and just come and talk to a
man and it just doesn't work that way in
Orthodox terava but the Thai Forest
tradition Thai monks in general they
they never fully recovered from having
their ecclesiastical hierarchy destroyed
by the Burmese during some unprovoked
invasion hundreds of years

ago

so

yeah shouldn't he also be able to return
to Samar after death I mean return I
mean from

where I mean Nirvana is not a
place you know it's just this
unconditioned

reality that I mean suddenly it becomes
conditioned he I mean mean you could
have somebody's Karma generate some
semblance of a Buddha coming and talking
to you you know you believe firmly
enough or your karma is just right for
some being to manifest and communicate
with you that's fine but it's not really
the Buddha it's it's just this
manifestation provoked by your own Karma
your own mental States or
whatever and I just got to keep going
here I just got a Wade through this this
next question is from Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Libra lamb and
occasionally still known as Libra lamb

and he says anything Lial on your mind
today well I mean this whole talk about
transcending samsara that that has
occurred a few times so far in this Q&A
that's that's kind of
Lial um lately not necessarily today but
I have been thinking about an a question
that I answered in the previous Q&A
about dark wisdom about kind of the
wisdom of
militarism and in a way that's kind of
Lial too I've I've been tempted to to do
a like a little video on that also
although it's it's like bottled
lightning I was inspired to talk more
about it and now it's the the lightning
is kind of fizzled out I think so I'm

not nearly as uh motivated to talk about
it

this now as I was a few days ago and I
did the did the video with auto I'm not
going to be doing three videos in one on
one weekend unless some of them are
really short ones you know like teensy
teensy

ones so yeah not especially other than
just kind of some of these questions
almost any Q&A I got to go Lial in
trying to explain two different levels
of reality

simultaneously he's talking about
Enlightenment is Lial unless you got
like this burmese dog IC

mechanistic cookbook understanding of things where you can just lock the most exalted ideas into this framework of words and memorize the words and think you understand it so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Otto this is the first time Otto has asked a question on these q&as that I can recall anyway it's been a while at any rate and and Otto's question is quote I prayed God to make me a better Buddhist unquote and then he says legit and that would depend on what you mean by legit you know legitimate I mean is that is that a valid I mean if it works I mean pragmatically it's legit if it you know if you're praying to God gives you an

increase in faith or self-confidence to practice Buddhism I mean eventually you you'd like outgrow the idea but I mean you like I've said before you can start off with lame

motivations or lame ideas about practicing but the more you practice the more your wisdom is going to develop and then it's like your reasons get wiser you might start off with foolish reasons but if they're at least wise enough to get you practicing dharma then they're good enough at that stage until youve outgrow them and then acquire better reasons so I mean legit it depends on how you interpret legit pragmatically it

is you know it's it's good enough it's a
good enough reason I mean logically it's
not really legit because of course in in
uh Buddhism there is no capital G God at
least not in Terra

Buddhism so it all depends on how you
look at it and I'm going to move on to
the next question this is from Austin
and Austin says is there something
independently real that grounds reality
and the scand do or is it all transient
properties dependent and empty Turtles
all the way down

well this is one of those Lial dealing
with two different levels of reality I
mean at the level of samsaric phenomenal
reality then no there is there is not

something independently real that grounds reality and the five condas he use the scas which is the the Sanskrit version um yeah it's all trans properties dependent and empty all like interrelated so it's like every conditioned thing is conditioned by other condition things and none of it really has an underlying self Essence but you can say all the way down at the bottom like at the level of Ultimate Reality like the Bedrock of Ultimate Reality then you have this Ultimate Reality the uncarved block from which all these imaginary statues are carved carved in

imagination you got the uncarved block
but it just transcends phenomenal
reality or unreality you know it's just
this paradoxical state that anything you
say about it it's going to be invalid
it's like essentially Nirvana the
dharmakaya capital G God the da Brahman
whatever like the the quantum
field it's like like whatever you want
to call it it's this under
underlying like Bedrock of reality that
is just off the scale you can't really
say that it exists or doesn't exist or
anything like that and trying to pin it
down is just it's just going to make you
go
nuts because you can't do

it but at the level of phenomenal reality then no I mean there's there is nothing that's independently real that grounds all of the the phenomenal World other than what is just off the scale and it's just this paradoxical Ultimate Reality that has has no constituent Parts no perceivable aspects near gab Brahman Ultimate Reality which has no perceivable qualities so I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question and I I'm aware that a lot of people just are not satisfied by such answers because they insist on Ultimate Reality expressed in words and if you express it in words

it's not Ultimate Reality the name that
can be named is not the Eternal
name and some people are just so
addicted to their own thinking that they
just cannot accept that and so they just
keep searching and searching and
searching and searching in
vain for some logical coherent
explanation of Ultimate Reality and the
best you can get would be like maamaa
philosophy or like the philosophy of
Kant where you can sort of get a grip on
how delusion works that creates a false
reality but it really can't touch the
Ultimate Reality below it or pervading
it
whatever so I'm just going to move on to

Austin's second question

which is I think you should find a
Mahayana Monk and get him on your show
for some cross talk what do you think
well if any Mahayana monk wants to talk
with me that's fine I'm my my woman is
always on my case or maybe I should say
continually not constantly but
continually on my case to like invite
this person on my show or invite that
person and that kind of thing and you
know for me it just doesn't work that
way you know I'm just sort of like
surfing the waves and you know whatever
comes my way I'll surf it somebody
invites me to do a talk that's that's

fine so any Mahayana monks out there
want to uh have a
discussion um like on a YouTube video
then that's that's fine with me somebody
if Austin here wants to hook me up with
one that that'll work
too so I'm just gonna move on the next
question also from

Austin Austin's third question do you
believe your metas psychical beliefs
aligned more with Mahayana maamaa than
terava I think maybe he means
metaphysical and not metas psychical so
metaphysical beliefs yeah my metaphysics
are definitely more Mah onist than
terrain because Terra they're to some
degree they're like realists and they

believe in four ultimate realities which
then can be divided out into
gosh I don't even remember the total
number 80s
something um but the four main ones mind
matter mental States and
Nirvana so they've got Nirvana and like
samsara at the same level of reality
which is already starting off on the
wrong foot but I do not consider
physical matter to be ultimately real so
that kind of kicks me out of terod and
Orthodoxy right there
um so yeah maamaa comes closer but
saying my metaphysical beliefs are more
in accordance with Mahayana there's

Mahayana is just a lots of different schools it's not just one school of of Buddhism called Mahayana it's a whole bunch of different schools you know sort of like you might have one Roman Catholicism but you've got all kinds of protestant schools in Christianity in Mahayana is sort of like Protestant Buddhism in a sense in that you know the Baptists aren't necessarily on speaking terms with the Jehovah Witnesses who in turn don't have anything to do with the Mormons who in turn maybe don't have anything to do with the seventh day Adventists Etc you know there is no pope of protestantism because they do not consider each other to be authoritative

Mahayana is similar to this so with regard to maamaa definitely yeah my metaphysics is more maamaa than terad I have to admit and mjamaica says you know it's all just there is no underlying self Essence nothing is ultimately real that you can point at whereas in terana we're we're our bodies are made out of Rupa kalapas our minds also are made of rupac Copus which are like these little atoms that are ultimately real at least the constituent components are ultimately real like the subatomic particles con constituting these Rupa kapas are ultimately real even though they're condition and exist for only a

trillionth of an eye blink but still
they're ultimately real according to
Terra and I don't I really cannot accept
that so I'm more mamaka although some
schools of Mahayana I have even less use
for than some of the the tenants of
Orthodox commentarial
terana and so I'm just going to move on
to this question and this is from
cabison and cabison says how do you
think Buddhism can help someone with
selfesteem problems to be more confident
and outgoing I've always had these
problems and although I've improved over
the years I still feel down a lot of the
time and I tend to be a people pleaser
so how can Buddhism help someone with

self-esteem problems to be more
confident and outgoing well I mean the
main purpose of Buddhism isn't to turn
you into an extrovert to make you more
outgoing but so I mean there are no
practices you're going to find in the
sutras you know the monk the monks is is
how to become more outgoing you're not
going to find it but
indirectly certain Buddhist
practices um can help you to be more
confident and maybe more outgoing even
though of course Buddhism is much more
inclined to endorse Solitude and just
being a
Hermit so

self-esteem I mean in Buddhism there is
no self and so if you take that
seriously then you're going to be
without much of an ego at least your ego
is going to be much reduced along with
these like ego doubting itself
self-esteem issues if you don't have a
self you're not going to have
self-esteem
issues so I mean you just learn to be
more equanimous just accept the way
things
are um to be more confident I mean Sada
or which usually translated as Faith uh
sometimes is translated especially by
Monk translators as
confidence so if you have more faith in

dhama that's a certain kind of
confidence it's more confidence in dhama
than confidence in yourself
though

but um how to be more confident and
outgoing just worry I mean it seems to
me like the main problem here is is like
worry anxiety which is Kucha in poly and
it is always bad karma it's it's the
same as regret or remorse a guilty
conscience that kind of thing it's all
Kucha um and

like feeling yeah anxiety in public
feeling nervous before you give a public
speech for example that would all be
cucha

also um so I mean the more you practice mindfulness I mean mindfulness is the panacea mindfulness cures all ills so if You observe self Consciousness arise self-consciousness in the bad sense or like anxiety worry anything like that just social awkwardness You observe that as a kind of phenomenon that isn't you because it really isn't you it's just this habitual mental state that arises and so long as you keep feeding it it's going to be like a stray dog it's just not going to go away but if you stop feeding it it'll hang around for a while but then it'll it'll drift away any kind of bad habit including social anxiety for

example that uh just observe it don't
feed it be mindful of it that would be
the the best approach I guess from a
Buddhist point of view I mean it might
not make you more

outgoing because being outgoing
outgoingness is not necessarily a
Buddhist

virtue anyways towards the end cabis and
says I tend to be a people pleaser and I
mean trying to help people be happy is
one thing but

using like pleasing people as a kind of
defense mechanism you know a survival
mechanism you know always trying to be
on the good side of people and and I

mean I I've known people like this you know especially like like short skinny passive kind of guys that I have known that you know they just kind of like be they're just really Pleasant and joking a lot and you know they just kind of survive sort of like the little dog that kind of wags its tail through life and uh I don't know it's like if you're doing it for the sake of just trying to please people to make yourself more safe or something then yeah that's not necessarily a wholesome mental state or a wholesome attitude but I mean just being a people pleaser in the sense of just trying to help people be happy you know trying to be pleasant

rather than unpleasant like if you're in
a bad mood not taking it out on others
that kind of thing that's 100% AOK from
a Buddhist point of
view but outgoingness really is not a
Buddhist virtue not that it's
necessarily bad I mean if you just feel
perfectly comfortable in the midst of a
crowd and just strike up conversations
with people you don't know I've never
been that way a lot of people are like
that some of the people I work with
that's how I got to know them is they
just walk right up and start talking
because they just walk right up and
start talking to

everybody but they're probably not role models for the perfect Buddhist in other respects so mindfulness is the Panacea mindfulness cures all

ills and uh there are other I mean just practicing meditation and so forth it can improve your wisdom which will not necessarily make you less awkward in public but it will at least make you not care so much if you are awkward in public and I should move on to the next question which is from java

nandin I think I don't know how to pronounce this name I'm just guessing and Java nandin says I know you are not a fan of wisi Maga but what is your opinion on palas samapti and neota

samapti mentioned there well first of all I mean sop just means attainment and Palos mopy and neurotop are two entirely different attainments that are not related it's not like a pair I mean you've got um mega and palat that are paired but you not Pala and neurod it's like neurotop is a very Advanced presumably meditative state that only an anagami or an arant can can attain and it's essentially a kind of you just go into a coma it's the sensation of perception and feeling which from the Orthodox terab point of view means I mean you're essentially comos and I do not see why that would be considered

such an exalted

State um I mean you wouldn't even be aware of having attained it because the awareness of having attained anything would be part of the perception and feeling so I

mean I I'm skeptical that the Buddha taught neurotop that neurotop is just one of these meditative States that's above fourth Janna that ancient Indian philosophers I mean they're just not satisfied with just four Jas and so you've got the abdist inventing a fifth jna

that's where you divide second jna into two or you've got like the the formless Jas get added on as a kind of annex to

Fourth J because technically fourth J
was as high as you can go and then
you've got neurotop gets postulated
you've got like the signless
concentration of mind what what is it
I animita Chito samti that is mentioned
in a few sutas that it's like the Indian
mind is always trying to one up the
highest it's like some people are saying
this is the highest and then some other
group says nope because we've come up
with a higher one and I think that that
neurot sopy may be one of those kind of
things and almost nobody would attain it
anyway because you'd have to be at least
an anagami to attain it pmop on the

other hand is paired with mega and this also is kind of a weird like practically a glitch in Orthodox terraa Buddhist philosophy that there's the four stages of Saint Hood those of you who have watched these q&as know my opinion about the four stages of Saint Hood I think that in itself is a kind of artifact of later developments in Buddhism but each of these four stages has two aspects to it's got Mega and palat mega is the path so you've entered the path on becoming um a soda or an anagami or whatever and then there's the palat or the fruition so it's like once you're like locked into becoming a soda then that's the the the path of that's

soda Mega and then once you fully attain
the consummation of soda Hood then
that's the Pala or the
fruition and so that would be the
attainment of fruition would be palas op
but it's in the sutas it's talking about
how both of these like the four pairs of
individuals who are worthy of respect
worthy of gifts worthy of you know
bowing down to them and so
forth according to Orthodox tervana this
Mega stage lasts like a trillionth of an
eye blink it's just Boop so how are you
going to bow down to somebody who exists
for a trillionth of a
second so apparently there's a

misunderstanding in Orthodox terraa of
what what may have been in it in and of
itself a previous misunderstanding which
furthermore may have been a garbling of
like an earlier teaching where you've
got Mega and palat you know path and
fruition that supposedly the the path
stage lasted a considerable amount of
time that long enough period of time
that you could bow to the person offer
them gifts and so forth and it's not
just a trillionth of a second and then
immediately you move on to to Pala it's
like one moment is path it lasts only
one moment and then you hit Pala
afterwards it's it's just kind of
strange so that's my opinion on that and

I'm I'm heartily skeptical of both palop
and
neurotop unless
pmop refers only to like a stage full
Enlightenment but even I'm kind of
skeptical about full Enlightenment
within the context of samsara because
within the context of samsara everything
is unenlightened because samsara
is an artifact of
unenlightenment ignorance
delusion so I better just move on the
next question here see we've been going
for almost an hour and a
half you guys have the luxury just
looking down at the time bar and seeing

how long this is going to be I don't
even know so the next question is from
jewels and juwel says is it possible to
make Marco

El a Supreme Court Justice and when he
asked this question I didn't even know
who Marco El is I don't know how to
pronounce

El could be eles for all I know Marco is
pretty solid I I got Marco down but the
the second name the eles Ela I don't
know and I didn't know who Marco was
until just like half an hour later I'm
just like scanning news headlines
because the news is so fascinating
nowadays now that Trump is running a
muck in in disassembling the Deep

State reducing the size of government and it turns out that Marco Al or whatever his name is is he goes by the the nickname of big balls and he's one of the like the the young autists that um Elon Musk has appointed to review all these workers at us Aid and determine whether they should keep their job or not and there was some journalist so-called who had previously worked for us Aid who put out a hit piece against this Marco guy and which caused him to resign because he had made racist comments on social media at some time in the past and then finally uh cooler heads prevailed and he was

brought back in and he's now back on the
the aest squad of deciding the the
future of people who work at us Aid and
anyways juwes says is it possible to
make him a Supreme Court Justice
technically the I almost called Trump
the Buddha
that's not
good anyways technically Trump could
like
nominate this Marco this big balls as a
Supreme Court Justice but it's my
understanding that a Supreme Court
Justice has to be approved by the Senate
I'm pretty sure you know there's going
to be like Congressional hearings and so
forth and you know it's like the the

nominee has to appear it was like like
what was his name Kavanaugh
you know he he had to get grilled by
hysterical Democrats before he got to
assume his seat on the the Supreme Court
also the

nanji brown Jackson or whatever her name
is you know she's having to get grilled
by Republicans asking her if she knows
what a woman is and she said I'm not a
biologist how should I know what a woman
is so Trump could like nominate Marco as
a Supreme Court Justice but I doubt that
he would get through the he would be I
doubt that he would be approved by the
Senate so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from Master Poe and
master Poe says are you getting tired of
these

q&as not really I mean they're kind of
getting longer you know they're they're
occupying a little bit more of my time
but the time that I'm using to to do
these q&as used to be the time that I
would use to write a blog post and those
of you who are familiar with my blog may
have noticed that I haven't I haven't
added a blog post to my blog in probably
more than a year because I'm doing this
instead now this is my means of
promulgating the DH rather than writing
like cynical blog
posts so am I getting tired of these

q&as I mean sometimes I'm tired and and
do them anyway not so much tired of the
Q&A but just tired in general kind of a
thing but the show must go on it's in a
way it's it's a public service that I'm
happy to

do and so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from The Three Holy
baskets and the Three Holy baskets say
cuz there's three of them what are the
types of women I I might have made a
joke at the expense of the titica just
now and so I would like to retract that
joke because that was you shouldn't make
jokes about Buddha dama or
sa so the three holy baskets says or say

what are the types of women that the
Buddha said we can have sex with or not
possible to engage in sex with I
remember the Buddha said it somewhere
yes with regard to
Kam like sensual
misconduct and it's kind of strange that
at least in one text this kamu
kamua or sensual misconduct which is
like the third pre the third precept for
someone taking eight precepts no wait no
five precepts even five precepts so it's
it's in the form of a list of the women
that are
forbidden and it's just a it's
patriarchal you know it just assumes
that it's guys it's phow Centric if you

will it just assumes that you know it's going to be a man who is inquiring into this

question and every woman on the list

that is forbidden is a woman who is

already like spoken for like under the protection or guidance or

guardianship or

ownership of somebody else like a woman

who's already married I mean she's under

the authority of her husband you know

he's got he's got authority over here

another man shouldn't mess with with a

married woman you got a woman who is

betto you know she's engaged already

spoken for you've got a woman still

living with her parents you've got the
slave girl of another person you've got
a female inmate in a prison who's like
under the guardianship or protection of
like the prison staff prison guards and
there's a few other ones there's a one
or two obscure ones that that really
just kind of fit into ancient Indian
culture but the gist of it is that any
woman who is already under the
protection or guardianship of another
person is off limit so
technically like even if you're a young
guy a young woman who is still living
with her
parents she'd be off limits so to
speak if she moved out then it'd be

different and so I mean you don't really have to be married I mean it's the the third precept isn't just don't commit adultery because you can still be monogamous without technically being married I mean marriage just is not a terraa Buddhist institution anyway that's purely a secular Affair monks it is strictly forbidden for a monk to conduct a wedding ceremony like in Burma it's like you just when when a man and a woman get married in general they just go down to the Village head man and sign papers they're married and then after that the the couple will go to the monastery and then the monks will bless

a done deed

so I mean you don't necessarily have to be married to the person but generally um promiscuous sex is out so like a prostitute you know she's under the authority of her pimp or whatever and mainly what it means is it's somebody that you are monogamous with that neither one of you is is like under obligations to anyone else and that is acceptable it's not necessarily recommended because of course celibacy is considered to be best from an orthodox terab Buddhist point of view but there we are I think I answered that question and so I'm just going to move

on to the Three Holy basket's second
question which is

NTI is homosexuality right I got no idea
it's it's a Sanskrit term it's not found
in terava Buddhism and because terada
budh ISM doesn't deal with Sanskrit it's
it's poly I'm not exactly sure what the
poly vers niat would be the same but
Mich

drti uh see maybe duti would be like
corruption it'd be like Dy in
poly

so yeah I'm I'm not exactly sure I don't
know enough about this to really answer
it because I mean it's my understanding
that like in Ancient India like in the

Buddhist time they really didn't have much of a concept of homosexuality kind of like in ancient Rome like there wasn't really a concept of homosexuality in ancient Rome it's just like if you were on top I mean you could be like under underneath could be a woman or like a teenage boy or whatever but if you were on top then you were still acting the role of a man you were still masculine that was you know that's as far as it went and I think think in Ancient India men with what would be called homosexual tendencies now would choose like Unix that kind of thing I mean I'm sure there must have been homosexuality like two gay men together

in Ancient India even though they may not have had a word for it but um you know it's just I'm not aware of it being specifically addressed in po texts and NTI may be it's if it's not Mahayana it's it's a Hindu term and I'm not familiar with it so I'm just going to move on next question and this is from chasz is who now goes by the name of Julie and trasis is who now goes by the name of Julie says if beings in heaven Realms cannot hear or see us then what about Mara who can you've mentioned that the Buddha didn't teach dhama to his previous two teachers because they were in heaven realm it wasn't just that they

were in a heaven realm they were in a formless realm where they had no sense organs and so he couldn't teach the the DAV or the the brahmas in a formless heaven realm because they had no body and because they were just pure mind with no body they didn't have ears to hear they didn't have eyes to see why the Buddha couldn't have communicated telepathically with them I don't know but that was like the reason that the Buddha after he became enlightened he didn't teach his his first two teachers who taught him Janna um because they were in formless Realms they they mastered these formless janas they died in formless Janna they

entered this formless realm and so he couldn't teach them but ordinary like dvas and and also like the brahmas from the Rupal Loca or the the realm of form that the brahmas that still have a physical body they can see us they want to most of them don't want to see us you know it's sort of like why would we want to go to some vacant lot and look at the ants crawling around in this vacant lot I mean most of us unless we're entomologists or little kids who are interested in ants we just don't care and so like dvas and and brahmas can see us we can't necessarily see them it's like whoever's the higher can

generally see the lower beings but the lower beings can't necessarily see the higher beings unless maybe the higher beings like adjust their their vibration or something to make themselves visible to

us how that relates to ghosts is kind of problematic because ghosts are lower generally we can't see them and it's my understanding that ghosts in general can't see us

either so it may be that ghosts that we see that when a person does see a ghost I mean the ghost doesn't necessarily see us back because we are at the the the less

crude um level of of

matter than they

are so let's see if beings in heaven

Realms cannot see or hear us yeah well

some of them can all except for the the

ones in the formless Realms because the

form the ones in the formless Realms

don't have eyes or

ears so yeah Mara I mean he's just in

the he's in the highest Dava realm

there's Brahma Realms above Mara let's

see you mentioned the Buddha didn't

teach Doo's previous two teachers

because they were in heaven Realms yeah

they were in formless heaven Realms so I

think I answered that question from

tasas is Alias Julie and so tasz is

Alias Julie's second question is do you prefer apples or oranges I prefer oranges if I'm just going to eat the fruit I eat lots of oranges I rarely eat an apple almost never in fact ever since I was a kid I have disliked apple peel it's like eating sour wax paper wrapped around the apple with regard to cooked apples like in pies or apple fritters or something I'm all for it apple fritters my favorite pastry is probably an Apple

Fritter but just the fruit itself I prefer oranges and so I'm just going to move on next question this is from cify cify says if all of us in this realm are crazy but some of us are aware

that we are crazy does it make those who
are aware of the craziness less crazy
and yes indeed it does and I do not have
my copy of the DAP handy I think it's
verse 63 don't quote me on that but I'm
pretty sure kind of almost pretty sure
that verse 63 of the DAP says the fool
who is aware of his foolishness is at
least wise to that extent but the fool
who considers himself wise is called a
fo indeed and that was one of my great
comforting thoughts as a young monk it's
like if I know that I'm a Fool at least
I'm wise to that extent that in itself
is a kind of
wisdom

so let's see here let's go back to the question if all of us in this realm are crazy but some of us are aware that we are crazy does it make those who are aware of the crazy yeah yeah it does if you're aware of your foolishness then you're at least wise to that extent so I'm just going to move on to next question this is from mooners mooner says what do you think of JD Vance's concept of Ordo amoris does Buddhist lay ethics support Ordo amoris and I don't know I don't know what was what was in my mind at the time but when mooners mentioned JD Vance I was thinking Jack Vance who was an old science fiction writer from like back in

the

1960s and um I'm thinking it must be
some from some science fiction novel or
something but actually JD Vance is the
vice president of the United States and
he was talking about Ordo amoris in a
recent interview and Ordo amoris is like
ordered love it's like with regard to
loving others there's like a priority
list you know like presumably for a
Christian God would be at the top of the
list you love God then you like love
yourself you love your family you know
you love your neighbors you know you
love people that are like sinning
against you and so forth you know it'd

be like this priority list of who you're
supposed to love maybe who you should
love

more

and does Buddhist lay ethics support
that um I assume it does I mean ideally
like a fully enlightened being would
just love everyone the

same but but at the same time realizing
that nobody really

exists but for a lay person I think it
would not be at all in conflict with
Buddhist lay ethics that you would love
your wife and your children more than
you love the person who is bad mouthing
you in

public they just it's just like

practical common sense you know you
selflove love of your immediate family
love of your friends I mean if you can
manage it you love your enemies too I
mean that's not some Monopoly of
Christianity that a Buddhist should
should love his enemies also but it's
more important I think for you to love
your spouse and your children and
yourself I mean that would be more vital
more important in In Living a happy life
than you know

loving Adam shiff let's
say and those of you who don't know who
Adam Schiff is well good for
you so I would assume that it's like

tacitly allowed in Buddhism maybe
there's even texts you know with regard
to lay ethics you know giving some kind
of priority you should have respect
for your teachers and that kind of
thing and but uh yeah I don't think that
it would violate just secular lay
Buddhist ethics that you have like a
priority list of who gets the most love
and who gets like the
leftovers so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from thermal
squid and thermal squid asked some
questions in the previous Q&A about you
know why should you believe in Nana if
it can't be logically proven kind of
stuff and I answered the question you

can look at the previous Q&A if you want
to see what my answers were excuse me
I'm I'm trying to burp and not burp at
the same
time so anyways thermal squid
says I wouldn't say I'm obsessed with
intellect but the absurdity seem to
begin when we abandon it outright in
simpler terms samsara encompasses all
conditionality and also all mental
states there are then no metaphysical
tools and mediums we can use here to
help us perception is out discrimination
is out tradition ritual Etc everything
is gone here wherein then is knowledge
or immersion of nibana or the deathless

actually

found the best you're going to get is
mysticism you know like St John on the
cross he talks about dark Faith where in
his version of contemplation you just
dismiss everything from your mind that
is not God Buddhist point of you dismiss
everything from your mind that is not
nibana and few people can do this
disclaimer here few people can actually
manage this but getting back to St John
of the Cross you can't see the see God
through your senses you can't sense God
through your senses dismiss the senses
you can't understand God intellectually
dismiss the intellect you can't
understand God emotionally dismiss the

emotions you can't know God through any
like mental state dismiss all the mental
States and so you get down to just what
should be just emptiness and nothing but
according to St John of the Cross you
still know something is there and that
is just like the the spirit of God that
pervades the the universe you can still
you're somehow still aware of that you
know that it's there that's dark Faith
because I mean it's dark because there's
no real conceptual content to it you've
already dismissed the
concepts it's just like an immediate
awareness
and people have more or less Talent at

this kind of awareness where you just in
call it intuitive you know it's in maybe
deeper than what would be standard
intuition but there's like this feeling
like when I was a kid
you know like a teenager I'm reading my
first like Eastern philosophy books and
it's saying you know it's all an
illusion this world is an illusion and
somehow deep down I'm like yeah I I mean
I could I really got on board with that
but at the time I didn't even understand
like
philosophically why it was saying this
it was just like deep down there was
just this feeling of yes that that's
it and you can be you can be mistaken

with regard to this kind of stuff too I mean some people are just absolutely absolutely sure that this or that cult leader is fully enlightened when really they

aren't but that's part of the problem I mean it's like we are delusional and we're trying to use our own diluted mind to cure ourselves of delusion so I mean you're just going to have to have a certain amount of faith fath at first choose the wisest Faith you can come up with and then go with that let's see here it's like at the beginning here he says I wouldn't say I'm obsessed with intellect but the absurdity seem to

begin when we abandon outright no that's
not true at all because absurdity is
itself just a figment of
intellect I mean you get rid of the
intellect you get rid of the absurdities
also if if you're in a state of just
like like mystical
contemplation where there's no intellect
there's no absurdity
either it's just I mean absurdities can
come through various means humor or
Paradox or just like sloppy intellect
but it's still intellect I mean it's
insisting upon rigorous logic I mean
you're just locking yourself into a cage
and that's not going to get you
enlightened either

so to some degree you got to have a certain amount of faith and that's like in the in the poly Tex it talks about um the the five strengths or the five faculties and two of them are Faith and essentially intellect or it's like uh faith and like what would be a good word I mean in the word is PA but it doesn't necessarily mean wisdom here it's it's more like Theory you know youve got fa Faith or or just intellect let's just go with intellect Faith or intelligence and they have to be inbalance you have too much faith and not enough intelligence then you can believe anything no matter how

ridiculous it is but if you have too much intelligence not enough Faith then you're going to be so skeptical I mean you're you're not going to do anything you'll have insufficient data to really do anything and according to the wisi MAA take that for what it's worth a person with too much intelligence and not enough faith is like a person who is sick and their sickness is caused by the medicine that they're taking you you just keep taking the medicine which just keeps you sick so at the bottom is the actual question mark wherein then is knowledge or immersion of nibana or the deathless actually found I mean ultimately it's

mysticism and a lot of people including
a lot of brilliant intellectuals have
almost no mystical Talent whatsoever
they just do not get
it like step Hawking was saying
mysticism clouds the issues when
actually it's the issues that cloud
mysticism so I'm just going to move on
to Thermal Squid's next question
here which is it is said at least in
some of these videos that nibana can't
be experienced so it seems to me that we
are still using logic or Reason and or
discurs thinking here it seems to me
that intuition that there is an ultimate
and perfect reality is not deniable the

technicalities are what I'm focused on
endless deliberation on Truth or words
here is not the issue but actually
making something like Enlightenment or
even absorption reachable not just an
artifact of one's intent or efforts
something actually substantial Beyond a
kind of contentless Consciousness which
might be too quickly discerned to be the
absolute

itself EG BR Brahman the one and so and
so forth take the metaphor of the raft
do you sail out across the river with a
busted raft that will sink it seems to
me that we'd be double triple quadruple
checking this to absolutely make sure
that we don't drown well this isn't

really a question this is he just it's
just something that I I just decided I'd
comment on that you make the raft you're
not just going to be like in over
analysis Paralysis on the near shore
doubting whether the raft is really
going to get you across I mean you make
the raft as best you can and then you
just go out there and and and brave it
and it takes a certain amount of faith
that you're going to be able to do it
and that it's maybe it's going to take a
certain amount of faith that there's
even another shore on the other side
because you can't necessarily see it
let's say maybe it's really farog that

day so that was just sort of my two cents worth on that one so thermal squid's real second question here is can Critters become enlightened and that depends on who you talk to according to to eart TOA in his first famous book The Power of Now all animals are already enlightened in a sense because they're fully in the present moment you know they're not living in the future not living in the past and the only animals that are not enlightened are animals that have acquired certain neurotic Tendencies from their owners like like domesticated animals like dogs although from the Buddhist point of view animals are not

enlightened so can Critters become
enlightened technically from an orthodox
point of view just giving the the
official Orthodox answer here no animals
cannot become fully enlightened regard
of aart TOA saying that most of them
already are enlightened because I mean
like how much greed hate and delusion
does like a Mito like a microscopic Copa
pod like planked in the ocean or a
jellyfish how much greed hate and
delusion does a jellyfish have possibly
zero but it but it also has no real mind
at that point so I think that an animal
like a cow might be closer to
Enlightenment than the average human but

that's just because they have less mind
which can hold less delusion so really
it's a matter of like in the cow's case
going with like Buddhist philosophy that
it's going to have to keep moving
forwards and get more and more
diluted in before it can get to the
point where it's conscious enough that
it can start reversing that
delusion and I mean something like an
insect I think insects are just kind of
like little um Terminators you know like
like little robots they might have
Consciousness but I doubt that they have
perceptions and perception is where
delusion comes in so I mean it may be
that they're already kind of

Enlightenment it's kind of a bummer to think that a fly or a mosquito is enlightened being but in a way they kind of are cuz they just don't have hate and delusion they're just little robots you know this little glimmer this little speck of

Consciousness but U I think I'll just pass move on to the third question which because it's a followup of the second question he says if so what creatures do you think are closer to Enlightenment or Liberation than others well is there's two different closer to enlightenments like I already mentioned a cow it's probably closer to Enlightenment with

regard to it has 1 greed hate and
delusion than the average human but it's
going to have to keep progressing
forwards it can't back up and and just
have less and less to has zero it's
going to have to get more and more greed
hate and delusion by becoming a more
complex creature that becomes
self-referential and can actually start
trying to reprogram
itself so the animals that are closer to
Liberation than others would probably be
the most intelligent ones you know the
ones that have the most Consciousness
about them which you know
like sperm whales Dolphins
elephants Apes you know the the

creatures that are considered to be you
know in highly intelligent or probably
be

closer um chronologic like temporarily
to Enlightenment than than other animals
like a cow even though the cow may have
less greed hate and delusion

so I think I'm just going to move on the
next question PSA says are you a Naga
that only takes human form during online
videos don't lie don't break CA are you
a

Naga and apparently from the context
he's referring to shape-shifting COBRA
dragons and yeah I'm not a
shape-shifting cobra Dragon I promise

I'm not a shape-shifting cobra dragon
I mean there are other interpretations
of Naga sometimes the Buddha is called a
Naga but he's not called a
shape-shifting cobra dragon that
Naga is apparently not an Indian term
and it refers to any kind of
imposing being so an elephant like a
bull elephant can be called a
Naga the Buddha can be called
Naga and I mean if somebody considers me
to be imposing then
arguably maybe I could be that kind of
Naga but I am not a cobra
Dragon I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from
Alfred who I believe asked this question

on Rumble it's rare to get a question uh
for a Q&A on Rumble usually on Rumble
all I get are these people giving me
false Praise of how great my content is
and then offering to optimize my
presence for a small fee that's all
almost the only kind of comments I get
on

Rumble so anyways Alfred says does the
Persona transfer at rebirth and I'm not
exactly sure what Alfred is referring to
with regard to the

Persona although I would mention what
last in the previous Q&A I was
discussing like really hard to
understand movies Persona by imar

Bergman that's a difficult to understand movie when you get to the end of the movie it's like all of a sudden it ends it's like why did it end I mean I I wasn't I didn't even have a grip on what was going on

yet so anyways Alfred is saying does the Persona transfer at rebirth and I looked in the dictionary because I wasn't sure what he meant by Persona and it turns out that there are various

interpretations various possible

definitions of the term and the two main ones that I think he might be referring to is one is the aspect of someone's character that is presented to or perceived by

others or it could be in accordance with
yungan psychology the outer or assumed
aspect of a
character so I guess it'd be like your
personality especially the outward
aspects of your personality the obvious
to others aspects of your personality um
does that transfer rebirth to some
degree but it's not going to be
necessarily you know just the same exact
same mannerisms and so forth because
you're going to have possibly be reborn
into a different culture you're going to
have some different DNA it's all going
to be kind of added to the mix and the
it's not going to be exactly the same I

mean it could be enough that some intuitive maybe psychically gifted person could recognize you as you know their aunt Mabel or whatever but it's uh it's more compc that it's it's it's like your karma is all that really transfers and that can manifest to some degree as your persona but also uh influencing your persona is going to be a lot of other factors like karma from the the I mean the life you just came into that is you know starting to take place immediately like cultural conditioning and that sort of thing so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question and we've been going out for two hours golly this is

kind of a scary one not this question
but just just the the mass of questions
I have received we may have to we may
have to trim it down to no more than two
questions per per
episode so anyways this is from quor and
quor says do you think it's possible
that time is an illusion and those of us
if not all who are destined to be arant
are getting guidance from our arant
future selves who reside in Parana there
aren't nobody's residing in Parana par
nibana is
undifferentiated it's
unconditioned I mean it's it's just
nibana par nibana technically is like

the death of an enlightened
being so they're they're like crossing
over into nibana that's that's par
nibana they're I mean it's like par
nibana is nibana without residue which
means it's you don't have an enlightened
being's body and mind still kind of
associated it's just part of neana is
you know you you've passed away and you
don't come
back and there's no discernable content
in nibana it's it's it's without moving
parts so there there's nobody residing
in nibana or
Parana but getting back to the first
part of the question is do you think
it's possible that time is is an

illusion yeah I do think that time is an illusion and those of us especially like the passage of time and those of us if not all who are destined to be arhant are getting guidance from our arhant future selves it's not necessarily your arhant future selves I mean it could just be your more advanced wiser future selves or kind of like you still are kind of connected to them because of the illusion of the passage of time you know it's like your future selves already exist in a sense and they're like they're still you they're sort of connected to you and I've had this idea when I was a monk you know it's like who

who would I pray to in a moment of
desperation you know it's like the gods
and enlightened beings out there plus
also like the future me who is much more
advanced I mean not the future me who's
fully enlightened and just dead and and
gone I mean what's the point of pring to
to that person but you know before you
become fully enlightened and die going
to Pana you might have psychic powers
and so forth that you could beam meta
back at your previous suffering diluted
Incarnation so to
speak so I think that's
possible and I do think that you could
derive benefit from the wisdom and
goodness of future incarnation ations so

to speak of of you you know you get to
the point where you're you're close to
nibana you got psychic powers you just
got this oceans of love you can beam you
beam them back at this miserable [__]
up previous version of you that kind of
thing that's possible I don't think it's
necessarily Orthodox terana but I do
think that it's possible and so I'm
going to move on to quator next question
which is if a meditator experiences jna
every day for the last three years of
their life and then dies in agony
incapable of Janna at time of death
versus someone who has never experienced
Janna and then achieves it on their

deathbed and dies in Janna does the
meditator first person not get reborn in
a Janna realm but the second person does
technically according to Orthodox terada
yes so that's why gotica self terminated
the the mindblowing godika sua where
Goda he got Janna and lost it and then
got Jonna and lost it and got Jonna and
lost it it's like his mind was kind of
unstable with regard to that my mind was
similar I could really relate to
that where you you get into deep
meditation and then you just kind of
lose it and then you get into deep
meditation and then just lose it and
Goda was like this he was getting Jonna
and then losing it getting it losing it

getting it losing it until finally he was getting desperate and he's thinking if I die without Jonna then I mean there's no guarantees of anything I mean he could wind up in in a Hell realm or something but if he if he dies while he's got Janna he's guaranteed of a Brahma realm so the next time he got it he Auto terminated he took his his head shaving razor and and um did an icky thing to his own neck and so and not only did he um not get a lower realm but he became enlightened as he was bleeding out and his his Consciousness became unmanifest so technically according to Orthodox terava Buddhist philosophy um

yeah the second person does better than the first person first person had Jonna for three years and then died without it sorry no no Brahma realm for you whereas the person he gets Jah for the first time in his life dies immediately boom Braham so there you go and I'm just going to move on to quor third question does wishing good wishes and prayer for someone to get well actually help them heal and can someone's negative wishes upon you cause you to become ill mentally or physically or is it more of a placebo effect and not the energy itself um I'm not sure that there's necessarily even a difference between like somebody's blessings curing

you and the placebo effect like when
Jesus in the New Testament would would
heal somebody and they would thank him
and he would say it's your own faith
that cured you so if you don't have
faith then in a way it
hinders deriving the benefit or the the
the opposite of benefit from somebody
else like beaming mental States at you
although uh with with Saints with
saintly people you know all things are
possible it seems like or a lot of
things are possible that aren't possible
for normies so I do think
that um like prayer you know the prayer
of a righteous man aileth much good

wishes just like beaming meta would
which would be more of a a terot
Buddhist way of going about it that it
can help people or you know beaming hate
at somebody could harm people but I mean
the the other person's karma is really
key that you know if they just don't
have the karma for you to succeed then
you're not going to
succeed sometimes you can try to help
someone even physically and it just
backfires I mean I I remember back when
I was a young man I wouldn't kill
insects or spiders that were in my
apartment you know I'd catch them with a
cup and a piece of cardboard and let
them go out outside and I remember I

caught something I don't remember what it was some kind of some kind of little creepy Crawley I let it go out on the front porch and IM immediately just comes heading straight back at me and then a spider jumps out and grabs it you know it's like you try to help it and it just made it worse or one time I was in a college student and I was at some Alpine Lake and I'm sitting by the by the side of this Lake up in the mountains and this little ant just comes trundling down the rocks and just goes right out into the water and starts floundering so I scoop the the ant out and put it on the rock you know let it

dry out and immediately it just heads
straight out into the water again so you
catch it one more time put it up on the
Rock immediately it's I mean it was just
it was just determined to like Auto
terminate I guess so finally the third
time I just said well your call I washed
my hands with this one
so I mean it it depends a lot on the
karma of the individual
involved um like even Jesus of Nazareth
you know he had these miraculous healing
healing abilities you know he was
psychic powers be called in in Buddhism
but someone who just thought he was you
know who's this guy think he is you know
this is just Jesus The Carpenter's son

that somebody like that Jesus wouldn't be able to heal them you know he went to his own hometown of Nazareth and is everyone there is like who does he think he is that's just Jesus The Carpenter's son and Jesus wasn't able to do very many miracles there he just cast out a few demons and then laugh saying no Prophet is without honor except in his own Hometown so I mean if you have the karma that is makes you receptive to that then somebody blessing you can heal you just as some doctor giving you medicine can heal you but you got to have the karma for it and I'm just going to move on

next question because we've been going at it for more than two hours and I'm not exactly sure how many more questions there are but there's at least several and so next question is from dhama river and dhama river says if you were given the choice in which realm of existence would you like to take rebirth and why well let's say not taking re re birth isn't an option here it's like you got to take rebirth but at least you get a pick where you're going to be reborn and probably I'd be better off just not picking where my karma just puts me where I need to be I mean that would be the wise choice you start like making

conscious decisions it might not serve you nearly as well as if you just let Karma take its course sort of like you know it's like people in ancient times they would be making offerings to afrodite

because they want such and such person to love them you know they want to hook up with this person when really they'd be better off not forcing the issue and just letting the person who is destined to be their mate show up maybe a year down the road it may be that trying to force the issue can just land you in the wrong place with the wrong person and I've got this

little little popup window I got to get
rid of okay

so getting back to the question though
see I'm I'm Meandering all over the
place even with the most questions ever
in a Q&A video I'm still just Meandering
and digressing just

AF so dama River if says if you were
given the choice in which realm of
existence would you like to take rebirth
and why well I mean you could kind of
cheat and go for the pure abodes because
you're guaranteed um Nirvana once you
once you you have passed away from the
pure abodes only anagami can go there so
I mean I could kind of cheat and and
like go to the pure AB boats which would

then necessitate me being an anagami
or um if if that kind of cheating is
frowned upon then I don't know tawa
timsa would be nice you know it's it's
sort of like being just this wealthy
powerful beautiful human who never gets
sick you know you can just kind of
manipulate your reality to some degree
you know you want chocolate ice cream
you just automatically get it that kind
of thing tawa timsa wouldn't be bad plus
you get to meet all the F the most
famous gods are in tawa
timsa so yeah I think I might do that if
the pure bodess are were off limits for
whatever reason you know so even Genies

when they give you three wishes you know
you find the lamp in the on the beach
you rub the lamp the genie comes out
offers you three wishes sometimes
there's still limitations it's like you
you can't wish for like one of your
wishes to be like three more wishes is
is just cheating and you can't do
it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from
Wayne and Wayne says in your view how
far could a householder go on the path
to Enlightenment well even a householder
can become enlightened it's just that
you're you've got more of the cards
stacked against you it's much more
difficult it's a much higher difficulty

setting but some householders do become enlightened I pretty sure it's just that let's say for example I've I've I've brought this up before let's say that a monk or a nun is a thousand times more likely to become enlightened than a lay person but there are 10,000 times more lay people than monks and nuns so still you'd have 10 times more enlightened lay people than enlightened monks and nuns just going with the

math so I mean technically you can make it the whole way although the way it generally works for Lay people if they get into some higher Awakening you know

somebody like eart TOA or I always
forget his name John Ren Lewis somebody
like that it's usually by accident it's
like they they go into this crisis and
just get slammed out of their
unenlightened

rut so a householder who becomes
enlightened it seems to me they're much
more likely to be like hitting ahead by
something than to do it through
meditative

Insight that's just my experience just
westerners in general who become
enlightened or who appear to become
enlightened who have some kind of
Awakening experience as a general rule
because westerners are so

lukewarm so so inclined to overthink
everything that generally they just lack
the faith for one thing to really just
go wholeheartedly like a medieval
Catholic saint and become enlightened
through just you know intense practice
that instead they're just kind of ripe
and then they get beat over the head or
having some kind of near-death
experience or like in um at C toa's case
just this existential crisis where it's
just so unbearable that it just like
wrenches them out of their rut and they
wind up in this higher level of
Consciousness that it's something that
you don't plan for it's just you just

get visited by this crisis and you have
Enlightenment thrust upon

you so anyways I'm going to move on to
way second

question which is could you describe the
destination of a nonr returner and I I
just mentioned that it's the pure abodes
that non-r returners or anagami after
they die they go into these high heaven
Realms that are accessible only to
anagami only the good Buddhists only
good Buddhists get to go to these Heaven
Realms and they are guaranteed that when
they pass away from from that heaven
realm that pure Abode they just fade
into Enlightenment Fade Into Nirvana
nana I should

say so yeah I think there's four four
Heaven Realms called the pure abodes and
all anagami go to them and uh I think
you still have a
body maybe yeah I think I think it's
like the highest Brahma
Realms

so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from thought fog and
I'm just I'm going to cheat she a little
and scroll and yeah we got several
questions but it's not a very long
scroll to the bottom at this point so
the next question is from thought fog
and thought fog says what's in your
archive digital and physical would you

please do like a literature tour or something maybe your top five digital items and top five physical items in your possession um yeah I mean it probably be better to do like um like a separate video that I prepare in advance with visual aids like the actual books and so forth

um the thing is I mean it it's pretty much all past tense because I do very little reading nowadays I mean if I read it's like online I'll be reading like articles and so forth I haven't read an actual book in more than a year so My archive I mean I can just kind of

kind of roughly go over what's on my

bookcase that the top shelf of the
bookcase is all Buddhist stuff it starts
off with poly like canonical text gets
into poly commentaries and dictionaries
and grammars that kind of thing and then
um then it gets it just into like
Buddhist philosophy Buddhist history and
then towards the end I've got some Zen
stuff which is still Buddhism so it's on
the top shelf and the the second shelf
it starts off with other religions
Hinduism Christianity you know the the
writings of St John of the Cross are on
the second shelf you know the the
upanishads the bagavat Gita um Miracle
of love stories about neim K Baba that's

on the second shelf no disrespect to
maharaji intended and then it gets into
uh gets into some like um paranormal
like parapsychology and and a little bit
of philosophy stuff towards the end then
the third shelf is Western
philosophy and uh let's see how the
let's see yeah it's the third shelf is
mostly like Western
philosophy including FH Bradley's logic
which I'll possibly never read in my
life because um I just don't have the
attention span living here in a house
with internet that I did living in a
cave with no internet and just a limited
number books to read so you read
everything you got no matter how dry and

dull and complicated and difficult to
read it is then towards the
third let's see fourth or the second
from the bottom is uh I've got history
like gibbons's Decline and fall of the
Roman Empire highly recommended it's
it's really a tragic story though I mean
reading about the the gradual decline
and eventual collapse of the Roman
Empire it really is tragic it's it's
just kind of sad
sad and let's see oh I've got my
strategy book down there and some of my
sweethearts books about uh let's
see like pre-colombian America that kind
of thing and then at the bottom is like

fiction and poetry that kind of stuff
that's on the bottom shelf and like my
favorite stuff well let's
see top shelf I mean I really like my
two Zen class Classics book which is the
mumon Khan and the hean
Roku um even though it's it's not
Terra um suan of
course um my annotated poly English
dictionary which is the big book with
the blue cover that's all torn showing
the red the red binding underneath um I
spent hundreds of hours annotating like
adding pow and adding definitions to the
pows in there so that every single page
is just got pencil all in the margins of
of stuff that I added back when I was a

monk and let's

see I mean some of the most important
books I've ever read are actually on
that shelf battle for the Mind by
William Sargent I don't see it it's
probably let's

see yeah it's on there somewhere and
let's

see golly Miracle of love stories about
NE Crowley Baba which is on the second
shelf really is one of of my favorite
books of all time it's just an amazing
book it's it's about the closest book
you can read to actually being in the
presence of an enlightened being or at
least an extremely extraordinarily

highly Advanced

one and let's

see Moby Dick down in the bottom the

idiot dostv is the idiot which is

probably my favorite novel I've got down

there and see what

else I guess that's good for uh I guess

that's good for uh my bookcase and with

regard to digital books I mean I've got

the book of the new son by Gan wolf

which is one of my I mean I consider

that to be like modern American

scripture that could be like a a holy

book or something as far as I'm

concerned and like Charles Murray's

human accomplishment I think that's what

it's called that was really an important

book for me to read it's uh Charles
Murray I mean he's more famous for
writing the bell curve but he wrote this
book in which he goes with like
encyclopedias from all over the world
not just like in the English language
but like Japanese encyclopedias
encyclopedias from like arabic speaking
countries just all over the place and
like the the biographical entries that
have the most to say about them you know
the longest biographical entries he
would all calculate this in to who were
the most significant people in history
with regard to a number of things like
art music science technology just these

different

fields and so he he compiles this list of the most important influential people in the world the most accomplished humans at least Within These certain Fields philosophy was one and it turns out that most of the significant human e conf even according to like Chinese encyclopedias Japanese encyclopedias Indian encyclopedias the most important accomplishments like overwhelmingly come from Europe that Europe was just this I don't know what You' call it just it was just this created this Genesis of just Innovation and so forth and it's almost all men and there's he

has a chapter explaining why it is is that you know there are so few women that are like in the top 100 you know maybe just like two or three like Marie cury was of the European women I think she was like the most influential in regard to science of all women although her husband was more important than she was and I think the highest ranking female across the board was a Japanese woman who lived like around the 10th Century who wrote this novel called The Tale of Genji that she is like the most important accomplished influential females Within These certain Realms of all time I'm sure like in politics you'd

have more important females like Queen Elizabeth the or even like Margaret Thatcher or somebody

but um his his explanation is first of all that women are just more inclined to have other priorities in life than just obsessing on a career cuz if you're going to be at the top of your game you're going to be a Shakespeare or like an Isaac Newton or some such a Bach some a dostv somebody like that I mean you got to just be

obsessed you know you can't have a lot of other interests you can't be like doing that and being a stay-at-home mom at the same time so there's that I mean Charles Murray even says that with

regard to his wife his wife once told him that if one of our kids is sick you can still go to work and and do your job and not be like obsessing all all the time I can't do that I mean just because of Fe the way the female emotions are wired her kid is sick she's going to be thinking about the sick kid all the time she can't just go on with her day so there's that plus of course men have a broader shaped bell-shaped curve than women do and also of course they were sociological like especially before the 20th century before like the middle of the 20th century women were just like you know they they couldn't get the same

kind of educations and so forth as
men but it it's also true that the
bell-shaped curve of like intelligence
is broader for males than for females in
the human species and so not only the
stupidest morons but also the most
brilliant super Geniuses are more likely
to be men and of course feminists just
can't take that at all they just can't
stand

it that just in just about any field the
most qualified person is likely to be
male simply because the bell-shaped
curve is broader for men so that the
people the the the highest extreme tend
to be all

male but anyways it's an interesting

book um I've got a number of other books
on on my computer that um I'd have to
like go through my my files and look
through them but those are some of the
important

ones and so I mean that's that's good
enough for now I mean this is this is
going to be an obscenely long Q&A
especially if I don't like keep it
concise so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from the Proto
sudo monk who I haven't heard from in a
while this he was asking questions under
an alias

and the Proto sudam monk

says why is the practice of yoga so

vastly underestimated in Terra Buddhism
and then he continues I think here given
the fact that yoga has been around 5,000
years in India wouldn't it be extremely
likely that all the arahant in the time
of the Buddha were all practicing yogis
particularly the five Aesthetics the
ones that were the ripest for
enlightenment and wasn't the Buddha
probably well practiced in yoga
as The Story Goes his former teachers
were probably yogis this is probably
where the derogation comes from and I'm
not exactly sure what the protos sudo
monk is referring to with regard to yoga
I mean yoga in general like in like as a
Buddhist term it just means spiritual

practice like any kind of meditation
would be yoga any kind of moral
self-restraint especially at the more
advanced levels of like extreme
renunciation and just you know guarding
the sense doors and all that that would
be yoga you know yoga is like y like
yoking or restraint at least that's one
way of interpreting the term I mean it
has the same proto-indo-european root as
as uh the English word
yoke so given the fact that yoga has
been around 5,000 years in India he's
got a capital Y and I mean yoga as as a
system that is called yoga first of all
I'm a little skeptical it's been around

for 5,000 years I mean that would be well back into the Indus Valley Civilization and they had some kind of yogic practices some of those seals they've they've found in like the ruins of of the Indus Valley Cities you know they have like it looks like people sitting in meditation and so forth and there's a good chance that the shamana uh traditions of ancient India including jism and Buddhism and aism had their roots in this atheistic yogic kind of spiritual system that was you know in it was like mainstream in in the old Indus Valley civilization so but I mean 5,000 years is kind of a guess it would seem to me and what is called yoga with

a capital Y is derived from another one of these from Dem monic Traditions that was called Sonia and it's mentioned in in the Buddhist texts the Sonia system and

Sonia um it had its own peculiar philosophy and it also had you know like meditative practices and so forth and at some point after the Buddhist time the Sonia system kind of split and some of the Sonia philosophers they they kind

of got incorporated into the vdic tradition they became Hindu by accepting the authority of the vdas and accepting the existence of like a supreme god like

Brahman or Brahma and they became known as theistic Sanka whereas like the older unreformed version of Sanka was just called atheistic Sanka so you had atheistic Sania which is just still called Sanka and then you had theistic Sania which became called yoga and within yoga you've got different strands you've got Raja yoga ha yoga like the just putting your body into pretzels I mean that's not even really one of on the list you've got Bak yoga or the the yoga devotion Nana yoga the The Yoga of knowledge Karma Yoga The Yoga of service or action and Raja yoga which is generally more the the buddhistic kind of of yoga of

just like self-restraint and meditation
and so forth so I mean with regard to
yoga with a small why of spiritual
practice which had its like ancestral
roots in the indis valley civilization
sure you know it's like most of these
Advanced practitioners were following
that General tradition but capital Y
Yoga which is theistic Sanka first of
all it didn't exist yet in the Buddhist
time time and it was just one strand of
this whole prehistoric tradition or this
tradition with its roots in prehistory
of just the idea that you know it's more
Dharma is more important than any idea
of God that that Dharma is the origin of

like um ethics for example and that this world is not a good place and we should Escape from it that kind of thing that that kind of philosophy with the spiritual practices to help you like work out your karma and so forth uh it just goes back into the the indis valley civilization and it was like uh eventually evolved in by the Buddhist time into Sanka Buddhism also although Buddhism had a lot of vadic like terminology and ideas added jism the aicas and so forth and there are probably lots more

so what is the question I should probably what why is the practice of yoga so vastly underestimated in terava

Buddhism well I mean technically terava
Buddhism is a kind of yoga if you're
using yoga as like spiritual practice in
general it may be the protos sudo monk
is referring to yoga that involves OAS
or the you know the bodily
postures um and I mean the the full
lootus was apparently adopted by terraa
Buddhists and early on but I'm not 100%
sure what the Proto suda Monk Is is
referring to here I mean there's three
different ways you could interpret yoga
I suppose just yoga a spiritual practice
in general along like ancient in like
even prehistoric North Indian lines
which I mean Buddhism did ganism did the

aicas did you know anyone who wasn't
like a Brahman fire worship being priest
in the Buddhist time who was spiritual
was probably going along with this this
the shamana

Traditions or you could have the capital
Y Yoga of theistic Sanka which didn't
really exist in the Buddhist time Sonia
did but I mean it was just one of many
Traditions to derive from this shamanic
early tronic tradition and then you just
got like the the small Y Yoga Yoga again
of ha yoga of you know just assuming the
the various bodily positions and doing a
few other things like fasting and water
netti and string nety where you're like
using like sinus floss you know you're

flossing your sinus cavities and
swallowing along strips of cloth and
like pulling them back out again and
that kind of
thing so I'm not exactly sure what the
Proto sudam Monk Is is exactly referring
to but the same general tradition that
gave rise to what is called yoga
also helped to give rise to Buddhism and
many others and it's just meditation in
general seems to have derived from
this so I'm not sure exactly why the
protos sudo monk would say that the
practice of yoga is vastly
underestimated in Terra Buddhism I don't
I don't fully understand that and so I'm

just going to move on to the Proto sudo
monks next question after I mean he
includes some some sayings of Swami
saand that uh I mean if you want to read
those you can go back to Q&A number 130
and look in the comments under the
YouTube video so anyways the next
question is why not integrate the
practice of yoga as a preparation for
neana and then he continues here from my
experience yoga seems to do what it says
and it feels like a game Cher compared
to just drilling the noting method into
a very distracted dispers stressed out
not relaxed mind well I mean that's just
not the way you're supposed to do it
anyway so deep relaxation and

concentration is much more achievable
hence Insight is much closer it seems
extremely logical I don't understand why
Buddhist frowns upon yoga so much they
see it as lesser but frankly unless you
are fully enlightened it seems to be
extremely useful thoughts and again I'm
not even sure what he's referring to as
yoga whether it's just the yogic
Traditions which Buddha follows you know
the with their roots in the prehistoric
Indus Valley Civilization probably or
the capital Y Yoga of theistic
Sanka which I mean the Buddha just the
philosophy of theistic Sanka really is
inferior to the philosophy of Buddha in

my opinion and then you've got um this
ha yoga so but I mean he's he seems to
be implying that if you just practice
Buddhism without practicing something
else you're going to have like this
distracted mind but I mean if you really
live the life of becoming a monk like
what terata Buddhism is based on you
know step number one is
renunciation then you I mean if you
practice the whole thing of dhama not
just Western secular attempts at terraa
Buddhism but terraa Buddhism the way it
is described in the texts then I mean
the problem is much
reduced that you're definitely not going
to have that much of a distracted

dispersed stressed out
mind that that the distracted dispersed
stressed out mind for somebody trying to
do Terra A0 meditation is is caused by
them not practicing the whole method
they're just picking the stuff that's
convenient for them they're not doing
the whole thing you know so they're just
picking and choosing what they're going
to follow and then it's
incomplete surprise
surprise so I mean if if you're a lay
person and just following everything
that a a a Buddhist renuncian is
supposed to follow just isn't convenient
for you then if something else helps if

practicing some kind of yoga and I still don't know what he's talking about exactly um if practicing some kind of yoga helps then fine I mean if it works then go with it if it doesn't work then don't let's see so I guess that's that's it for uh Proto sudam mon I think so I'm just going to go on to the next question which is from Joe do and Joe do says is the dolly llama enlightened and I mean I discussed this in a recent Q&A not with regard to the doy Lama with regard to a lot of people that are considered to be enlightened like oh what's his name gosh I can't remember his name now he's he he declares himself to be enlightened on his on his website

page

one now I don't remember his name but
there are a lot of people who are
considered to be
enlightened and just to say just because
they don't seem enlightened because they
don't live up to your preconceived
notions of what an enlightened being
should be like um I mean
that's I mean it's very problematic
there was a a a Buddhist
School sometimes they were called the
yogachara logicians you know they were
like medieval North Indian text or
Buddhist sect Buddhist School sometimes
called the Daga school they were

logicians you know they they

Incorporated logic into their dhama and

and some of the stuff they came up with

was really profound like bare sensation

with no perceptual interpretation is as

though there's no sensation at all that

kind of thing which I agree with but

they considered like the classic

problematic premise is that a person any

person is

enlightened because logically you can't

verify that it's just purely

problematic so is the doy Lama

enlightened well

maybe um I kind of doubt it it may be

that he really is the

the Incarnation of a long line of llamas

that he's like an avatar and and I guess
the Dal Lama is considered to be an
avatar of Manus god of wisdom who is a
kind of bodh

satva um you'd think that if he was the
god of wisdom he might be enlightened
but I'm not 100% sure about that because
manuser is more of a Mahayana being than
a

teravan uh it may be that I mean it's my
understanding that some Mahayana

Buddhists will accept that

that some bodh svas are already fully
enlightened then they're still bodh svas
which is kind of I mean it doesn't work
that way in

Terra but I mean I would guess that he probably isn't fully enlightened but I would guess that he's wiser than the average

person but who knows I don't know I'm just going to move on to the next question here this is from

philes and philes says I've started to believe eug Krishna mty was an arant even though he would laugh in my face for implying that he even says in one interview that he is completely blown out and that people don't realize

there's no one there when they're talking to him but he does this without using Buddhist vocabulary thoughts well

I mean this is like the same question as

the previous one except directed towards
eug Krishna murty instead of towards
the doy Lama um it may be I mean eug
chrishna murty he didn't follow any
rules and he just I mean he he like shat
on rules even more than Jay Krishna mty
did like I I mentioned before that he
sent a picture to the doy Lama of some
porn star having sex with an elephant
with the the picture modified slightly
so that you could see that it was
supposed to be the Buddha's mother you
know who had like this dream of the
elephant when she got pregnant with with
Goa and um I me so he would do stuff
like that

but I mean it could be that he really did attain something that the ideas of what an enlightened being it has to be like is just the Terra of Buddhist just don't get it Terra Buddhist say that in order to be fully enlightened you have to be an absolutely perfected Saint who never does anything wrong you have perfect

morality and I'm skeptical of that so I'm

openminded with regard to somebody like eug chrishna mty really having attained something but I mean how can you possibly

know I mean in ug Christian M's case he actually underwent physical changes I

mean he he like it's like he reverted to
like a prepubescent bodily State I mean
I haven't read the details
but I don't
know how can you possibly know that and
it may be that an enlightened being just
doesn't even it's not even a valid
statement within a ssar context it's
just purely
problematic and I keep getting asked
these questions is so and so fully
enlightened well
maybe so I'm just going to move on next
question and this is from Kama comma
comma comma Comma Chameleon who used to
go by the name of schaden and now is

just kind of he's just become rudderless
he's just broken free of his Moorings
and is changing his name on on a pretty
pretty

frequently so anyways comma comma comma
comma Comma Chameleon says Spiritual
music

recommendations and then he in the
standard bullet point he says I like the
keeper of seven keys by

Halloween it was a song about a wise

Sage who went up against Satan to rescue
mankind um Spiritual music

recommendations well certainly not

Buddhist because Buddhism really does

doesn't have very good music Hindu music
tends to be good and I consider Shiva to

have better music than Vishnu as a
general

rule so I mean just getting into like
Indian trance music the only kind of
music that I can like type like if like
I'm editing my

book um I can listen to like Goa trance
music and still function and and that's
about the only kind of music I can
listen to without being like distracted
by the

music um there is a lot of Indian music
with I mean it's like taking like om
namashivaya and just putting it to music
that kind of thing like Hindu mantras
set to music like there's one um Lord

Shiva and deep meditation which is just
om namashivaya over and over again with
like electronic music in the background
that kind of thing or how about uh um
shiva's Indian shiva's India by 1200
micrograms I mean I don't know if you
call it super spiritual but at least it
has a like a religious theme to
it but yeah I mean sort
of like sitar music too like raagas
sitar and TAA is an excellent com
musical combination like of instruments
so that' be good like old Ravi Shankar
stuff that' be all right anyways I'm
just going to move on to kak kak Kama
chameleon's next question which is
spiritual places

recommendations and then the bullet point says the only place I've known to be spiritual was the ocean I've seen people I know who walk down the beach just to keep everything together the air seems to dilute anger and occasionally I've heard of people just abandoning Society to take to the sea yeah Sailors are notoriously spiritual people at least uh at least Ishmael and Moby Dick was but uh in addition to the ocean the mountains up high in the mountains there's there's a good reason why mountains are associated with uh meetings with God and so forth it's not just that you're higher up to outer

space but just the the clarity and
silence and I mean it's it's has a good
effect mountains and and and the shore
are are like the two most spiritual
places just geographically or
geologically although with regard to
specific
sites um I mean bod Gaia definitely is
it's worth going to if you're a
Buddhist so I would add bod Gaia to that
list or any of the the the four main
um like uh pilgrimage places like the
place where the Buddha died
also and uh I I always blank out that
name of the place both names the modern
one and the Ancient
One between the two Sal trees I remember

that

though so let's see here I think I'll

just move on to comma comma comma comma

Comm chameleon's third question

spiritual animal

recommendation and then the bullet point

says the Farmer's Almanac says to pick a

pet based on your personality habits but

I don't know what's the best spiritually

like picking a rescue animal they seem

to have more character or just feeding

whatever animal I come across or

choosing a specialty animal like a

helper monkey or a PTSD dog or an ant

farm well yeah I think it would depend

on just what intuitively you're drawn to

what you feel most comfortable with some
people are dog people some people are
cat people um

like Carta says he's he's lived with a
number of Zen Masters all of them
cats personally I'm more of a dog person
than a cat

person um and you just have like a a
deep bond with some animal I mean dogs
have a certain spirituality to them
because they are capable of
unconditional love for for you that I
mean is rare to find in a human I mean
you can kick your dog and the dog will
still love you and you kick your woman
and she might just decide that she's had
enough of

that um but also um just aside from any kind of like spiritual connection and speaking of which I've got this dog named Tater if you've seen my q&as you probably noticed Tater walking around and I do think it's possible that Tater was like an infant who died in my in some previous life you know it's like like Tater has like this personality of sort of like at least a one-year-old child you know when they're still not able to speak yet but they've already started forming like a personality they're kind of aware of what's going on around them I think it's possible that I may have that this dog I've got was like

a a human baby in a previous life
possibly my own human baby but I'm not
sure about that it's just a guess
so I mean fish fish in an aquarium
that's a good meditation object if if
any of you have seen my aquarium videos
that really just sitting in front of an
aquarium and watching the fish silently
gliding
around that that's that's a very
relaxing beneficial kind of relatively
Elementary meditation that a person can
do so there's that too I would I
wouldn't really recommend the ant farm
and I'm just going to move on to the
next question and we're getting we're
getting down there we're yeah it's still

going to be 3 hours but it's it's fairly good I mean I've done some videos that were three and a half hours with fewer questions than this so I guess I'm doing all right this is from Ken Ken says did you meditate 50,000 hours in your 30 years as a monk and I actually got out the calculator and it was I mean if you average like 5 hours a day of meditation for 30 years it comes out to a little less than 50,000 hours so that's just from like sitting cross-legged that maybe sitting cross-legged in

meditation I did like maybe 40,000 I don't know I was I was averaging at least 6 hours a day my first 10 years and then it kind of tapered off maybe my second 10 years it was like four five and then towards the end I just really had gotten as far as I could with it and had was sort of losing my definitely had lost my momentum by the time I finally disrobed but uh I mean if you include walking meditation I probably did 50,000 in 30 years so Ken second question how many hours per day did you meditate seated and I already I already mentioned that I mean it was I was averaging about 6 hours a day my first 10 years as a monk maybe four or five my second 10

years and then it kind of gradually tapered down I mean I was still I mean even shortly before I dropped out you know it was still couple hours at least

so and then and then you include walking meditation like towards the end I was getting more benefit from walking meditation than sitting meditation so I was doing more walking than than sitting cross-legged and so let's see the third question from Ken what was the longest period you spent in silence and I'm not exactly sure I never really kept track of how long I spent in silence I mean a monk is forbidden by

the rules of monastic discipline from
taking a vow of
silence so there is that I mean there
are some monks including one of my
teachers who would go wizzy bait it's
called in Burmese where you just don't
talk maybe just to make confession
and then you know you're not taking a
total vow of silence I mean a monk is
required to make
confession on on
occasion but uh I mean even when I was
alone I'd live alone in a cave I'd be
talking to a stray dog or talking to a
lizard there was a a kind of chameleon
lizard in fact that I named Linda you
know I'd say hey Linda how's it going in

fact when you're when you're alone and
you don't have anyone to talk to people
do have like a talking in in inct I
remember once finding myself bending
over this little weed outside my cave
saying who's a good little weed H who's
a good weed yes you you're a good little
weed and it's just you know you're just
talking just talking to yourself
sometimes which isn't a good habit but
Hermits notoriously talk to themselves
largely because humans do have an
instinct to talk and like babies when
they're babbling you know already the
talking Instinct has kicked in even
though they don't really know how to

speak a language yet so what was the
longest period I spent in silence it's
hard to
say few days at least
probably and I'm just going to move on
to the next question this is from Young
phenomenon and this is our last
questioner and he's got two questions
and the first question of these two
questions is as follows I have heard you
mention Carl young a few times in these
videos I would like to know what you
think of the man and his
work well I mean I'm No Authority on
Carl Young I have read several things by
Carl Young I I've got his his essay on
synchronicity on the bookshelf there I'm

pretty sure at least I used to have it
there um I've read his answer to job
which was good I like that I've read
some weird stuff that he he wrote I mean
when I was in Burma um I had access to
it was like the collected works of Carl
Young and he wrote a lot of really
obscure stuff about like alchemy that I
read some of his stuff on Alchemy like
it's it's just etched in my memory you
Carl Young wrote
about um there was some alchemical sect
I don't even know what country it was in
maybe Syria or some such place where it
was it was like a religious cult they
were Alchemists but it was like

religious Alchemists and maybe most most
Alchemists were was kind of like a a
yogic thing where they had this
Temple and there was this tradition I
guess that if a certain person I think
they had to be like have like blue eyes
maybe even blonde they walked in you
were supposed to like kidnap this person
and then you you trap them in this vat
of olive oil so that just their head was
sticking up out of the olive oil you
know the rest of their body is just
submerged in olive oil and then all you
feed them is figs that have been soaked
in olive oil and you just keep the
person in the oil and keep feeding them
these figs soaked in oil until their

skin just becomes waxy and translucent
and then you rip the head off this
person while he's still alive I mean he
stops being alive by the time you've
done ripping his head off you don't cut
it off you have to like pull it off and
by then it was like supposedly his whole
body had just become soft and waxy from
soaking in this oil for so long then you
take the head and you preserve it in
some way it's already fairly good pres
fairly well preserved from all the oil I
guess you put it into a box surrounded
by some sort of like cotton or or kpo or
something and then you put it into this
niche in the temple and you could use it

for prognostication you could ask the head questions and it would answer at least to somebody trained in hearing answers from this head so there's that I read psyche and symbol as a as like a teenager which was just over my head at the time it was one of my father's books um you I've I've read quite a lot of Carl Young but I've never really mastered Carl Young's psychology or philosophy and um ROM dos used to say that um like Sigman Freud was operating at the level of second chakra I mean he just kind of boiled everything down to sex but Yung was operating at third chakra so I've I've recalled that that's that's some little nugget of information

I can divulge with regard to Carl Young
is that ROM do considered him to be
functioning primarily at the level of
third

chakra um but aside from that I really
don't like all of his stuff about Thea
and the Animus and the Persona that was
brought up earlier I really have never
bothered to master Carl Young's
psychology so I can't really say much
more about Carl Young than I already
have and so I'm just going to move on to
Young phenomenon's second question which
is the very last
question and it's not even fully three
hours yet we're doing good and young

phenomenon says have you read the red book and I do think the red book is on my bookcase I got it for Christmas like two years ago but like I say I hardly ever read books anymore it's weird as a as a monk I used to read a lot before I was a monk I think I read even more it was like I couldn't really sleep at night without reading for at least half an hour before I became a monk and then the reading kind of got replaced by meditating and now it's just I just go to bed and don't have to do anything before I go to bed and usually I manage to fall asleep pretty easily so I do have the red book I just haven't read it and I guess the red book is just sort of

like personal stuff that he wrote that
wasn't intended for publication but then
somebody went and went and done gone
published it

anyway so I mean that's it I finished
finished answering all the questions and
so I'm done and or at least I'm fixing
to being done because I just got to say
the last standard stuff that I always
say like I should say it at the
beginning but I almost never do you have
any questions about something you think
I can answer which would probably mainly
be with regard to terraa

Buddhism early like pre- terraa Buddhism
Buddhism in general although some

Mahayana stuff I'm not really well
versed in like Eastern philosophy in
general there's I I mean it's it's
getting a little more iffy and sketchy
but a lot of the time I can answer stuff
about Eastern philosophy Western
philosophy I have a fairly good
knowledge of Western philosophy
mysticism in general meditation in
general like
Burma living in
caves
biology human evolution that kind of
thing I'm uh there's a good chance I
would be able to answer questions about
that and no more than three questions
per episode please and if questions

continue to be as many as this time we
may go down to two and pray that I do
not reduce it

further and if you like um you like this
video I mean if you made it this far you
probably do unless you just hate
watching then smash the like button
don't just click it or whatever just
smash the son of a [__] subscribe if
you haven't already and be happy and now
I'm going to stop recording

alrighty then hello and welcome to
question and answer number whatever it
is I am your host poo
basa and I'm in a very slightly
zombified state of mind today so I hope
it will not interfere with the quality
of my question answering in the past
I've been similarly
zombified and just getting into to the
the flow of the Q&A usually is
sufficient that I'm more or less un
zombified at least 15 minutes into the
thing or 20 or something so I got the
beverage with the little paper umbrella
demonstrating my taste and style and
sophistication and so

forth and we might as well just Wade
right into

this and there's there's like

not like an obscenely large number of
questions so I think we should easily
stay under three hours unless I just go
on a complete digressive rant on

something and so let's just do this and
the first question oh I should also say

I'm doing this in for a change of
scenery in our newly painted bedroom

which the I mean the paint is kind of
nice the color is kind of a subdued dark
color for a bedroom but it's not so good
for a studio because the lighting is not
so good

but that's just the way it

is so now I start answering questions and the first question is from Young phenomenon and I think this question was submitted and then it was like submitted under an older video and then it got deleted or something possibly by the person who posted it but it's too late because it's already I already uh copied it and it's first on the list so young phenomenon says my beloved Kine has some serious joint issues but he isn't too old yet I'm faced with the choice of doing what little I can for him since I can't afford surgery or taking him in to be euthanized he has a really hard time

getting around and I am struggling to make this make the right choice here I don't want to keep him around out of attachment to him while he suffers but I also do not want to end his life prematurely since his joints are really the only part of him failing with age I could use some advice

poasa what do you think would be the right choice well from the Buddhist point of view like the Orthodox terraa Buddhist point of view probably other schools of Buddhism would agree

euthanizing an animal

is interfering with its Karma to some degree and is

unethical so euthanizing animals even if

they're in pain from the Buddhist ethical point of view which differs from the standard Western ethical points of view it's still unethical to euthanize an animal that is in pain mainly because instead of let letting nature take its course you are like playing God or I mean you are literally terminating the life of this animal of this sentient being so I mean this this story this question reminds me of this monk I knew in Burma he pretty much hated the human race but he loved animals there are people like that schopenhauer was another example of this and this monk was kind of like a

Burmese

schopenhauer and he loved animals and he had this dog Uncle Wiggly I called him who started getting it was like intestinal cancer or just some kind of blockage so that he couldn't poop anymore and this monk this Buddhist monk like on a daily basis he's got his finger up the dog's butt like helping to get the poop out because the dog isn't able to do it anymore because of the obstruction there and I mean he did this for months until the dog finally passed away so with regard to a a dog that's got like bad joint pain um the first thing that comes to mind is I mean you could give it small doses of what humans

take for joint pain you know maybe you know aspirin or ibuprofen I I really don't know I mean I'm I'm not in a position to give Veterinary advice but some kind of like maybe a anti-inflammatory given to the dog might be helpful um I should have consulted with my sweetheart because she's like an expert on dogs and she might be able to give advice on this but it didn't occur to me before starting the video and I don't think you want me to just go off and ask her with a like nobody sitting in front of the camera for like three minutes so you might want to consult with somebody who knows about you know

animal medications what you would do for
um you know inflamed joints or whatever
it could be like degenerating joints
like the bone itself is degenerating in
which case I'm not sure what you could
possibly do but uh you know making the
dog's life comfortable so it doesn't
have to get around very much might be
something you could do but really it's
it's you have to consult your own heart
your own intuition to decide what would
be the best under these circumstances
because after all it is Young
phenomenon's dog and so young phenomenon
is in the best position to decide what
is best um although you should bear in
mind that just from the Buddhist point

of view if if he considers the Buddhist point of view to be important then the Buddhist point of view would just be keep the dog as comfortable and well cared for and loved and just let nature take its course I mean you can give it medications and so forth but uh euthanasia is still essentially murder from a Buddhist point of view but again the Buddhist point of view is not necessarily authoritative on anybody who watches these videos so I'm just going to move on to the next

question which is from David and David
says practically speaking how does one
burn up their karma I hear people
talking about this but they either don't
talk about how it is actually
practically accomplished or they talk a
load of gibberish
which gives one the impression that they
don't know how to accomplish this
themselves

well um burning up one's karma is not
really a Buddhist thing a Buddhist is
not supposed to be trying to burn up
their karma other than just in a way
also letting nature take its course
which would mean you just live your life
with a kind

of acceptance or equinity so that you're not generating more karma or at least you're keeping the generation of new Karma to a minimum by just self-restraint saying out staying out of trouble keeping five precepts you know living a moral ethical life a simplified quiet harmless life and so past Karma will be burning itself out and you'll be making less fresh Karma but you're never going to exhaust your karma that was that was like a a philosophy of like the Janes The Janes presumably still believe that you're supposed to exhaust your karma in order to become enlightened and so they would try to speed up the

process Through self- Torture and so forth but a Buddhist if you're just following the middle path you're not seeking trouble you're not running away from it either necessarily you're just letting whatever happens happen and just not reacting to it with attraction or aversion that is going to be creating more karma so I guess I answer that question because I'm moving on to the second question from David which is as follows as far as I understand it ending the cycle of rebirths involves elimination of all desires and aversions while along with Karma which along with karma is the factors which Propel one into being

reborn is this your understanding or are there other factors I assume when one is dying there are they are reviewing their entire life and at that moment all kinds of regrets and desires are formed which causes us to be propelled into another rebirth to set things

straight well I mean not necessarily I mean somebody who just dies of a sudden Blow To The Head for example doesn't have time to be reviewing their entire life unless it's like in this kind of a a BTO kind of a realm immediately after

death like near-death experiences the review stuff happens after the body is

clinically dead and the spirit is
elsewhere so let's see here let me
review this question let's see that
ending the cycle of reverse involves
elimination of all desires and
aversions uh which along with
Karma um is the fact which Propel one
into being reborn yeah yeah that's
that's basically correct um is this your
understanding or are there other factors
well I

mean yeah you still have Karma that is
causing you to be reborn and you still
are identifying with that Karma you know
you're identifying with your
personality and
so see how do I how do I explain this I

mean it's not just

Karma that causes you to be reborn

because even an enlightened being

supposedly well no no that's not right

because like an enlightened being they

don't they're not enlightened before

they're born so yeah it is it is karma

which is just the momentum of your

mental States and if you become

enlightened you may still have these

mental States but they they no longer

have any momentum you know it's like

they are without mass or some such so

that they no longer have this this

karmic effect to create future events

after I mean to the extent of causing

you to be reborn and there's all kinds of problematic issues like how is it that a fully enlightened being still has karmic fruition and there's another question on the list that touches upon this same issue it is a kind of messiness in ancient Indian Buddhist philosophy and part of the reason for that is ancient Indian Buddhist philosophy uh arose in India before India had developed a kind of formal logic and so there are self-contradictions certain messiness just bad systematization in terava Buddhist philosophy and to some degree the Mahayana Buddhists uh were in a somewhat

better position because they had a more sophisticated kind of logic in India at the time that Mahayana arose hundreds of years after after the earlier schools but I'm I'm like digressing away from the question here let's see oh boy yeah I'm I'm still slightly zombified I have to admit as far as I and it's not because I'm hung over I didn't get drunk last night so shame on you for even suspecting that so let's see here the cyc re rebirth involves elimination of all desires and aversions which along with karma is the factors which Propel one into being reborn well I mean the

desires and aversions are themselves
creating the karma which is the only
thing that passes from One Life to the
next according to
traditional like early

Buddhism so is this your understanding
or there other factors it's karma karma
is what does it and an enlightened being
somehow transcends and like neutralizes
their karma so that it no longer has the
power

to cause you to be reborn in into
another
life so let's

see I assume when one is dying they are
reviewing their entire life and at the
moment all kinds of regrets and desires

are formed not necessarily which causes
to be propelled in another re birth to
set things straight no what propels you
into another birth is just the momentum
of your mental states which is your
karma and I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from anara
Lion I think I think that's how you
pronounce it Anar lion or anara lion I'm
pretty sure it's not
anarion anyways enar lion says is it
possible to get psychic powers through
Perfection of fourth jna what does
terava scriptures say about this
traditionally in Buddhism it's through
cultivating the jic states fourth jna

being the highest one that result in
psychic powers

so um it's not that fourth JN

necessarily causes the psychic powers

it's just that it's sort of preparing
the

ground uh for these psychic powers to
manifest

themselves so yeah and in like in Terra

Buddhism there's what is called the dry

Vision to arant who is a fully

enlightened being that never mastered

Janna and so they don't have any psychic

powers so yeah it is true that according

to early Buddhist tradition psychic has

come through mastering these these

Advanced meditative States called

Jan so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from the sabats
which might be one person or it could be
a plurality of
people and the savatours
say in the bhavat Gita as it is and then
in parentheses it's i k c
n 1 ver 36 the translation or
explanation States quote according to
vdic injunctions there are six kinds of
aggressors one a poison Giver two one
who sets fire to the house three one who
attacks with deadly weapons four one who
plunders riches five one who occupies
another's land and six one who kidnaps a
wife such aggressors are at once to be

killed and no sin is incurred by killing
such aggressors unquote what is the
Buddhist point of view especially
karmically well you can't just from the
Buddhist point of view you can't kill
people with no sin incurred although sin
really is not a Buddhist term it would
be

ausa you know unskillful UNH wholesome
Karma Bad

Karma so a person could be like a serial
killer and still the Executioner who
lops off the serial Killer's head with
an axe is still I mean he's still guilty
of terminating a human life I mean
there's all kinds of like complications
ramifications mitigating factors and all

this but the fact remains that exe even
an executioner who's doing the will of
the people or the will of the King the
will of the government by executing
violent criminals still I mean he's not
a good person he is a killer himself
it's just that he has government
sanction for doing what he's doing and
there is a story in in the rules of
monastic discipline about a monk who had
like like kindly motives or
compassionate motives who advised an
executioner the headsman to keep keep
his ax sharp and try to finish off the
victim with just one chop just for the
sake of being painless and Humane and

even that was condemned by the Buddha according to the texts and this monk was guilty of like he was complicit in Murder because he's giving advice on the Executioner on how to kill people and if the Executioner took his advice that rendered the monk complicit he was like an accomplice in the killing of another human which is a parajika offense which results in a monk being excommunicated from the SAA for

life so I'm just going to move on to the second question which is is the Dalai Lama truly enlightened when he is on public record as telling people to get the covid jab and telling a boy aged about 10 to suck his tongue well I

already answered the question of whether
I consider the Dal Lama to be
enlightened which was I don't know I
mean enlightened beings are problematic
it is a problematic
premise

so this is just sort of I mean he's just
sort of questioning my I don't know by
pointing out two things that are
presumably blameworthy that the dolly
Lama is supposedly culpable of one is
telling people to get the covid jab and
I don't know if it is impossible for an
enlightened being to promote vaccines I
mean some Co Jabs technically were not
vaccines they were like a totally

different kind of animal some of the
covid vaccines were legitimate vaccines
I think the Johnson and Johnson vaccine
was actually uh a vaccine based on like
denatured viruses or whatever like like
a polio vaccine or a small box vaccine
or some

such small pox I should

say so I'm like encouraging people to
get

vaccinated um I don't think that

necessarily disqualifies somebody from
being enlightened even if some of those
so-called vaccines apparently have way
more negative side effects than were
people were admitting to for years and
were actually punishing people who are

bringing up what are now considered to be just undeniable facts with regard to telling a boy to suck his tongue that's a Tibetan cultural thing the dolly llama was probably just trying to joke around with the kid and in this case he dropped a brick you know he's just trying to speak at a tenure level or a child's level and it didn't didn't work out very well and again whether an enlightened being is incapable of telling a joke that backfires or bombs

problematic so I mean regardless of any dirt you could dig up against the dolly Lama unless you've got like video

footage of him like screaming and
beating on people that kind of thing
then still I don't
know I would guess that he probably
isn't I mean he's supposedly an avatar
of um the
mahayan god of wisdom
manjusri and manri is a bodh SVA and I
don't think that manri is fully
enlightened although some Mahayana
schools redefined their own redefined
term of bodh satva so that you can have
fully enlightened buddhis svas even
though the Buddha himself ceased being a
budy sat when he became enlightened so
Mahayana schools I mean who knows with
regard

to exact terminology and so forth
because different mahayan schools will
have different definitions of the same
terms and all
that so I mean I would guess that Dal
Lama is wiser than the average
person but I would guess he probably
isn't fully enlightened but I mean I
have no way of knowing
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from Stellar Supreme
formerly known as Libra lamb and
occasionally still known as Libra Lam
and Stellar Supreme Etc says can you
share the main comforting thoughts you
had as a monk I think they deserve to be

an answer to a Q&A question for their practical value and it is true when I was a monk I had the three comforting thoughts first comforting thought was even if I make no significant progress in this life at least I'm staying out of trouble more or less and that's still relatively true maybe not as true as when I was a monk but still I'm pretty much staying out of trouble kind of second of great comforting thoughts is I think it's the first half of verse 63 of the Dum aana which goes the fool who is aware of his foolishness is at least wise to that extent so if you know that you're a fool that means you have

some wisdom you're not a complete fool a complete fool is a fool who thinks he isn't a fool but a fool who knows that he's a fool isn't a complete fool he actually has some wisdom and that was a comforting thought to me at times as a monk and the third comforting thought comes from The Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament which is blessed are they who know their spiritual poverty for theirs is the kingdom of heaven or at least just even just the first half of that blessed are they who know their spiritual poverty although you had some Wise Guys Like St John of the Cross who interpreted Spirit of

pover poverty of spirit to mean that you are essentially in fourth J and so your mind was completely destitute of any kind of perceptual content but I really doubt that that's what Jesus had in mind assuming that Jesus of Nazareth really did say that the

Christians may be even better than the Mahayana Buddhists at reinterpreting statements made by the founder of their religion so let's just review one even if I make no significant progress in this life at least I'm staying out of trouble more or less two the fool who is aware of his foolishness is is at least wise to that extent and three is blessed

are they who know their spiritual
poverty so I'm just going to move on to
Stellar Supreme etc's next question
which is are there more comforting
thoughts you've learned later that you
would incorporate in the same way as the
other three if you were a monk again no
I think those three were sufficient I
mean I could try to come up with
something you know to exist is to
transgress you that was that was sort of
like a motto more than a comforting
thought but I mean there's there's more
you could add you know beware of goal
oriented Dharma that kind of thing but
those are more like motos that just

belong in their own

category and so I'm just going to move

on to Stellar Supreme etc's third

question which is do you believe that

there was credibility to the super

natural claims in the Sanya paluta

denaya number two regarding the three

knowledges or visions they seem to be

both accessory and integral to the

nature of a sama sambuddha and the sya

palasa is considered to be relatively

very old and it's important it is a

cardinal

suta and it's King AATA satu goes to see

the Buddha

and he asks him you know what are the

benefits of being a renunciant or some

some a Sam which would be like a philosopher a non-vedic philosopher essentially and so the Buddha gives this graduated talk starting with really like lower level you know it's like if you become a monk then you get more respect and better treatment and so forth you know that's sort of like the Bottom Rung and then the very top is like full Enlightenment and it is interesting to me that although he mentions the first four janas nowhere are the formless Jonas mentioned and furthermore nowhere are these four stages of ARA hood that I'm continually being pestered about mentioned at all in this suta which

would seem to indicate I mean it could be some circumstantial evidence that at the time that this sutra was composed the four stages of AR Hood did not yet exist in Buddhist philosophy and also the four formless Jnas possibly did not exist yet or at least they were not considered to be

janas so getting back to the question though um is do you believe that there was credibility to the supernatural claims so of the three knowledges so the three knowledges is the Buddha is giving like the the list of the six standard um psychic powers that you can get through for through through like jna or as your wisdom increases you get

you can get these six psychic powers and the last three that he mentions are also pretty much like traditionally bound up with becoming a Buddha like when you become enlightened as a fully enlightened Buddha not just a regular arant but a s Buddha you have the three knowledges that occur to you the first knowledge is remembering your past lives the second knowledge is seeing the arising and passing away of other beings according to their karma you know it's like you can sort of see the karma the karmic state of various beings what their Destiny is likely to consist of you know what their past has been like

you know in in general terms at the very
least and then the third one the the
highest psychic power is just the
awareness of Enlightenment itself you
know it's sort of like the awareness of
Nirvana is sort of like Beyond mere
Clairvoyance it's me Beyond merely the
Divine eye the debach chaku it's it's
it's higher than that it's the highest
psychic power is just penetrating
through samsara seeing through
samsara
and attaining to
nbano so do I believe there is
credibility to the supernatural claims
um I suppose so I mean how how can you
possibly know one way or the other for

sure though unless maybe you are also a
SAS Sam Buddha but according to
tradition um there's not going to be
another samasan Buddha until long after
Buddhism is completely gone from this
world although some people might say
it's gone

already so let's see here did I answer
the

question I mean the question is do I
believe that there was credibility to
the supernatural claims uh regarding the
three

knowledges and I

mean with regard to a a sasam Buddha I
mean how can you really know for sure

what the mental states of a fully
enlightened being are going to be like
and again there's there's a question
that kind of touches upon this later
on um and it's it's so hard to talk
about some of this stuff because if
you're talking about like the subjective
experience of a fully enlightened being
from the point of view of of like an
unenlightened being in

Samara it just doesn't really Jive and
even if you try to do it

skillfully you're going to have to be
dealing at two levels of reality

Ultimate Reality and samsaric
conventional reality

simultaneously and I mean for most

people it just goes whoop right over
their head

they just don't get it and I mean

there's nothing that you can do really

to fix that not I mean maybe there might

be some Zen master who just knows the

exact words to say or just the exact

time to just wall up somebody with a

stick that will just kind of knock their

damn Foolery out of their head and then

they'll they'll

see but I mean I can't hit you guys with

sticks I mean even Zen Masters really

can't hit people with sticks much

anymore because people are wimps now and

they'll they'll be offended and they'll

Sue and they'll be traumatized and
taking therapy for years afterwards and
it's just a big
mess so I do think that there is
plausibility but I mean
credibility it's it's kind of a a sticky
word for me I mean you're better off not
believing anything the Ana waga says
don't believe anything which doesn't
mean that you positively disbelieve
everything because disbelief is itself a
kind of belief you know somebody says
it's going to rain tomorrow and then
somebody says I don't believe it it's
not going to rain tomorrow well they're
just believing that it's not going to
rain tomorrow which is still a belief so

it's suspension of judgment it's it's um
skepticism in the classical sense of
just suspending judgment and not
believing one way or the other and
that's your best bet and for an
unenlightened

being to be trying to second guess the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being is just

silly so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from seov
action sead zida whose second guess is
the mental states of fully enlightened
beings on a regular

basis and SE action CAD zida who is a
silly person says when you say that

there is nobody there for an enlightened being and it's just a reflection of the karma of people around them doesn't this contradict the Buddhist teachings for example the Buddha said he could still feel pain despite not suffering Mahamogana getting beat into a pulp due to his past Karma or bajia getting killed by a cow on the loose yeah I mean there's I mean or for example the Buddha decided to teach the dhama out of compassion you know that's like a subjective emotional mental state inspiring the book Buddha to teach when one way of looking at an enlightened being is that there's really nobody there and why would a fully enlightened

being have compassion for beings that he
can see full well don't really
exist so the the Buddhist teachings as I
mentioned earlier are full of all kinds
of like logical messiness and
self-contradictions and so
forth but you can kind of make sense of
this by saying that a Buddha or an
enlightened being has mental States it's
just that in a way they are neutralized
because they no longer have karmic
momentum and so in a way an enlightened
being has mental States but he has
transcended those mental States and so
that they're they're practically
irrelevant they're irrelevant to like

his experience of existence assuming a
fully enlightened being experiences
anything

and again I mean trying to second guess
enlightened beings is just silly but
people keep asking me about this it's
like what could an enlightened being
feel this or does he feel that or does
he experience and it's

like I mean how do you answer these
questions

so I'll just I'll just start over again
when you say that there is nobody there
for an enlightened being and it's just a
reflection of the karma of people around
them doesn't this contradict the
Buddhist teachings to some degree yeah I

mean that is a hypothesis that I mean it's one way of looking at it and it does contradict certain teachings where the Buddha is just thinking these thoughts sometimes if you read the text the Buddha is thinking thoughts that a modern Westerner cannot take seriously like in the commentaries the Buddha is thinking all these thoughts about how you know once you know 5,000 years has elapsed after his past passing away all of his relics are going to coales and they're going to give a a one last doat talk levitating in the air and then that'll be the end of dhama which is kind of

strange that dhama would end right after the Buddha gives one last dhama talk but why why that would kill dham I'm not sure but there's all these I mean you can find all kinds of stuff in the texts you know the Buddha just bragging about how great he is how people ought to worship Him talking animal stories all kinds of stuff that I mean you don't have to take them seriously unless maybe you're like a a Southeast Asian villager with sort of a medieval mindset and you just cannot dare to question any of it for fear of going to hell so you can say from a saric objective point of view a fully enlightened being still has mental

States but it's like the mental states
are

denatured they no longer have karmic
momentum and so I mean the enlightened
being no longer identifies with them in
in a sense the enlightened being is
empty but trying to explain this stuff
is

just it's it's

just an exercise in

futility futility of futility all is

futile and so I'm just going to move on

to see of action set Z's second question

which is what are your thoughts on the

various heretical schools and teachers

mentioned in the texts and like the Sona

paluta the second suta of the dean Kaya
does start off practically with King
ajata satu going to the Buddha and
telling him you know what these
heretical teachers you know the six the
the six heretical teachers taught him
you would ask these questions what are
the benefits of the Holy life and I mean
you can find them throughout the sutas
and it's not very reliable
information because the Buddhist the
early Buddhists indulged in a fair
amount of religious propaganda just as
the Mahayana Buddhists later on just
turned the tables and just indulge in
like scathing religious propaganda
against the earlier Buddhists which in

my opinion is much worse because the Mahayana Buddhists were essentially slandering the Buddha himself and his chief disciples and so forth you know the earliest Buddhist mean it's like they're saying well that's just kind of the inferior vehicle you know etc etc but getting back to the six heretical teachers one of them was mahavira the the founder the historical founder anyway of

jism and you can read Jane texts and you see that the Jane texts are are considerably different from the terava Buddhist or the early Buddhist version of what mahavira would teach I mean the

early Buddhists had these six heretical teachers including mahavira the founder of the Jaines who was called neant NATA and I think NATA is just like a kind of ridiculous name which means something like son of grandson so anyways I mean they make them look like fools according to Buddhist tradition mahavira founder of The Jaines vomited hot blood and died simply because one or two of his disciples converted to Buddhism and it's not very likely so you're going to get just like this rough fairly inaccurate sketch of what some of these teachers or what any of them was teaching by reading the

Buddhist version because the Buddhist version is just going to distort it sort of like you know the the globalist media distorts what like a right-wing populist is saying you know they just twist it into something ridiculous and then just condemn the Ridiculousness of of their own

twisting so anyways um if you read AK W's history of Buddhism in India he he mentions that um in addition to neant natap the MAV the founder of The Janes that a number of these other teachers would all qualify as ajivikas that mall goala is mainly the one who's identified with the aiva

religion which is extinct now but it was more popular than Buddhism in the Buddhist

time um

so kind of you can kind of pick up a few things but really it's just not to the advantage of early Buddhist texts to give a fair representation of what these teachers were teaching in a Buddhist text where of course the the early Buddhist wanted people to believe Buddhism and rather than these other these other

sects so I mean there was one who might qualify as a charvaka I can't remember his name where you know he's saying that you can go up and down the banks of the

Ganges with like this Raaz rotating
razor knife and just leave heaps of of
like mangled flesh all up and down the
banks of the river and you're not doing
anything wrong you know that would be
just like just materialism you know
there is no Karma there is no ethics you
know there's no Foundation to ethics
other than just like Superstition you
can do whatever the hell you want
there's going to be no repercussions for
that that sort of thing at least there's
not going to be any metaphysical
repercussions so you had somebody like
that who was like a
charvaka a number of people that might

qualify as a Jain you had Mahavira the founder of Jainism who was a contemporary of the Buddha and uh probably and oh also you had uh Sanbeetputra who was previously the teacher or the leader of the Buddhist Two Chief disciples who left him and converted to Buddhism and he was sort of a skeptic um so what are my thoughts in the various heretical schools aside from the thoughts I'm already I've already been uh expressing probably their own point of view is going to be wiser than it is portrayed in the texts and that can be seen from like Jainism you read Jain texts it's not very similar to what Nanda NATA is teaching in the

Buddhist

texts and also there are some uh

vestiges of ajaka religion like

inscriptions and so forth where uh I

think his name is Basham I can't

remember his first name he wrote a book

about the aicas an entire thick book

about the aiva religion and I mean some

of the teachings of of the aikas really

kind of are represented in the the

Buddhists kind

of like rejection or criticism of the

aicas like the aicas were strict

determinists you know they think that

you know really your fate is laid out

and it's sort of like you take a ball of

of string and you just hold on to one
end you just throw the ball of string
and it just unwinds and unwinds and
unwinds till it reaches is the end and
then there's no more ball of string the
the aicas really did kind of believe
something like that it's just
determinism that you're going to live
what is it 84,000 lives from start to
finish it just runs its course and the
the way you know that you're close to
the end of the ball of string the way
that you know you are close to
Enlightenment whatever the aiva
conception of Enlightenment was is
you're you're an AAA monk I mean that
itself is fairly good evidence

that you're at one of your very last
lives if not your very last
life but uh yeah I think if you really
wanted to understand the teachings of
these six heretical teachers six non-
buddhist

philosophers um that were not vadic and
these were in the Sham tradition that
you you probably do best to seek
elsewhere or be very cautious in reading
the the official Buddhist explanations
in the suas like for example in the S
pal

so I suppose I answered that question
that those are my thoughts I mean he
wasn't asking anything more than just my

thoughts and those are my thoughts so I
did answer it and I'm going to move on
to the next question this is from Stefan
I think and the S has like this little
this little thing over the top of it I
don't know what influence that has on
the S whether it remains an S sound or
whether it's like ston or something I
don't know I'm not very good at
pronouncing certain foreign languages
especially when I'm not even sure what
language it is so anyways let's just
call him Stefon let's anglicize his
name and so I mean
that's I don't know that could be a
micro aggression or something to
anglicize somebody's name without their

permission but we do it all the time so
might as well just be unrepentant and
just Brazen it out Stefan says Steve
says I wanted to ask if you are familiar
with Hillside Hermitage in Slovenia led
by nanami if so I would be interested to
hear your thoughts on the approach to
dhamma practice and meditation I've kind
of overheard a few of U their videos
especially venerable Nan's videos uh he
seems to be a serious practitioner he
seems to have some wisdom he seems to be
relatively like
Orthodox and so as like Buddhist monk
Western Buddhist monk teachers go I
think he would be considered one of the

better

ones um he might be a little kind of opinionated like it's my way or the highway kind of a thing I don't I'm not sure about that but uh he does seem to be relatively strict and serious and have some wisdom and the only thing the main thing that I don't like about venerable nany is his name because he detracts from the first famous Nan moly now there's two famous Nan mes the first nanam mole I think his name was osbert Moore he was an Englishman who lived in Sri Lanka and he wrote the famous translation of the wisi Maga he translated a lot of kind of difficult abstruse philosophical text in the mahay

or the Terra tradition and so now
there's a new nle who is kind of
eclipsing him so that when you just say
yanle people will just assume you're
talking about the new famous nle in
Slovenia and not the old famous Nan mole
who was an Englishman living in Sri
Lanka or Salon I guess it was called
back

then so but I really I'm I'm not like an
avid viewer of his videos I don't really
watch dhama videos much my sweet heart
does sometimes and so I kind of overhear
what's being said but that's about as
far as I get with it so I can't really
say for sure um what the situation is

there but I just get the impression that he is stricter and more serious and has made more progress than a lot of the high-profile Western monks or Eastern monks monks in

general so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Green Cube and green Cube says how to be

happy well I mean you've got sort of the conventional samsaric answer and then you got sort of the more advanced

Buddhist answer the more advanced

Buddhist answer is I mean you've got to become enlightened in order to stop suffering if you want to go beyond all dooka all unease you have to become fully enlightened which involves

renouncing the world and practicing as a
conscientious mind and mastering jna
preferably and you know just eradicating
your defilements and all this and even
if you try as hard as you can there's
still no guarantee you're going to
succeed on the other
hand you can sort of mitigate your
unhappiness by just being content with
little try to reduce your desires be
mindful so when your habitual desires
arise you can just observe them with
Detachment and not just immediately act
out the the craving that sort of thing
just live a virtuous life live a
harmless life you know don't [__] with

people that kind of thing and uh just living a a philosophical dharmic kind of life will make you happier although if you exist you're going to have unhappiness in your life that's the first Noble Truth so long as you exist as a sentient being there's going to be unhappiness in your life and that's just I mean one way of being happy is just not care whether you're happy or not just it's sort of like the ancient stoic point of views where it's like you're just willing to accept whatever life throws at you with a certain amount of forbearance so there's that too but either either way either way that I just

mentioned is far preferable to the
standard secular
materialistic point of view which is
just human nature really to believe the
way to be happy is to get what you want
to avoid unpleasantness and to get lots
of pleasant stuff and it just doesn't
work that way is not conducive to
happiness just getting whatever trying
to get whatever you want and avoid
whatever you don't
want that is just a Fool's errand and it
doesn't
work because you're going to get what
you don't want regardless
and sometimes you're not going to get

what you do want and sometimes even if
you do get what you want it turns out
not to be the way you are expecting it
to

be and even then you're still going to
get sick sometimes you're going to get
hurt sometimes you're going to get old
all this stuff's going to happen and a
lot of it you just have no control
over so one or two renounce the world
and become enlightened that would be the
best way although there's no guarantees
with that and second way is just sort of
M mitigate the unhappiness sort of
refine the unhappiness through living a
dharmic life and cultivating wisdom and
virtue

so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Austin and Austin says if morality isn't independently grounded how can we make objective moral truth claims so if morality isn't independently grounded I assume he means that morality is subjective and not based on some Cosmic law I I assume that's what he means by morality isn't independently grounded but the thing is even if morality is subjective which from the Buddhist point of view it is it's based on your own psychology because we're all human we all sort of have the same

general like composition of character
and the like our minds work more alike
than
different and
so there's a certain moral law that's
not written down necessarily up on some
tablet up in space but still if a person
tells a lie or they kill or they steal
it's going to have certain effects on
their mind if only because they are
human and if you're a human it's going
to have a similar effect it's not going
to be exactly the same for each
person but still because we are all
human that these
certain like aspects of human psychology
that result in Morality apply to us it

may be for some four-dimensional alien
on the planet

trador who maybe even has tentacles that
it might be different I mean they might
have a different kind of morality based
on a different kind of
psychology

so I guess and we make objective moral
truth claims just based on I mean in a
way it's almost like statistics you know
it's like different people have
different subjective States but still
you can generalize you can objectively
make statements about these individual
subjective States and come up with you
know patterns that can be verif ified

and statistically analyzed and all
that so I mean ultimately our Karma our
and our ethics our morality is
subjective based on our own psychology
but we're all human and so we all have a
similar psychology with similar rules
about

ethics even though cultures May differ
you know some cultures still say it's
okay to kill people sometimes most
almost all cultures say that cultures
that would like be un like what's the
word uncompromising

pacifists then they just historically
they just don't last very long because
they can't compete with violent
barbarians they just can't stand up to

them so I guess I've started to digress
on that one I think I'm just going to
move on to Austin's second
question which is empiricism asserts
that all knowledge comes through sense
data however that statement itself is
not justified through sense data this
would then follow the implication that
logic and Mathematics exist
independently of our minds what say and
this is a very complicated question I'm
not even sure if I can fully understand
it um empiricism asserts that all
knowledge comes through sense data
well I guess but it doesn't necessarily
I mean it comes through physical sense

organs so I mean it's just sort of the
the

bare material of our perceptions

especially the initial perceptions when

we're like you know what uh David hum

would called the more Vivid the more

lively perceptions that are our

experience of a presumed external

world so that would be empiricism would

be based on experience

more I mean I would say empirism is

based more on experience than on sense

data so however that statement itself is

not justified through sense data but I

mean it's you can call it just a a

hypothesis a philosophical point of

view

um yeah I mean it's it's justified
through like inference or not inference
what's the word like like
induction logical induction which is not
purely logical I mean it's not
completely valid it's not as solid as
logical deduction logical induction is
you keep seeing the same patterns over
and over again and so you assume that
that pattern will continue into the
future and so you make predictions based
on that that's kind of what Science is
based on it's a lot of induction rather
than deduction deduction is you're do
doing like a logical syllogism and it's
like you're proving something if the the

initial premises are true then the conclusion will necessarily be true but induction is is different from that and that's mainly how empiricism works so this would then follow the implication that logic and Mathematics exist independently of our minds I don't necessarily think so I mean there's like the potential of it but it doesn't really exist doesn't take any kind of form until there's a mind perceiving it and still I'm I don't entirely 100% follow the reasoning in this question and I may be that I've just missed the point because first of all as an empiricist I would not assert that all knowledge comes through sense data I

mean it comes through

experience but some experience is not

necessarily through sense State

especially like if you become

enlightened then that Enlightenment is

not experien through sense data I'm

pretty

sure

so I I hope I answer that question my

apologies if I fail to even see the

point of the question or to to follow

the the reasoning of it but I got more

questions to answer so I'm going to move

on to Austin's third question which is

in the Buddhist Paradigm empiricism

serves as the epistemological framework

for understanding truth however if not
all knowledge comes from sense data
alone how can this idea itself be
justified as a true belief well again
empiricism is not
necessarily all entirely based on sense
data it's just based on like
experience so experience whether it's
sense data or not most experience would
be based on sensory data I mean from
like a biological point of
view let's see but I these these last
two questions of Austin are difficult
ones in the Buddhist Paradigm empiricism
serves as the epistemological framework
for understanding truth yeah see for
yourself come and see

aaso it's one of the qualities of dhama
it's aaso come and see see for
yourself however if not all knowledge
comes from sense data alone how can this
idea itself be justified as a true
belief well I mean if not all knowledge
comes from sense data alone then where
does it come from I mean it seems like
the onus would be on Austin here to
say if all knowledge doesn't come from
experience then where does it come from
because I mean even if you just take
somebody else's word for it that's
that's an experience you're experiencing
somebody else telling you
something so I mean this was one of the

main arguments in early Indian
philosophy early philosophy in general
is what is a legitimate source of
knowledge all the vdic schools of
philosophy had to include the vas as
like an ultimate source of knowledge
whereas the non-vedic schools which
would include like Buddhist philosophers
would could just dismiss the vas just
scriptural author scriptural Authority
is not really an authority it's not
really

authoritative and in fact I mean a
radical skeptic might say there is no
fully authoritative source of
knowledge and some Buddhist schools are
pretty much follow about like the maamaa

school theyan they don't even accept
personal experience as authoritative
we're all we're all living in an
illusion

anyway

so

gosh empiricism serves as the
epistemological framework for
understanding truth well I mean
depending on how you look at it
depending on what school of Buddhism or
what school of Phil philosophy I mean
truth doesn't necessarily have a
framework you know truth can just be
like
emptiness and you don't experience

emptiness

sensorially

so I mean how can this idea be justified

as a true belief well [—] justifying

true beliefs I mean all beliefs are

false no belief I mean a belief can be

conventionally true but no belief is

knowledge I mean knowledge and belief

are two entirely different things they

can there can be a certain amount of

overlap

theoretically but belief is delusion

belief is thinking that you know

something that you don't really know

that's why there's a difference it's

like the first philosophical essay or

one of the first philosophical essays I

ever wrote was called knowledge and belief I think and I was pointing out it's like let's say there's a clock that's stuck at 5 minutes to 6 you know it just always says 5 minutes to 6 now through random chance somebody comes along at exactly 5 minutes to 6 looks at the clock to see what time it is and it says 5 minutes to 6 so he walks away thinking it's 5 minutes to 6 but does he really know that it's 5 minutes to 6 that clock always says 5 minutes to 6 so I mean there's all kinds of these weird ways I mean you can just because you believe something doesn't mean that you know something I mean most beliefs

if not all beliefs are they're just not ultimately

true no belief is ultimately true a

belief is a perceptual

phenomenon that true knowledge is just

on a completely different

level but this this is this question is

approximately as difficult as the

previous one in the Buddhist Paradigm

empiricism serves as the epist logical

framework for understanding truth no it

doesn't really I mean you could say

empiricism serves as the epistemological

framework for understanding Dharma and

how to practice so that through

practicing dharm you can eventually

understand the truth but it's not this

epistemological framework that is considered to be ultimately true that's just skillful means that's the raft made of rubbish that gets you across the flood and then you throw the raft away so how can this idea itself be justified as a true belief fools can justify anything and I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from xenoid and xenoid says at what age did you seriously begin meditating every day well I experimented with daily meditation for the first time as a senior in high school and I was doing M at the time time and I just totally sucked at it I

was not good at meditating at all for
until after I had become a monk really
so it didn't last extremely long and it
would be like a few minutes before I
went to school I'd sit down on the
meditation mat and try and M just try to
keep the monkey mind from being a monkey
mind which didn't
work

so my first attempt at serious daily
meditation happened as a when I was
like 17 years old but it didn't really
kick in until I had decided to become a
monk I was like in my late 20s mid to
late 20s and uh I was preparing to
become a monk and then I just started
really um taking it more seriously or

just like forcing myself because it was at first my mind was so hyperactive so nervous and high strong and agitated so much udacha shot going with the poly term that just sitting still was not easy just sitting still for 30 minutes you know I'd have to set up a timer to so i' I'd know that I sat for 30 minutes CU if I didn't I'd be opening my eyes it's like 30 minutes has to have passed by now it's like 15 that kind of

thing so at what age did I seriously begin meditating every day first at 17 which didn't last and then maybe around like 25 26 something like that and then

it it really kind of struck traction and
I got better and better at
it so I'm just going to move on to xeni
void's second question what is good
mindfulness meditation supposed to feel
like I seriously attempted it for the
first time the other day and I felt kind
of dissociated during it but happy
afterwards I don't know if this is
because I was proud of myself for
finally getting around to it or if it
was actually because of the meditation
itself so what is good meditation good
mindfulness meditation supposed to feel
like well I mean it can feel like just
about anything is that's really not the
point of what it feels like it's good

mindfulness meditation means that you
are being mindful you are observing and
noting objects you know observing just
note it Let It Go note it Let It Go note
it Let It Go without your mind wandering
so good mindfulness meditation means
your mind mind isn't wandering away so
that you're sitting there and then you
finally realize for the past 10 minutes
you've been engaging in a sexual fantasy
or thinking about what that noise is
outside the window or thinking about
your fourth grade teacher or this kind
of thing so good mindfulness meditation
is that your mind stays on the object
whatever the the primary object is and

if anything else arises you're mindful of that you don't get distracted Ed by it to the point that you're just not noting and letting go noting and letting go anymore I mean if your mindfulness meditation gets really good you can even get rid of the the noting but at first you know whatever it is that's arising and generally you use your breath as the primary object not necessarily but in general that is very common and so it's like in breath and out breath you know the touch of the touch of breath uh the nostrils and you're just noting that and if you get bored then you note the boredom if you get exhilarated you note the

exhilaration you know you just note it
Let It Go note it let it go whatever it
is that arises note it and let it go and
so it could be any kind of feeling anger
arises not it Let It Go boredom arises
not it Let It Go exhilaration arises not
it Let It Go sadness arises note it Let
It Go Just Bleak despair arises note it
Let It Go but so long as you're noting
it and letting it go that's good
mindfulness

meditation regardless of whether you
feel good or bad but if you're being
mindful of it you're detaching from it
so if you feel good it's just a good
feeling it's not I feel good it's just

you're noting a good feeling and then
and then it goes and it's if you feel if
the bad feeling arises it's not you
feeling bad it's just you know a bad
feeling arises then you let it go and
then when the distraction or whatever it
is is more noticeable than the primary
object has passed away you just go right
back to the primary object which is
often just the touch of sensation at the
nostrils just the touch of air the touch
sensation of air at the
nostrils so it can feel very different
different times but I mean the main
point of good
meditation is I mean primarily
especially at first is that your mind is

sticking with the object or if if
something else arises you know you're
being mindful of that and you're not
just sitting there thinking about what
you want to have for
dinner so I'm just going to move on to
xeni void's third
question which is has meditation ever
made you feel amped up instead of calmed
down I was once doing the meditation
technique shown in this video which I
didn't watch and on my fourth attempt I
entered into a state of very intense
focus it felt similar to being on adero
however my heart rate was normal and
almost no thoughts entered my mind

during this time the effect lasted
around 30 minutes I plan to continue on
with this technique in order to overcome
my ADHD yeah I apologize for not
watching the video because um I just cut
and paste this question and there was a
link to a video after the question but
it did not
register that I had to watch the video
in order to answer the question and I
guess I really don't have to because the
the only question mark in this question
here is has meditation ever made you
feel amped up instead of calmed down and
in my case no it really hasn't I mean
when you're not meditating instead
you're just thinking about something

that can amp you up just the thoughts of
what you're thinking about can amp you
up but just noting and Let It Go note it
Let It Go note it Let It Go so um yeah
that doesn't really cause me to feel
amped up I mean there's there was a time
especially I was living in a forest in
Burma and my mindfulness was just sort
of like
mediocre it was it was sort of like I
was seeing everything like through a
magnifying glass but it wasn't enough to
just you know it wouldn't dissipate and
so it's like if you're in a bad mood you
can if you're being mindful like with
mediocre mindfulness it can just amplify

the bad mood without really helping you
to detach from it very well you know
it's like you're looking at through a
mic or through a magnifying glass makes
it bigger but it's not good enough to
just be able to just let it go and let
it let it pass away you know it just
makes it worse in a sense so I have had
mindfulness like bouts of a peculiar
kind of mediocre mindfulness where it
would just make bad things worse just
because it's like you're seeing it more
clearly without really being able to
detach from it very
well but that's about as close to what
um xenoid here is is mentioning that
that I can recall

offand and so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from PSA and PSA says would you like Canada to become the 51st state and not especially and I mean one thing is if Canada became the 51st state it would be bigger than all the other 50 states combined so probably you'd have to divide Canada up into individual states like maybe the already existing provinces could each become a state but still Canada is more messed up than America is you know it's more castrated than America is so I don't think that um like annexing Canada would necessarily be to the advantage

of the United States you know it just be like increasing the size of the problem so yeah I mean I somebody in a on the Discord server I think it was yesterday said that that Indians have destroyed Canada but really it's it's like culturally castrated like liberals white liberals have destroyed Canada at least to the extent that it is destroyed Justin Trudeau is not Indian and he's he's done more than most if more than anyone to just drive Canada into just this state of being just this I a place that I would not want Annex to the United States although I got friends in Canada there's lots of good people in Canada they might not be able to say the

truth

publicly might not be able to bear

arms but I guess they got free health

care which uh now includes people

advising you to just self-terminate if

it's going to cost the government too

much to fix you have you considered this

option so I guess I answered that

question so I'm just going to move on to

psa's next question is can chat GTP

become enlightened I don't think so I

mean they would have to to get like

massively upgraded for that even to be

like

plausible I

think

so yeah I don't think that GTP can
become Enlighten
unless just any kind of um anything that
isn't human is already enlightened just
kind of merged with Nirvana you know
it's sort of like humans are the ones
that ate the forbidden fruit the fruit
of the knowledge of Good and Evil and
all that and we separated ourselves from
God so to
speak so I mean somebody like art would
say pretty much everyone is enlightened
except us humans so that might include
computers and so forth I mean they might
they wouldn't be conscious in the human
sense but I mean like a rock might be
considered enlightened a tree might be

considered enlightened and if a rock or
a tree are is enlightened then chat GTP
can be enlightened too but
um with like sentient and enlightened in
the human sense I think chat GTP is is a
very far cry from
that so I don't think chat GTP is
sentient in other words or
self-aware so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from ruie and ruie
says ever heard of deathbed ordinations
and no I actually have never heard of a
deathbed ordination I've heard of monks
in Thailand ordaining
trees they or they do the ordination
ceremony on trees and then they hang

like a monk's robe on the tree as a
kind of

environmentalist act where they're
trying to keep superstitious wood
cutters from cutting the tree down and
they're they'd be much more hesitant to
cut down a monk tree than just a regular
lay

tree but deathbed ordinations no I never
heard of it and technically I'm pretty
sure it would be against vinia just like
ordaining a tree is just completely
invalid I mean they're not really
ordained sorry to tell that to people um
but I don't think there's any Tai wood
cutters watching these videos anyway
that's going to be encouraged to cut

down trees from me pointing out the plain fact that trees cannot validly be ordained into the

S but there is I know for a fact that there is a rule of monastic discipline for forbidding a monk who is old and feeble from becoming a preceptor and I think there's also a rule that prevents a monk or

prevents a person from who is old and feeble with age from being ordained like a preceptor should not accept a student you know like or ordain like a new monk who is like completely broken down and feeble with with old age but um I'm not 100% sure about that

well I mean deathbed ordinations they're just based on the Superstition that just the act of being ordained is meritorious and I mean it's it's part of the spiritual materialism that runs rampant in terada Buddhist countries the burmes have got a lot of spiritual materialism they think that just taking five precepts from monk with no intention of actually keeping those precepts just doing the little ceremony of taking the five precepts is itself meritorious they think that just anybody being ordained for 3 days as a monk it's called the don laah don laah literally is it's the Burmese pronunciation of the poly word that means hard to get hard to

obtain that that like the the beu life
or a monk existence is difficult to
attain in this world so it's like this
rare treasure that they're getting and
they think that I mean they're getting
some kind of great from being ordained
as a monk even though they don't know
the rules they don't follow the rules
they're breaking the rules the whole
three days you know they they've still
got a bank account which is they
shouldn't have they don't really
renounce the world they just think that
through some kind of
magic that they're just going to get
this really Advanced Merit just from

being ordained for a few days I mean if they're serious about it they really want to live the Monk's life that's that's another thing especially if they get rid of all their money which almost none of them

do so I guess getting back to the question ever here ever heard of deathbed ordinations I've never heard of them this is the first I've ever heard of deathbed

ordinations so I'm just going to move on next question this is from quor and quor says the fourth jna is a state Beyond Pleasure and Pain and is characterized by Equanimity if attachment is formed towards this state

would this clinging taint the equinity
resulting in a lower jna well if you're
having if you're in fourth Janna you're
not going to be having attachment to it
if you're going to have attachment to
Fourth Janna it's going to be at times
when you're not in fourth
jna so it may be that you attain fourth
Janna and then you've got attachment to
that when you're not meditating that
that can sort of interfere with the
depth of your meditation that the this
attachment can be like like an a
stumbling block or like a kind of
hindrance to your meditation but it's
not going to happen while you're in

fourth

Janna it's going to happen when you're not in fourth jna which can then sort of sabotage your ability to get forth jna again then it might wind up in a a lesser johnic State just because your attachment like your your greed and desire for this this exalted experience and that's one reason why the weasa teachers like in of the mahasi tradition warn people against practicing somat talk you can get psychic powers you can get all these mind-blowing states and then you get attachment to those and it can lead you astray so I'm just going to move on to quis tor's next question let's see here

we've been going at it for over an hour
it's all right I'm okay with that next
question is it someone's strongest
desire which determines their rebirth or
is it more to do with ending up in the
realm most similar to their vibrational
frequency not sure anyone would desire
to be reborn in Hell well I mean one of
the most important factors is just your
mental your very last mental state that
in a way like determines your bearing I
mean it's your karma in general that's
going to be determining your general
like moment momentum your general
direction but that very last moment
before you die has um what do you call

it it's it's more of an effect than any other mental state in your life determining where what direction you're going be going that's which is why like when Mahatma Gandhi was shot you know he says Hey Ram not it's not like oh God they got me like like in the movie which is you know completely secularized but you know it's like he wanted his final moment to be like based on God directed towards God because you know that's that's the direction he wanted to go after he died so that kind of thing is uh it's your strongest desire is certainly going to be a significant aspect of your karmic momentum you know let's say that

you're just just a horn dog just
dedicated your life to being an
extremely lustful person then certainly
that's going to have a radical very deep
effect on what your next life is going
to be like um

but

still it's like your very last conscious
thought is I mean in Trad traditionally
this is what they say there are some
sutras that may deny this but the Su
there's all kinds of sutras that that
contradict each
other

so I guess I should ask and I should
read this question again is it someone's

strongest desire which determines their rebirth or is it more to do with ending up in the realm most similar to their vibrational frequency not sure anyone desire to be reborn in Hell well I mean you die with a human mental state you're more likely to be reborn as human you die with like a demonic mental state you're more likely to wind up in a demonic realm you die in in like this animalistic mental state you're more likely to wind up in an animalistic existence you die with like a Heavenly mental state you're more likely to wind up in a heaven realm that kind of thing although there are people that will say no there's this Su that says but that is

my understanding but the thing is let's say you've lived like a an icky life an immoral life and then for whatever reason you're like in an exalted State when you die you wind up in like a Heavenly realm but it's not going to last very long because you don't fit there very well you know you just sort of like squeaked in there but it's it's not likely to be a stable situation or it can go the other way too it may be that you've lived a virtuous life and you know you cultivated Advanced meditative States even and then at the moment of death you're like in a completely like like a hell realm or or

like some sort of I don't know like an
animalistic state or something then that
can wind you up in a kind of a lower
realm but even that it's not going to be
stable and so you're not going to stay
there for very long

probably so at the end he says not sure
anyone would desire to be reborn in hell
yeah it doesn't really work that way
most people don't desire to have
nightmares at night but still a lot of
people have nightmares when they sleep
even though their own mind is creating
it I mean our own mind is creating our
reality so mainly it's just it's like
the the subtlety of your own mind is
going to determine the subtlety of the

realm in which you exist that's that's
like the long and the short of it right
there so sometimes I kind of confuse
like my best guess my understanding with
what the official dogma of terraa
Buddhism is I do try to distinguish
those two especially if I don't agree
with the established Dogma which does
happen

sometimes

anyways I'm going to go move on to
quora's third question which is as
follows if someone has spent years
meditating and has eradicated many
defilements moving to subtler and
subtler realities is this person if this

person experiences fear is their vibrational frequency different than a non meditator experiencing fear even if the experience feels subjectively the same to both people no if it feels objectively the same then it's the same so what's what's more likely to happen you've got a person who spent years meditating has and has eradicated many Defilements and they feel fear it's just going to it's going to be a different kind of fear as a general rule than some non-m meditator experiencing fear you know like someone who's been practicing mindfulness meditation they experience

fear it may be just second nature just a matter of habit that they're going to note the fear and detach from it so it's not going to feel subjectively the same and it's like I answered that question so quickly that I've now got like early early answer completion insecurity you know sort of like being the first person that hands in the test that's like a kind of insecurity or the last person that hands in the test at school I don't know if you guys experienced that maybe tests are now considered to be racist or sexist or something let see so yeah I mean it's

not going to feel subjectively the same
to both

people I'm just going to move on next

question this is from thermal

squid and thermal squid says feelings

about Carl Schmidt and I have no idea

who Carl Schmidt is but fortunately for

all of us thermal squid has uh included

a little bit of commentary here that

maybe I'll be able to make some kind of

comment on he says first he says

feelings about Carl Schmidt which I've

already divulged to you then he says

particularly on the political it seems

to me that political realities are more

or less totally barbaric and I feel that

this makes it clear about the entire

Pursuit evil seems to be instrumental in winning the game of the material world and that there's really no spiritual solution to this evil I mean yeah I don't I don't think so I mean like the founding fathers of the United States of America were not pure evil I don't think they were primarily motivated by evil they were idealistic and apparently had some good intentions they were trying to set up like the best constitutional republic that they could come up with and so I mean you do have like benevolent Kings even benevolent autocratic Emperors so it's not just pure evil um like

obviously Kings as a general rule they
they're just the son of the king they're
the eldest son of the king and so I mean
they don't necessarily have to like even
murder all of their brothers or anything
like that

although in Persia that was pretty much
the standard I think for a long time in
ancient Persia first thing a new king
would do would be to kill off his male
relatives so there'd be no no contenders
to the

throne but uh I mean political power
does attract moral

inferiors but it doesn't attract only I
mean it's like politics is not just
purely composed of moral inferiors

although if you see the the stuff that
is coming up in American American
politics with Elon Musk and his group
like examining auditing different
different like government agencies you
might think that yeah it's just it's the
whole thing is just rotten to the core
there's no worm in the Apple it's just a
ball of

worms but it's not necessarily that way
so see thermal squid here says it seems
to me that political realities are more
or less totally

barbaric um I mean barbaric has negative
connotations but not it's not
necessarily a bad thing you know sort of

like in a previous Q&A I was talking about like the dark wisdom of militarism that is there is a certain wisdom to that and it may be there's a certain wisdom to a kind of ruthlessness in

politics let's see evil seems to be instrumental in winning the game of the material world not necessarily I mean that is one common strategy that does have some some success I suppose but yeah I mean that should not discourage like genuinely good people from trying to participate in the political

system like Pericles of Athens I don't think he was pure

evil I don't even think Winston

Churchill was pure evil although quite a

few people that watch this these videos

might disagree on that one so anyways

I'm just going to move on to to Thermal

Squid's next question I'm not even fully

sure that I answered his first question

but then

again the the only question mark in his

first question was after feelings about

Carl

Schmidt and I I don't know who Carl

Schmidt even

is

so thermal Squid's next question what

sort of attit attributes and qualities

rise to the mind immediately when you hear the phrase sick freak or depraved maybe even deranged please go into detail and even potentially be grotesque I don't see what what possible benefit there would be had in going down a rabbit hole of grotesqueness seriously I mean it's it's generally could involve toxic mental States and I mean it's just why would I want to inflict myself with toxic mental state or inflict you the viewer and listener of these videos with toxic mental States so sick freak I mean the first thing that came up would just be something sexual you know just somebody with weird Kinks depraved depraved is a

much more general term and I think
depravity is
largely I mean it's sort of like the
atmosphere breathed by the political
left nowadays just sort of cultural
castration and and just G General
decadence and depravity seems to be the
general direction that like the
globalist left the people that were
being chewed out by our our good
American vice president recently in
Munich that that seems to be what they
want they want depravity they don't
necessarily want sick freaks but a
certain degeneracy like moral
degeneracy is uh

yeah it's it's it causes the downfall of civilizations when it when it goes mainstream which is what is has been going on in the West for decades if not centuries so deranged I mean that's even more General still deranged is just insane which is what pretty much everybody is so yeah I think that's good enough I mean wallowing in like like minute descriptions you know just graphic descriptions of depravity and so forth it it's not to anybody's benefit whatsoever that I that I can uh I can see it present so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is also from thermal

squid which is karmically speaking with asking goofy silly cryptic or bizarre questions on this channel be bad karma in the sense that we might be wasting potential for acceleration of insight or spiritual progress this question falls into a similar category about having bad opinions about monks or doing other seemingly dull things to a monastic that wouldn't otherwise result in hell if it were a lay person but I also feel that you desire to answer questions that are easy personal or otherwise outside of the confines of seriousness or urgency I think it would be divinely ironic to have had the opportunity for major

enrichment yet wasted on questions about
Critters or some other kind phenomenal
topic so I guess the main question here
is up up here see karmically speaking
what asking goofy silly cryptic or
bizarre questions on this channel be bad
karma in the sense that we might be
wasting potential for acceleration of
insight or spiritual progress I mean
it's it would depend on the individual
who's asking some people people ask
goofy silly cryptic or bizarre questions
in good faith you know they they just
have a mind that works differently and
it may just sound like a goofy silly
cryptic or bizarre question to to
somebody else when to them maybe it's

they don't realize how goofy it may
sound to somebody else on the other hand
some people may just deliberately be
trolling and asking smartass questions
and they would be getting worse Karma
than the person who is just kind of kind
of a a goofy person maybe who asks a
goofy question in all
seriousness it's the people that are
just like being sarcastic trolling that
kind of stuff and it does happen on this
on this uh on these Q&A
videos people just asking just
ridiculous
questions on
purpose just just to see what happens

see what kind of result get I mean that
has that has happened before so let's
see but he he further says that it's
like um would it be bad karma in the
sense that we might be wasting potential
for acceleration of insight or spiritual
progress a person who in good faith is
asking a question that might be
considered a silly question from others
I mean I might just point out to them
that it's a silly question you know I
might kind of to I mean sometimes I do
kind of um good-naturedly berate people
for for asking certain kinds of
questions like second guessing the
mental states of a fully enlightened
being for

example um just for this Q&A somebody a generous supporter of mine um they asked questions that were just completely in [__] land that just I mean it was like they deliberately asked questions that did not make rational sense you know it's like like some Zen Master on mushrooms would ask these questions and I mean I I didn't even include them because I mean it's so difficult to tease out any kind of actual meaning from the question that I mean this wasn't much point in answering so but I mean if somebody is asking a question in good faith it might seem like a silly question to other

people but to them it might not seem like a silly question and it might not even be a silly question to them or I mean I can sort of give some kind of feedback that might kind of allow them to see the question from the way other people would see it Etc but I really don't think that there's necessarily bad karma in the sense that you might be wasting potential for acceleration of insight or spiritual progress unless you're doing it on purpose I mean if you're if you're asking a kind of a a question that other people would consider silly in good faith then you really haven't done anything wrong other than just the

standard you know the immorality of
being

unenlightened and in Buddhism I mean
really it is immoral not to be
enlightened it is immoral to be
delusional it's just the way it is it's
immoral to be unhappy in

Buddhism and usually Buddhists don't
describe it as such but that really is
the case it is immoral to be unhappy
even though everybody's unhappy
sometimes at least everyone who isn't
fully

enlightened so let's see I I suppose I
answered that question so I'm just going
to move on the next question this is

from

Romeo and Romeo says I'm a fairly recent Explorer of mindfulness and so much of what I've learned here to for has been focused on the awareness of what is going on within an individual person's internal world

however the other day while reading Joseph goldstein's excellent book mindfulness I found out about another aspect of mindfulness that I wasn't familiar with awareness of the external mind states of other people can you speak on this aspect of mindfulness any practical tips on how to actually do it I find it hard enough to focus my Awareness on my own thoughts and

feelings much less somebody else's and
it is true like in the sa patana sua
it's talking about how you're mindful of
your own feelings and you can be mindful
of other people's feelings and from the
time that I was a junior monk studying
this stuff it really did not make much
sense to me

although I don't think it's something
that you would necessarily try to
cultivate it might be something that you
just pick up on somebody being angry so
you can just be mindful of that you can
you just pick up on somebody being
joyful so you can just be mindful of
that but I don't think that you're going

to be cultivating deliberately being
mindful of other people's mental States
unless you've gotten to the point where
you can read

minds it may be that there are some kind
of strange Advanced meditation Masters
who have developed the psychic power of
looking into somebody else's mind and
knowing what they're thinking and
feeling and then just like practicing
mindful Detachment of that which would
be a very peculiar yet Advanced
meditation technique but other wise I do
think it would be more halfhazard where
you just become aware of somebody's
mental state through whatever means and
then you just note it and and Let It Go

I mean it might be there are certain
associations with your own mental states
that way

but yeah it is it is kind of weird I
don't think that there really is a very
good explanation of it in Terra
tradition or at least if there is one I
either haven't seen it or what is more
likely um was told it or I read it and
it just didn't satisfy me very well and
then I just forgot
it

so I do think that it's not something
that you would deliberately cultivate
because I mean being mindful of your own
mental States is something you're much

more on Solid Ground there and you know you've always got your own mental states to work on which is one reason why almost all mindfulness meditators are being mindful subjectively of their own States and not trying to like be mindful of somebody else's mental States it just doesn't work nearly as well it's something that may come up occasionally just haphazardly but I don't think that it's something that you cultivate unless maybe like I said you're very Advanced you can read minds and then you can like detach from somebody else's mental States instead of detaching from your own so anyways I'm just going to move on to the next question is from Fred and

Fred

says uh is there really a difference

between nibana and

Moka well Moka is sanskrit and in poly

it would be mocha which means a

Liberation so is there really a

difference between nibana Enlightenment

and Liberation and no not really

although nibana can ALS nibana has like

two different possible meanings you know

it can be like like an ethical kind of a

subjective State the attainment

of Enlightenment or it can be a more

metaphysical State whereas Moka

generally is like the first kind you

know it's like an attainment it's not

some abiding or I mean anything you say about the absolute is going to be invalid but it's not a metaphysical state so much as like a psychological State you know more of a subjective

event that happens it's Moka literally means Liberation and it's just like a synonym for nibana in the sense of the attainment of

Enlightenment so Fred's second question can the lizard brain be

controlled and to some degree indirectly you can control the lizard brain you cannot have complete control over the lizard brain you can't have complete control over any aspect of your brain

but you know like like core emotional stuff then through mindfulness you can learn how to note it and be detached from it and just through self-restraint and so forth and in it combined with mindfulness you can learn how to be less angry or you know less greedy or whatever it is so indirectly through practice maybe prolonged dedicated practice you can modify the behavior of your lizard brain

but I mean you can't just make a decision one day I'm just not going to be angry anymore and expect that to be a realistic

statement I mean that's you read the

text and sometimes it says you know a monk should never be angry a monk should have no preferences this kind of thing and you can't just decide okay from now on I won't get angry anymore it just doesn't work that way because the lizard brain is not completely under our control so you just have to do the best you can indirectly and you can kind of steer it in certain directions if you've got the the determination you know the steadfastness and the like the WEA that just the the energy the commitment and everything to to sort of gently guide your lizard brain in a certain direction but still it's going to remain the

lizard brain and it's going to be like
the animal aspect of your mind like the
sort of like the the Primitive animal
aspect of your mind and you're not going
to just be able to reprogram that and
just however you please we're pretty
much stuck being who we are we are human
All Too Human and we're going to remain
human until we die and then maybe we'll
be human again who
knows so I'm just going to move on to
Fred's next question which is do you
think a soda paana is one who knows the
ropes so to speak and this is another I
mean people's just obstinately
insist people even people who watch a

lot of my Q&A videos they just
obstinately insist on asking questions
about the four stages of Arya hood and
like I mentioned earlier on in the Sona
paluta which is discussing sequentially
the steps of like higher and higher
benefits of living the holy life four
stages are not on that list at all
neither are the formless

Jas so so a soda paana probably in in
all likelihood in my opinion it just
meant a new convert to Buddhism someone
who had entered the stream and you know
they weren't going to get a lower realm
just because you know they're good
Buddhists now so they're not going to
get lower Realms just because of that I

don't think that being a soda originally
meant that you have the glimpse of
nibana and then you're incapable of
telling lies after that you know there's
certain Feds that don't exist for you
anymore you no longer have self viw and
you can't do these immoral acts anymore
I really don't think that that was the
original meaning of aapo the original
meaning of aapo probably in my opinion
was a new convert to
Buddhism well entered the stream of
Dharma by converting to
Buddhism so is is he one who knows the
ropes not necessarily because if they're
a new a new

convert then they might be a beginner
you know they might be really like eager
to learn but there's still might be a
lot of Basics that they haven't learned
yet and with regard to the soda in the
later derived more metaphysical sense of
someone in the four stages of Saint hood
and Buddhism has a monopoly on four
stages of saood you don't hear anything
about that in other religions which is
another bit of evidence that I think the
Buddhists just made it
up anyways
um just going with the traditional
interpretation of a sopon as someone who
is at the lowest stage of of sainthood
or sagehood has had their glimpse of

nibana and can't tell a lie anymore and
can't be reborn into one of the lower
Realms anymore and so forth are they one
who knows the ropes I mean it depends on
what the ropes are I guess I mean they
would have to have a pretty good Mastery
of some of the basics of Buddhist
philosophy

anyhow and they can't be immoral much
anymore

so I guess they would know some ropes
and so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from

Wayne and Wayne says could the god of
the Old Testament be an

archon okay there's he's got another

question right after this which is similar but I might as well divide them up into two different questions okay could the god of the Old Testament be an archon and I don't think so I think the god of the Old Testament um he started off as a Canaanite god L he may have had his I mean wherever the semites originally came from you know he probably migrated from there and it was this belief in L and then he got conflated around the time of Moses assuming that Moses existed he got conflated with this midianite or Edomite like God of Storms and War and just blood in general just violence named

Yahweh and then this belief just evolved over time anyone who looks at the belief in some of these metaphysical beings you know like God Almighty in this case

Yahweh

Jehovah that I mean you see that just the whole belief about this entity has evolved over time until finally you've got um Jehovah being sort of like this really crude primitive attempt at understanding the absolute you know the Christians took it even farther like in Catholic the theological seminaries and so forth that God becomes so abstract that you know he has almost no resemblance at all to The Angry God of

the Old

Testament so I mean he could be an
egregor as the pagans would call them
where it's just the belief of millions
of people just sort of their faith in
this being does actually kind of creates
this real real
entity but yeah an archon I mean that's
the sort of agnostic term
anyway so yeah I think the god of the
Old Testament is is more of a
sociological entity than a Divine entity
although sometimes he is tried I mean
people have tried to equate him with
like the absolute you know the capital G
God and so forth
but that was a later

development that that Yahweh was like a
god of storms who was like the chief
rival of the god Baal who is also a god
of Storms and you can't have two God two
storm Gods living in the same area it's
just not big enough for the both of
them so I mean God's I mean God Almighty
Jehovah started off as the Canaanite god
El who had like a female consort and was
one of many gods and then it just
evolved over
time

so yeah I do think that the Old
Testament God and the Old Testament and
New Testament Satan are both more
sociological than

theological so I guess I'll just move on
to Wayne's second question which is kind
of similar is Jesus of the New Testament
a bodh satva

thoughts and I mean a bodh satva I mean
really I mean Jesus Jesus lived around
the same time that the mahayan bodh
satva concept was coming into
being so I mean that's just coincidental
I think I mean it's it's really you're
trying to impose Mahayana Buddhism onto
Christianity just sort of apples and
oranges I don't think I think it really
works that way that I do not think that
Jesus as Jesus of as Yeshua the
carpenter son of Nazareth I do not think
he took any budhy son of vows I really

do not think

so so some people might say yeah he is a
bodh he's going to be an a Buddha
someday but I mean it's just guessing
theorizing

okay so I think I'm just going to move
on next question this is from yugao and
yugao says have you seen Eternal
Sunshine of the Spotless

Mind um and then he says any thoughts
about it from a Buddhist perspective and
then what do you think about that
expression so that's actually three
questions so I got to separate
these okay have I seen Eternal Sunshine
of the Spotless Mind I think of Jim

Carrey starred in that and actually know which is kind of weird because I almost saw it several times you know it's like I'd be deciding what movie to watch and it's like oh this one's considered to be philosophical and profound and everything but then I'd always wind up watching something else like one time I watched The Truman Show instead of Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind although Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind is on numerous lists you can find on the internet of you know the best philosophical movies this kind of thing but no I haven't seen it so um the second question is kind of nullified now which is any thoughts about it from a

Buddhist perspective I'm not exactly
sure what it's even about you know it's
it's kind of a love story it's supposed
to have some profound aspects of you
know what it means to love somebody that
kind of thing but that's that's about it
I just I've just shot my wad with regard
to describing what I understand about
the

movie so Yuga third question what do you
think about that expression which I
assume is the expression Eternal
Sunshine of the Spotless Mind and it's
it's a poetical nice way of describing
you know sort of illuminated
wisdom Buddhism uses illumination as

kind of a synonym for wisdom you know
like jna means something like blazing or
illumination

so yeah I mean it's nice it's kind of a
poet IC

metaphor so I'm just going to move on
this question this is from dhama

river and dhama river says let's see
just a minute indulge me here I want to
scroll down just to see oh we still got
a uh it's not a really a long scroll
down to the bottom now it's we've still
got several questions but we're
definitely way over halfway

done so philes is the next question and
he says how does one end the accuse
suffering of being hated shunned and

abandoned by a lover well being hated by
a lover I

mean that seems to be kind of an

oxymoron doesn't it to be hated by a

lover but I mean if you got a lover that

turns on you and starts hating you I

mean it's questionable whether they ever

really loved you in the first place I

mean love in that sense is just animal

mating instincts it's not genuine love

I've got this popup button thing there

we go I got rid of it I mashed the

button made it go away so how does one

end the acute suffering of being hated

shun and abandoned by a lover time

really I mean you could have avoided it

by just not getting entangled with that person but that opportunity is PED and so mainly it's just time heals all wounds I

guess um I mean you can I mean if you're really in the habit of mindfulness

mindfulness is the Panacea that cures all ills but still it's going to I mean the throbs the pangs are still going to arise and then you just have to note them mindfully which won't make them go away it will just help you to detach from them

somewhat but I mean that's just you mean you take your chances you get like intimately involved with another person especially if you get intimately

involved with a person is not Suited
sued to then this kind of stuff happens
and it's just you got to consider it to
be worth the risk you know better to
have loved and lost than to have never
loved at

all I think Tennyson said
that

so how does one end the acute sufferings
by continuing to exist and then it fades
away maybe you find a new lover
preferably one that won't just repeat
the the process of the previous
one so I guess I answered that question
cuz really there's no really good answer
to that I mean how do how do you end the

acute suffering of the loss of a loved
one you know you just it just runs its
course it does whatever it needs to do
to your

heart and then you move

on so Phil ay second question if reality
can't be expressed in words then what
are words for I've begun to feel that
the primary purpose of language is lying
mainly in terms of praising and
denigrating not communicating neutral
valueless information inter subjectively
as is commonly believed in my view
language is not utilitarian at least not
by The Common Sense idea of utility and
we fail to see this because of massive
karmic

delusion well I mean let's just get up
to the top here if reality can't be
expressed in words then what are words
for navigating

samsara I really do not believe that the
main purpose of words is lying like when
I go to work almost all the Talking that
I'm doing is just like work rated stuff
you know where should I put this what
what where does that go you know what
should I do next that kind of thing so I
mean it's just navigating some sorrow
which is not ultimately real but um I
mean it is true that children learn to
lie almost as soon as they learn to
speak even Apes who have been taught

sign language learn to lie pretty quickly but yeah I do not think that it's anywhere near the primary purpose of existence it just has survival value from a biological point of view human language has great survival value it allows us to pass on information from one person to the next and from one generation to the next so you know at first it was like hey I found something good to eat over here that kind of stuff which might have been a lie sometimes but usually wasn't and so I'm just going to move on to Phil's third question does being silent for long periods of time in itself have any positive spiritual

effects it can have positive spiritual effects on people who for example are just like chronically talkative or they're like very social you know they've got attachments to socializing attachments to just talking all the time and I mean I've met monks who I mean they probably would have been better off if they took AOW of Silence from time to time there was this one monk in particular he was just talking all the time and usually not about dhama he was talking about this really great cricket bat that he had at one time or talking about you know this motorcycle experience that he had this kind of

thing so that I mean some monks would just kind of steer clear of him just because they didn't want to be talk to about cricket bats and motorcycles but um being silent for long periods of time yeah I mean it can have positive spiritual effects like for example one of the the main spiritual advises of Tong Pulu the founder of the religion or the founder of the the the sect of terrible lot of Buddhism which I was ordained the the the ordination lineage in which I was ordained had this advice with regard to dhama practice which was eat less sleep less read Less Talk less so at least reducing the amount of

talking that you do does have positive spiritual effects or at least it can so it's let see here I mean it can just help you to break attachments to talking that would be the main benefit of

it and so I'm just going to move on next question this is from

Casa with a K and Casa says hello how many types of Buddhism are there like different schools or philosophical differences and stuff like that well it's it's sort of like saying how many how many different types of Christianity are there I don't think there's as many types of Buddhism as there are types of

Christianity you know first you got like the old schools of Christianity you know the Catholics the Greek Orthodox you know the Coptic Christians in in Ethiopia the the nestorian Christians in Syria and then of course you've got all these Protestant schools that I mean you can just have Fly by Night Protestant Cults

arising and they're just all over the place so Buddhism isn't quite that that diverse but I mean you've got it started off with the old schools which now there's only one really remaining there's like a vestigial sarasti Vada in the Nara region of Japan that nevertheless has incorporated so much

Mahayana that it's almost

indistinguishable from Mahayana or so I

have read and been told but technically

speaking you still have some vestigial

sarasti Vada in

Japan but of the older schools all this

all that really remains is Terra and

then you've got numerous Mahayana

schools and I mean the main ones early

on were pure land that surprisingly I

was surprised to learn that pure land

was one of the the earliest Mahayana

schools which arose around you know five

four or 500 years after the time of the

Buddha you got

maamaa um you got

yogachara and you got Zen then you got
like various Tibetan lineages you got
the K what is it the gugas I think are
the yellow hats the Ning mapas I think
are the Red Hats

and um I means the the philosophies very
widely you know you got nii Ren in Japan
which is almost which has essentially
degenerated into a little more than
reciting namoo Rango rengo over and over
again which is sort of worshiping the
Lotus Sutra you know it's homage to the
Lotus Sutra which is a kind of
apocryphal Sutra sura you know it's sort
of like Christians whose religion just
has pretty much devolved down to nothing
more than just repeating as a mantra

Praise of the Book of Mormon that kind
of

thing so how many types of Buddhism

there are I really can't say I mean you
can divide it up into Theravada and Mahayana
or you can divide it up into Theravada

Mahayana and vajrayana which is what a
lot of Tibetan Buddhism goes under but
within

Mahayana um there's various schools you
know it's like Zen is very different
from Pure land even though in a lot of
monasteries they're combined into into
one system which is weird or like Nichiren
and like

um oh let's just say maamaa I mean just

as different as night and
day so different schools or philosoph
IAL differences I mean it would it would
take a long time for me to try to
discuss various philosophical
differences between the different
schools but mainly terraa I mean it's
not exactly what the Buddha taught but
it's like the closest to what the Buddha
taught that still exists as a living
tradition and it's just become
enlightened In This Very life you know
the Buddha was a man he became
enlightened you can be enlightened like
him and just do it if you can and then
in Mahayana it just became more and more
you know more like mythological space

Buddhas and and just don't try to become enlightened in this life you know the Buddha said you should do that no that was one of his lower teachings his more advanced teachings is postpone it indefinitely until all beings are enlightened even though that's impossible so I mean some of the teachings of Mahayana it just they just kind of went off the deep end in my opinion but I shouldn't be spending a lot a lot of time discussing different philosophical differences between different schools of Buddhism because it would just take too long and we've already been going at this for a little

over two hours at this point so I'm just going to move on to the next question and this is from bodhisatta 969 and bodhisatta 969 says should we as right-wing Buddhists at least not left woke Buddhists use the 969 as a symbol and spread the movement everywhere and gather under the 969 of course I assume that the mainstream media is reporting on this movement is as almost always a lie that means nonviolence of course so the 969 movement is a movement in Burma and 969 represents the qualities of the nine qualities of the Buddha the six qualities of the dhama and the nine qualities of the manga that

are in the standard like Mantra that is
recited when one is reciting the
qualities of Buddha dama and sa so
that's where 969 comes from but mainly
in in Burma it is kind of movement to
keep Burma at least the ethnic Central
areas of Burma Buddhist which means to
resist Islam and that is considered to
be you know just racist and and
xenophobic and wrong and bad and
terrorism and all this kind of stuff and
it's not necessarily bad for a culture
to want to preserve
itself
so should we as right-wing Buddhists and
I'm not extremely right-wing I'm I'm

more or less of a Centrist when I take those tests you know where where you fit on the political Spectrum I'm usually pretty much near the center which I guess is appropriate for a Buddhist because that's the middle path between extremes and all that so should we use the 969 as a symbol and spread the movement everywhere and gather under the 969 well it's a matter of personal taste I mean I don't think that it's necessary and I don't think it's very realistic really that very many people are going to go with that especially since the 969 movement is either unheard of to Buddhists or they've you know they've

read the the media propaganda and
consider it to be like a terrorist
organization so yeah I don't
know I think just I mean the movement I
mean just real dhama just like tradition
not even necessarily traditionalist
dharm but like try to follow what the
Buddha actually
taught and there's people that will
appreciate that and people who will you
know they'll try to learn what the
Buddha really taught and and try to
follow that as best they can just D just
the poly
texts
so yeah I really don't think that the

969 movement is is likely to strike much traction in the west partly because most people don't know what it is or they've had their mind poisoned against it by mainstream

propagandists so there might just be a better way of going about it you know people might just like Flock to

venerable nanam in Slovenia as like this charismatic leader of like a mainstream like traditionalist Terra Buddhism

something like that might be more

realistic not that I'm singling out Nan mole because I think he's necessarily the

guy so I'm just going to move on to bodh 969 second question which is what do you

think of a joh sha and his teaching style maybe also in comparison to ajan and he has man here but I think maybe he means man or is there an aan man if there is an aan man I'm not exactly sure who he is aan man I've heard of so I mean I'm not really like super well-versed In tha monks although aan Chaw and aan manun are two of the ones historically that I I know something about

so what do I think of ajan Chaw and his teaching style I think he had a good teaching style P partly because it was based primarily on his own personal experience he wasn't just like

dogmatized just repeating what he read
in sutas which is generally the way burm
seatt work burm seatt are very dogmatic
and so I mean you cannot deviate from
the Orthodox
position um even if your own personal
experience deviates from it they will
prefer to follow the tradition they will
force fit their personal experience into
Orthodox tradition somehow because
Orthodox tradition is more authoritative
even than their own personal experience
in dhamma and meditation and so forth
but Ty monks aren't so much that way
they're less dogmatic in fact they're
less scholarly in general and so aan man
or aan cha I mean taught primarily from

his own experience just from the wisdom
that he acquired through practicing
dhama and that is valuable and good and
also aan

sha he would really work on the
weaknesses of his disciples like I've
said before if aan cha had a disciple
who was just terrified of ghosts he'd
make him go live in a cemetery he had
another disciple who he just didn't want
to associate with people he just wanted
to be a Hermit he'd send him to to one
of the busiest monasteries in town you
know the busiest aan cha Branch
Monastery in a city somewhere you had
some other monk who was very gregarious

got lonely easily he'd send them off
alone into a forest this kind of thing
and that's that's a good way of teaching
somebody also I think it was uh um Jack
cornfield said that he was when he was a
junior monk under aan cha he had a lot
of problems with sleepiness so aan cha
made him medic sitting at the edge of a
well where if he fell backwards it was
like 70t straight down and so that
worked like a

charm you know you just don't fall
asleep when you're meditating when
there's like a 70 foot vertical drop
just right behind your
butox so yeah I think aan cha was was
very wise and that's one of the main

reasons why he is you know he's like the founder or he's like probably at least half of Western monks are in the aan cha tradition and for good reason I think because aan cha just you know he had a good system that worked well for westerners as a general rule the burmes tend to be way more dogmatic in a medieval scholarly kind of way Scholastic kind of way that doesn't work so well for westerners as a general rule and uh compared to ajan mun I don't know about ajan man but aan mun um yeah ajan mun was I mean he sort of revived the Thai Forest tradition he was fierce I mean he apparently had psychic powers

so he could read your mind which would make it easier for him to help you but um I do think that aan Cha's style is preferable ajan manun you know he he was a chain smoker for example so he was literally a drug addict you know addicted to nicotine and just Fierce and for some people that works really well I guess aan Mahaba was a disciple of aan man who was also relatively Fierce and I I can appreciate a fierce teacher but an angry teacher not so much so they'd have to be fierce without being angry because anger obviously is frowned upon in Buddhism whereas a certain fierceness is is very skillful you know like the Marine Corps

drill instructor that just you know
fills you with you know fear of of
getting on his bad side kind of a thing
you know just wanting to please him or
whatever so yeah aan cha and his
teaching style definitely get two thumbs
up from me I got nothing bad to say
about aan

cha and so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from scolin who
changed his name to various other things
and now has returned home to the name
scolin or sko Dean and he asks strange
questions sometimes and this is one of
them in fact there's like three of them
and the first question is would you

kindly explain the lyrics to Love Potion
Number Nine which is a song from like
the late 50s or early
60s and it's my understanding this guy
was unlucky in love so he goes to a
gypsy and she gives him this love potion
and he drinks it and he just falls in
love with everybody and he winds up
getting in trouble by kissing a police
officer and I mean what's there to
explain it's like the Love Potion
probably should have been given to the
girl that he liked so that she'd fall in
love with him instead of him just
drinking it and falling in love with
everybody although if he gave it to a
girl he'd probably want to get her alone

somewhere before she started falling in love with you know everyone else around her but I mean there's really not much to explain I'm not exactly sure why scolin would ask me about this unless he thinks maybe there's some deeper meaning like maybe the Love Potion is poisonous or something I have no idea so I'm just going to move on to scadden second question thoughts on Pride and Prejudice and Zombies and so I mean that has to be two questions because Pride Prejudice and Zombies I mean it's not just a Unity here Pride and Prejudice it is the only Jane Austin novel I ever read I was living in a cave in Burma somebody sent

me this box of books which included I mean it was a woman that sent me this box of books books and so it had a lot of chick lit in it including Jean Austin's Pride and Prejudice so I did read it and it's a chick book but it's very well written Jane Austin I have to admit is one of the greatest authors in the English language I think she was very she was just a brilliant writer even though she was writing stuff that's mainly of interest to women so I guess that's pretty much all I got to say about Pride and Prejudice with regard to zombies I mean the main the main thing that I've taken away from

various exposures to zombies in like
video games and also in in movies and so
forth is that fast zombies are way worse
than slow zombies you're going to be
dealing with zombies deal with the slow
kind the fast kind like in World War
Z no that's not good you're in you're in
trouble when you got fast
zombies and I'm just going to move on
next question and this is the last
question boom very last question this is
from Yoshi Buie and Yoshi Bui says many
people believe there's no such thing as
karma how would you respond to that is
karma a theory a belief and is there any
evidence of it seems that if we think of

karma as volition will or mental state
and that everything that happens to us
is of our own doing then we may as well
believe in a God to simplify things
because a God is because a God is as
inexplainable unex explainable
non-pro a concept as karma for example
if a rock falls on you and kills you
what difference does it make in terms of
proof If you ascribe that to the work of
karma versus the work of God why not
just ascribe it to Randomness or bad
luck
instead so I mean there is sort of
self-contradiction in here there's a
mutually contradictory statement or the
first part of the statement contradicts

the second part where he's saying like
uh where is it seems that if we think of
karma as
volition Let's see we may we may as well
believe in God because a God is as
inexplainable or non-pro a concept as
karma but I mean how is God as
inexplainable or non-pro as
volition
obviously volition I mean within a
samsaric empirical context volition
exists pretty obviously much more so
than Yahweh sitting on a throne up in
heaven
somewhere
so first you start off with fairly

obvious examples of karma which like
force of habit the autopilot that's
essentially what karma is it's it's the
momentum of our mental states which
generally serves as an autopilot it just
pushes us through S Sor and I mean it's
hard to deny that most people are on
autopilot most of the time so that's
just like a superficial fairly obvious
manifestation of karma that it's just
force of habit that is just pushing us
through life through force of
habit and then you can take it a little
deeper where it's like there are like
scientific studies that show that people
who are like worried about being mugged
are more likely to get mugged people

that worry about getting sick or
whatever are more more likely to get
sick although I don't know if they they
like filter out the possibility that
they just know that it runs in their
family and that's why they're worried
about it that kind of
thing but I mean a lot of karma I mean
to just this completely superficial
Normie I mean it would have to be a
matter of Faith until you get deep
enough in your practice to realize that
we really are creating our
reality and there's not much point in
trying to persuade somebody of that if
they're just not ready to understand it

yet um

but we are creating our reality and for the most part we're creating it like subconsciously we're not fully aware that we are creating our reality just like we're creating our dreams at night and like I mentioned earlier I mean some people have nightmares even though we no longer believe that our our dreams are implanted into our mind at night by some God that that our own mind is creating these dreams and it's creating nightmares just because that's kind of where the person is at and it's creating our our outward life I mean someone wants to be a materialist they just want to insist on being a materialist they

can do that and a lot of people do that
especially in the west and it's it's
just kind of
superficiality in I mean it's like
spiritual bankruptcy essentially whereas
I mean if you're able to get deeper into
it you're able to like see through the
veil a little more clearly you realize
this is not reality even science will
admit that this what we are seeing is
just a construction of
mind they would say that it's based on
something deeper than that that we can't
see but I mean they can't prove
that I mean materialism can't be proven
any more than belief in God or or belief

that karma is creating our
reality it's just that we it's just our
cultural conditioning in the West so we
just assume that it's some kind of
obvious fact which it
isn't but I mean the deeper you go into
it the more like weird synchronicities
start happening just like weird
coincidences start happening and also
just you start being able to see below
the surface a little better and then
you're you're more inclin to accept that
really this universe is a manifestation
of Consciousness even some science like
like theoretical physics is going with
the idea that it's it takes like a
perceiving Consciousness to single out

one possibility among this this cloud of possibilities to sort of crystallize this world into like this concrete system that we see we're not even seeing it directly we're seeing it indirectly through a kind of inference I guess

so I mean science and there there were books written like in the 70s and 80s like the da of physics and so forth that was trying to really push this idea that science is actually getting closer and closer and closer to Eastern philosophy and it kind of is or at least it did for a

while but I mean with regard to beliefs

again like some of the earliest Buddhist texts say don't believe any anything which means you know don't positively disbelieve anything either it's just accept something as a working hypothesis if it helps you to to be a happier like more virtuous better person then fine just go with that don't cling to it though just use it as a working hypothesis and you're better off not firmly believing anything because that's just

attachment so in Buddhism the the convenient working hypothesis of one of many is that there is karma in which case our own mental states are conditioning the reality that we live in

another convenient working hypothesis in Buddhism is that the founder of the system said Buddha was a fully enlightened being there's no way to absolutely prove that but it is a convenient working hypothesis which most Buddhists just cling to as some kind of gospel truth but they couldn't prove it and if you point that out to them they might start getting upset but that's just the way people are in general with regard to any beliefs that they have you challenge somebody's beliefs you're challenging them so let's see did I answer the question did I answer the very last

question see many people believe there's
no such thing as karma how would you
respond to that well people can believe
whatever they whatever they please I
guess whatever they consider to be most
likely to be correct and in the WB
just because scientism has been the
reigning like world view with regard to
explaining reality then just by default
they get conditioned into
scientism but let's see is karma a
theory a belief and is there any
evidence of it well yeah there's plenty
of evidence for I mean The Superficial
stuff just The Power of Habit at driving
us through life is like on autopilot
that's that is a manifestation of karma

so at least with regard to The
Superficial stuff yeah there's plenty of
evidence more more evidence than maybe
for God Almighty for example but I mean
any Theory or belief I mean science is
is a it's made up of theories it's
beliefs it's a belief system any
religion is a belief system any kind of
system that you use to navigate samsara
is a kind of theoretical belief
system there's no way to prove Jack
didly unless it's just completely
self-contained in your mind like like a
a theorem of euklid or something maybe
you could prove you could maybe prove
within your own mind that you can

Checkmate an opponent in chess when the only pieces still on the board are his King your king and a bishop and a knight of yours that maybe you could prove that just logically but you cannot prove that physical matter exists you cannot prove that scientism is really true it's based on induction more than deduction you can't really prove anything with regard to any supposed external universe so you just choose what you consider to be most likely in good faith and go with that and use it just as a working hypothesis something held loosely in the hand not clung to because once you start clinging to it it becomes a hindrance doesn't

matter what it is like aan sha used to
say even right view becomes wrong view
if you cling to

it so just keep it at the the level
whatever whatever Theory you think is
most

useful you just accept it as a working
hypothesis and don't cling to it don't
just vehemently angrily insist upon it
to other

people and that's it I'm
done that's

it so like like I usually almost always
say I should let see how how do I put
this I almost always never say this at
the beginning when I should I almost

always say it at the end that if you
have any questions you think I can
answer feel free to include them in the
comments below this video

especially about ter Buddhism early
Buddhism Buddhism in general Eastern
philosophy in general philosophy even
more in general meditation monasticism
Burma me personally that kind of stuff
I'm generally pretty good at like some
Western

literature I'm fairly good at like
somebody somebody locked out and I
actually did read Pride and Prejudice by
Jane Austin so I was actually able to
comment on that but I haven't read
everything and and people asking me

what's your opinion about myON Schmick
it's like I don't know and I generally
do not watch a lot of like dhama videos
that kind of thing I just for some
reason it just it does not appeal to me
so that's it and uh hit the like button
smash the son of a [__] if you feel so
inclined and uh subscribe if you haven't
already and uh I guess uh be happy

okay then hello and welcome to question
and answer number

133 I am your host P basa and you guys
don't notice this but I just got almost
20 minutes into this video and then had
to stop and just scrap it and start over
because somebody asked me a question
about a sua that I read a week ago and
then had pretty much forgotten what it
was about and so I get to that question
and it's like I don't remember so I'm
going to have to stop the video in order
to go back and read this sua so that I
can make some kind of reasonable comment
about it other than I didn't read
it so there is that and uh before I

start answering questions I would just
like to show my beverage with the little
paper umbrella show the emergency backup
beverage with the emergency backup
little paper umbrella and also I would
like to shout out to somebody called
shumo shumoo I assume it's just one
person and not two people each called
shumo who this morning cash at me a
generous donation and there is no like
message thingy on cash app that I have
seen I mean I didn't even know how to
work cash app I had my my sweetheart do
that part for me so since I couldn't I
couldn't like respond respond on the
cash app thing I'm responding now and
saying that your generosity is

appreciated may you earn much Merit by
doing such

things and since I'm talking about my
sweetheart might as well point out that
I am wearing a waist coat right now I
don't know see a waste coat which I've
never owned before I read about them in
like Charles Dickens novels but I got it
for Valentine's Day this is one of the
things that happens when you have a
woman in your life that if I didn't have
any woman in my life I wouldn't have
flowers behind me I wouldn't have stuff
on the walls probably like bare walls
I'd probably be wearing gray cotton
sweats every single episode and I'd be

fine with that but now I've got more clothes than I've ever owned in my life probably and most of it was not bought by me and in addition to dressing me nice and putting flowers and other decorations in the background she also cooks really well and uh sometimes even cleans up after me and in addition to to the shirt and the waist coat that I got for Valentine's Day I also got some special underwear which I am wearing but I'm not going to show them to anybody other than to my sweetheart and we've got fairly large number of questions today including two questions that I somehow spaced off last

time and didn't answer including the one
that I I had to like stop the video
almost 20 minutes into it in order to go
back and read the the
suum because it is kind of an obscure
sutum so I guess I should just uh start
answering questions then which means I
gotta
find okay so I've got to answer these
some of these questions I'm answering
for the second time and the asymmetry of
my beard is bothering me ah
man I maybe I should just I don't know
just hold I hold my head at like this
angle like this so that you don't really
notice I could just do the whole Q&A

like

this but I'm not going to so anyways the
the first missed question that I should
have answered last week but didn't is
from dhama river and dhama river says I
have studied both Terra and Mahayana
Buddhism I respect both but I don't
understand what is the point of the
bodis satv vow it seems like a trap to
get the person into a karmic contract
that will keep them rolling around in
samsara indefinitely it's a binding
agreement to hey one of the dogs just
coughed or something it's a binding
agreement stop
it it's a binding agreement to a
seemingly impossible task because there

is no such thing as liberating an
infinite number of beings by a person
who is also possessed of no self or
anata

it's a shame that Mahayana monks are
required to take the bodh satv because
there is so much wisdom in Mahayana but
in this particular aspect terraa makes
more sense because it encourages
practitioners to liberate themselves
first in your opinion what is the point
of the bodh satva how do you understand
it in terms of Liberation and all of a
sudden I'm remembered of the I think
it's called the Navas sua of the suata
which points out pretty much what um

dama River here is pointing out that if you're going to help people across a river it's I mean you got to be Adept at crossing the river you can't be helping people to cross the river while you're being washed Downstream by the current but I do agree with dhama river that Mahayana Buddhism in its buddhis vows is indulging in some sloppy reasoning that presumably samsara has been in existence for an infinite length of time and there are still an infinite number of suffering beings at least in a conventional sense of suffering beings but ultimately they don't really exist not not like at the ultimate level and so if an infinite period of

time has already elapsed and still there are an infinite number of suffering beings that's a pretty good indication that there's all always going to be an infinite number of suffering beings so yeah I think the Buddha himself the historical godma Buddha would have denounced the whole bodh V concept um let's see the question part though let's see where's the question mark in your opinion what is the point of the bodh how do you understand it in terms of Liberation well I think in the case of the bodh Val um compassion just overwhelmed reason and uh they just committed

themselves to like an impossible task in that I mean glorification of the Buddha started before Mahayana even in terat attacks there's a fair amount of glorification of the Buddha I think originally the Buddha was just an Arun and he was saying you know I became fully enlightened you can become fully enlightened too by following my teachings at least there's a good chance that you'll become fully enlightened by following my teachings and you should strive for that in this very life and I mean according to early Buddhist philosophy the Buddha really is no wiser than any of his enlightened disciples because according to Abid dama

at least PA or wisdom is a synonym for
amoha or lack of delusion so when you
have zero delusion you have maxed out
out on wisdom and any enlightened being
has zero delusion and therefore any
enlightened being has maxed out on
transcendental wisdom anyway maybe not
with regard to worldly wisdom like
cleverness perceptiveness that kind of
thing but where where it really
counts like Supra mundane wisdom the
lonliest dry vision arant is going to be
just as wise as a sama samb Buddha
because both of them have zero
delusion so anyways uh glorification of
the Buddha um like through jota stories

and just I mean you can see it all
through the
sutras um it's just this human Trend to
glorify one's the founder of one's
tradition and

So eventually before very long really
the Buddha was just considered to be
just like orders of magnitude above of
an ordinary enlightened being and the
Mahayana Buddhists they were very they
were more into devotionism
and they just kind of took the ball and
ran with it and they're saying you know
it's so much more noble and glorious to
become a fully enlightened Buddha that
to become an ordinary fully enlightened
Arun is the inferior vehicle the

deficient vehicle and so they just start
dissing the actual historical teachings
of the actual his hisorical goab
Buddha the Buddha says strive for
enlightenment In This Very life and then
later Mahayana budas are saying nope
postpone Enlightenment
indefinitely and it's just not a very
good idea especially since it's
extremely unlikely that they're going to
liberate all beings unless they follow
the teachings of Huang in the Sutra of
Huang a Chinese Mahayana text who short
circuits the whole thing
by saying when you become enlightened
you look around and you see that

everyone else is enlightened too the
problem is is that when we are
unenlightened we're looking at the world
through unenlightenment colored glasses
and so we see an unenlightened world
full of unenlightened beings but when
you become fully enlightened you just
transcend all that you wake up from the
dream

so I mean it's like somebody vowing to
stay asleep stay in the dream until they
have liberated all of the dream beings
in their dream when really you're
liberating them by just waking
up so anyways getting back to the
question in your opinion what's the
point of the bodh I think it's sort of

like leftist politics or Progressive
politics nowadays where just like full
gush of compassion is just overwhelming
the reasoning capacity of certain

Buddhist

philosophers I think I mean if you want
a better answer than that you're going
to have to ask a like a Mahayana

Buddhist because I'm just seeing it from
the outside in just this kind of seeing
it objectively and I'm seeing it less
compassionately than a Mahayana

Buddhist

so I mean some Mahayana Buddhists they
think that after you come enlightened
you can just remain a bodh satva which

is kind of trampling underfoot the original meaning of the poly term bodhisatta which was just someone who is destined to become a Buddha and as soon as you become enlightened you're not a bodhisatta anymore whereas in Mahayana apparently they've got fully enlightened bodh sanas that just somehow stay in Samsara out of compassion and it may be that kind of thing that is uh more in harmony with any semblance of sense in the bodh vs that even after you become enlightened you voluntarily somehow remain in samsara to liberate all these ultimately non-existent beings but I think your best bet would be to ask a Mahayana Buddhist and

they'll give you a more sympathetic answer to their own tradition and so I'm just going to move on to dma River's second question which I didn't skip over last time because he he included it recently for this episode so he says do you get the impression that nowadays Buddhist monasteries are turning into liberal Social Clubs with a Buddhist flavor to them and then sort of as a commentary he says and the monks and the monk that gets the most support is the one that caters to the desires of the woke crowd and not the unpopular monk that teaches the real

dhama and I guess

I guess it is kind of two questions it's sort of like question two and then question 2a because it's they're obviously like linked and related so anyways I'll just attend to the to the first question mark first do you get the impression that nowadays Buddhist monasteries are turning into liberal Social Clubs with a Buddhist flavor to them some are and some have been for years I mean there haven't really been terraa Buddhist monasteries in the West um that were like run by westerners until like the 1980s at the very earliest so I mean it's it's kind of a new thing there have been temples before

then like Thai temples Burmese temples
shonkan temples um bana Society is maybe
the first Terra Forest Monastery in in
America and it was run by the monk who
with all due respect was like the chief
C P year at the the weara book service
so I mean they don't really follow vinia
as far as I know at least certain rules
they don't but I'm I'm digressing and
we've got like 48 questions so I
shouldn't digress very much I should
just answer questions here should do my
damn it

job so some Buddhist monasteries
especially like Western Buddhist
monasteries Buddhist monasteries fre Ed

by westerners which often have Western
monks and western
beunis western nuns
um yeah it's it's sort of a complicated
phenomenon where first of all
most Buddhists of European ancestry most
people who consider themselves to be
Buddhists who have European ancestry or
just non-asian ancestry they tend to be
left of center politically and
culturally because conservative
Americans tend to go with
Christianity so it's sort of like the
progressive types the liberal the
liberal types which I mean liberalism in
the in America now is essentially
progressivism cultural Marxism that kind

of

thing so I mean most of the western lay
supporters are going to be liberal or
Ultra

liberal and when the monks are being
supported by the these people they have
to be

diplomatic at I mean they've got to be
circumspect at best and you know
sometimes kind of even diplomatic where
you're just kind of dancing around
certain issues avoiding certain
issues

so some monks just can't manage this and
so they're plunged in the The Dragon's
Lair of some leftist Metropolis like

Seattle Washington or Portland or one of
the big cities in in California or like
Barry Massachusetts places like that
where you've got lots of ultra liberal
types and some of the monks just out of
a desire not to offend their listeners
and to get support because monks are not
allowed to support themselves they have
to rely upon the generosity of lay
people sort of like blanch Dubois on a
streetheart of a street car Named Desire
you know I've always relied upon the
generosity of
Stranges monks are like that to some
degree and so some monks that maybe
don't have as firm of a vertebral column
as others will kind of Pander you know

they'll be welcoming in the lgbtq
retreat group and this kind of thing and
maybe even going so far as to promote
mindfulness of white privilege
meditation and this kind of
thing and uh I mean some monks just
really have just they really go for it
one of the most famous Western monks
nowadays is biku body who even goes so
far as to promote female reproductive
Health which includes abortion I mean
that's like a euphemism for abortion the
very fact that they have to use a
euphemism indicates that even some of
these people know that it's kind of a a
cedd kind of a thing especially from a

Buddhist point of view because from a
Buddhist point of view abortion is
murder at least from a Terra Buddhist
point of view I mean that is just
uncontroversial anyone who denies that
is just ignorant of the texts any monk
who even talks a woman into getting an
abortion is guilty of being an
accomplice to murder and he is
excommunicated for the rest of his life
so if any woman took biku's advice with
regard to his promotion of female
reproductive rights and got an abortion
bbot would be excommunicated he would be
par of J he'd be kicked out of the songa
for Life
automatically so there are some strict

serious monks that remain traditionalist
and

conservative um usually monks are more
conservative than lay people um simply
because they are following the tradition
they are

traditionalists but as a I said most
western lay

Buddhists who are of non-asian
ancestry uh they tend to lean leftwards
politically and

culturally and so some monks just you
know they're trying to be liked and
supported and just brutal honesty will
get them just not

supported so they have to be careful I

mean my advice to any Western man who wants to be a monk go to Asia stay in Asia as long as you can stand it and then if you come back you got I mean it's more important to stay true to the tradition than to make sure you're going to get enough support you're better off going hungry sometimes because you have said that you think the bikuni order is is like fraudulent it's not real it's invalid or you think abortion is murder or I mean the te point out that the text say it not just your opinion it's right there in the poly texts that you don't want to have special Retreats teaching mindfulness of white privilege special Retreats for people of color or like gay

people or something I mean most terraa
Buddhists in America are in fact people
of color and this fact is just ignored
for the most part by these Ultra liberal
lay Buddhists but most terava Buddhists
in America are brown skinned people from
Southeast and South Asia they are
immigrants who brought their terraa
Buddhism with
them

so I guess I answered that question I
mean some Buddhist monasteries are
turning into liberal Social Clubs with a
Buddhist flavor and uh yeah I would do
well to find monasteries that are not
like that and the the Dharma centers are

even they're even worse

I mean back when I came to America in

2011 I was relatively shocked to see

that I mean it was like left leaning

Boomers who really could not

differentiate Dharma from their leftist

cultural conditioning they just combined

them into one group and just assumed

that the Buddha himself would be

perfected in political correctness which

he was not

but that's just kind of like the secular

approach to Buddhism that most western

lay Buddhists

take and I suppose I should just move on

to the next question mark which

is as follows and the monk that gets the

most support is the one that caters to the desires of the woke crowd and not the unpopular monk that teaches the real dhama yeah and there is actually a case of this in the in the ancient poly text this is not a new thing that Western cultural Marxist

Buddhists Buddhists didn't invent this sort of thing it's been around almost from the beginning there's a story in the text of a serious monk you know a monk who's practicing correctly who who goes for Ms through this Village and he keeps his eyes downcast he's not like cracking jokes with the lay people you know he's he's not making acquaintances

with the lay people he's aloof and detached just keeping his eyes downcast accepting the bowl accepting food into his bowl in silence and then passing through and some of the lay people were like disgusted with this monk thinking that he was just some stuck up [—] of a monk because their Village monk he was friendly to everybody he'd just hang out come over to their house and just hang out you know he was like their buddy and the Buddha points out that really it's the the silent Monk Is the good

one that you're not I mean a monk is not supposed to be making friends in the village and it's probably easier in the

Buddhist time when a monk was just just wandering you know it's like he's just seeing unfamiliar faces all the time if he even bothers to look up whereas if a monk is staying in the same place then it's I have to admit it is hard not to make friends with lay people but monks aren't supposed to do that at least that's what it says in the texts and so I do think that you're better off just being honest you know like ajan tanero from the beginning to his credit he was saying that these new beunis just it's not a valid ordination procedure they're not real bonies maybe he's changed his mind on

the issue maybe he's he's received so much flak from that that he may have changed his mind I don't know but there'll be a little about aan tanero in subsequent oh the very next question in fact this this question also I skipped over somehow I spaced it off last time this is from Co of action Cad zida and he says I came across a very confusing suta please explain its meeting and I just happen to have it right here let see where is it yeah it's the kalakuta from the angur nikaya angur nikaya 4.24 and it's not a very long Su but I don't want to read the whole thing I'll just read uh like the first paragraph the

first substantial paragraph once you get
past the

introduction the blessed one said monks
whatever in the cosmos with its Davis
maras and brahmas its generations with
their contemplatives and brahans royalty
and common people is seen heard sense
cognized attained sought after pondered
by the intellect that do I know whatever
in the Cosmos with its Davis maras and
brahmas its generations with their
contemplatives and brahans their royalty
and common people is seen heard sensed
cognized attained sought after pondered
by the intellect that I directly know
that has been realized by the the dag

but in the Daga it has not been established so I come back and get the questions all back together okay so it's essentially say that the Buddha knows things the way a lay person or like an unenlightened person knows things but in the Buddha he knows it but it's not established which means there's no clinging to it there's no Karma I mean it's just like phenomena arising and passing away with the the mind of the Buddha simply observing and just not clinging to anything not interpreting anything really not getting involved it's just holding the knowledge in an open hand instead of like grasping it in a in a clenched fist kind of a

thing so I mean again you have to think at different levels of reality I've I try to talk about this kind of stuff and and usually it fails that first of all trying to explain an enlightened point of view to unenlightened people is like trying to explain colors to a blind person unless they have some special talent some in intuition maybe like latent memories from a past life when they could see or some such then maybe something will

click and I'm not claiming to be enlightened by like insinuating with that statement but I mean it takes a capacity for multi-dimensional thought

when somebody is like trying to explain everything to to fit everything onto a two-dimensional plane of knowledge so to speak you can't really understand

Enlightenment that way I mean you can't even begin to to get an intuition of it really so let's see

here yeah I mean the the meaning of it is that it's like the same kind of thoughts can arise in an enlightened being it's just that the the same kind of like

samsaric Quagmire isn't occurring in the mind of the enlightened being that it's just their this it's like objects in front of a mirror they're there so long as they're in front of the mirror and

then as soon as they're they're not in
front of the mirror the mirror they're
not in the mirror anymore it's just
there's no attachment at all it's just
nature taking its course no more will
like volition no more karma that's like
creating friction and clinging and all
this kind of

messiness so I think I'm just going to
move on to seal of action CAD Zena's
next question and he asked four
questions which is not exactly
transgress it because as I say I spaced
off the first one in the previous Q&A
and didn't answer it there and so covac
is milking this and getting away with

asking four

questions but I do not encourage that

and uh so don't do

it so Co of action CAD Zena says what do

you do when you are having a low

day well I mean I have been

significantly depressed in my life not

real recently

but my mind does expand and contract you

know it's like contraction of spirit

expansion of spirit sort of like in a

more exaggerated form it would be like

being bipolar or manic depressive as it

used to be

called um you know these mental

disabilities or whatever you want to

call them like being bipolar or manic

depressive they're or schizophrenic even
or you know there's all these different
things that can happen to a person's
mind that are considered to be
pathological I mean they're mainly just
exaggerations of a normal State you know
it's like everybody's on this this
spectrum so to speak autism comes to
mind but everyone's kind of on a
spectrum with regard to all these
different mental qualities and it's sort
of like the outliers are the ones that
have the the disability whereas you know
there there are people just write at the
verge of like being obsessive compulsive
some people are not obsessive compulsive

at all but I mean you can have tendencies in that direction but not be clinically significant like I took a test for obsessive compulsive disorder and you know I did get like um you know I did score you know above zero on it but it was not enough to be clinically significant so anyways what do you do when you're having a low day if I'm going through a period of low days then I found that sleeping a little extra helps and also accomplishing something every day even if it's just cleaning your cave you know just just accomplish something you know just clean the house wash your your laundry or something just so you can you don't feel like the whole

day was just wasted because that makes
it

worse um but aside from that I mean just
be aware that it's just nature taking
its

course um a low day I mean I'm not
exactly sure what he means by a low day
than just sort of a kind of a depressed
day it's that's different from one of
those toe stubbing days where
everything's going wrong that can be a
just a [_] up mess of a day too and I
guess the way you deal with it might be
a little different you might have more
capacity for mindfulness because I have
found that when my spirit contracts like

in a state of relative depression it's
much more difficult to meditate and it's
much more difficult to be
mindful and otherwise being mindful
that's the Panacea that's the cure of
all ills in terra Buddhism mindfulness
just note it Let It Go observe it detach
from it it's not
you but you can still remind yourself of
that even if you're not doing it at a
very deep level just remind yourself I
mean it's just nature taking its course
you know I mean even at a like a
physiological materialistic level it's
just some sort of chemical imbalance
going
on so I guess I answer that question

so I'm going to move on to seov action
seat Z's next question which is can you
please explain why Maha molana allowed
himself to be beaten to a pulp in the
end after seeing his past life it might
explain why the thugs were ultimately
coming for him but I don't get why he
went along with it well according to the
story um some non- Buddhist
athetics um apparently they hired some
Hitmen to to beat up Maha molana to just
get rid of him essentially to beat him
to death and they came after him twice
and both times he used his psychic
powers he had he was the the disciple
the great disciple who was foremost in

psychic powers Maham mogana was psychic
AF he just he could do all these
miraculous Feats and so forth and so
twice he he was able to just fly away
just get away from them and then he had
like this past life uh memory
of doing some horrible thing I think it
was like killing his parents in some Far
distant life and it was such weighty
Cara that it was still sort of like a
ball and chain on him to some degree and
even though he was fully enlightened
already and wasn't making any new Karma
was going to pass into partana at death
for re enlightened reasons that maybe we
cannot fathom assuming that the story
really happened this way he just decided

Well it's just uh my just this Karma has to be resolved it's gonna they're just going to keep trying until they succeed so he might as well just uh bow his head you know GG well played and uh reach his part in bana it was just time for him to go he just realized that's just the natural natural course that was trying to take place and he was sort of interfering with it by getting away from these murderers every time so I'm going to move on to seac and C

zona's fourth question which is not entirely transgressive because I skipped over one of his questions last time and

that is do you know if Mara being the ruler of a specific sensual Heavenly realm is mentioned in the sutas or if it is a later commentarial material well I have read that Mara really is not the ruler of the the Heavenly Realm of the the Davis who Delight in the in the constructions of others that is it's the highest Heaven Realm in the sensual sphere any higher than that and you stop being Davis and start being brahmas and I have read that Mara really isn't the ruler of that heaven realm that he sort of um made like a pirate raid I mean I can't remember the exact way that it was described but Mara just sort of like claimed some territory

there that that I mean it was sort of like he he colonized it or something he conquered it and this he's just sort of got this uh Insurgent group or whatever you know sort of like the Insurgent groups in Burma that have defied the government and have St have staked out their own territory that's kind of the way Mara and his three voluptuous daughters have done in the realm of the devas who Delight in the creations of others um but I don't think that it's mentioned in the sutas I do not recall coming across that anywhere in fact I mean in early Buddhism the whole 31 PLS of existence scheme had not been fully

worked out yet and Mara was considered to be you know he's like the the bad daa and they really didn't nail down exactly where he was living so I mean most of the dvas that are known by name live in tawa timsa which was like where the the viic pantheon lived I mean that was like the traditional just the heaven and then it got multiplied into all these different Realms and uh yeah I do not think that it had been worked out yet in the mythology exactly um what heaven realm Mara lived in or how he got there that kind of thing so I'm just going to move on to

the next question this is from

Austin and Austin has been on a kind of empiricism kick lately he's been asking asking questions about empiricism and uh so he's or maybe even just theory of knowledge he's asking epistemological questions and so Austin is sort of following up on a followup of a previous answer to a previous question how does experience justify itself to argue that all knowledge comes from experience

besid Enlightenment you would need a a way to verify this claim without assuming it is true

beforehand if you use experience to

prove that experience is the only source of knowledge you create a circular argument what say you and then he's got like a footnote here rationalists like day cart argue that some knowledge for example mathematical truths logic or innate ideas is independent of experience for example we don't need experience to know that $2 + 2 = 4$ or that contradictions cannot both be true some knowledge like ethics metaphysics or linguistic structures may not be directly derived from sensory experiences but rather from reasoning Intuition or any cognitive structures well it depends on what you mean by

knowledge first I mean like true

knowledge like real knowledge not just

belief not even true belief but actual

knowledge can only come from experience

because that is

Enlightenment the only true knowledge is

knowledge of

nirvana nibana in paully the everything

else is just symbolic constructions

which are

beliefs

so how does experience justify itself it

doesn't bother to justify anything why

the [_] should it even bother to

justify anything reality is there why

should reality have to justify anything

why should it have to prove
itself so anyways Austin continues here
to argue I'm I'm reading this the second
time to argue that all knowledge comes
from experience besides Enlightenment
well that's all knowledge doesn't come
from experience besides Enlightenment
because all knowledge is Enlightenment
everything else is just belief it may be
conventionally true conventional truth
so in a way it's kind of conven
knowledge like to know two and two is
four Carson City is the capital of
Nevada conventional knowledge but it's
not ultimately
true so you would need a way to verify
this claim without assuming is true

beforehand okay so let's let's do a little a little speech on theory of knowledge also known as epistemology at the turn of the 20th century there were three main theories with regard to how do we know the truth what is truth so the main one is the correspondence theory that is like science it's like a statement is true if it corresponds to some objective matter of fact like the statement the apple is on the table is true if and only if the Apple really is on the table then there was the coherence Theory which was championed by people like FH Bradley and

FH Bradley was saying that a statement
is true

if and only if it is in harmony with
every other statement that has already
been perceived as

true so the apple is on the table is

true if and only if it is in harmony

with all of the other perceptions that

you consider to be true so it's like a

subjective psychological construction

and then there was a third theory that

was championed by William James called

pragmatism which is it's true if it

works and if it's stops working then it

stops being true and that one kind of

fell by the wayside and almost everybody

goes with the correspondence theory of

Truth nowadays which is it's a statement
is true if it corresponds to some
objective matter of fact but I think the
correspondence theory of Truth Works
only with

Enlightenment that all other knowledge
so-called which isn't real knowledge
it's just conventional like virtual
knowledge goes with the coherence Theory
which is it's true if it's not
contradicted by anything else you
consider to be
true

so how does Nirvana justify itself how
does knowledge of Nirvana justify itself
it doesn't not that I know of at least

not in this like um with regard to
justifying its own truth
value I just I mean some people are just
delusional they think they're
enlightened when they really aren't and
there's really not much you can do about
that anyways I'm just going to move on
to Austin's next question which is
Buddhism does not claim moral laws exist
independently of experience so
theoretically I could compassionately
kill someone to prevent greater harm
question mark so long as I don't have
negative mental States because of what
I'm Mor moral justified in doing so
question mark well it sounds good in
theory but the reality is that if you're

going to kill somebody I mean you know
you know that you're killing somebody
and just that knowledge that volition to
kill somebody regardless of any
justifications or rationalizations you
can come up with you can say you know
it's like you're putting them out of
their misery or it's going to save 10
other people by killing this one that
kind of thing still it's GNA have an
effect on your mind it's G to have this
subconscious karmic effect where you
know that you are depriving this
sentient being of life and even though
you can justify it at The Superficial
level still at a deeper level it's going

to have a karmic effect that you might
be oblivious to at the
time so I noticed I'm waving my arms
around I think it's the waste coat the
waste coat is causing me to wave my arms
around a lot cuz it's like a vest so I
got like freedom of arm motion or
something

anyways let's see Buddhism does not
claim moral laws exist independently of
experience yeah it's it's a matter of
human psychology or just psychology in
general that certain actions have
certain effects on the
mind and certain
volitions I mean they have certain
qualities and the volition to kill

somebody is always going to have a
certain amount of negative volition
which is Bad

Karma but I mean sometimes like a lay
person especially this is something that
I I bring it up every once in a while
that only a monk can really afford to be
a saint that if you want to follow
Buddhist ethics perfectly renounce the
world for example if you've got a family
you need to protect you couldn't you
wouldn't really be worthy of of the word
man if you just refused to rescue your
child from a predator because you didn't
want to harm the
predator or you refuse to delouse your

child's hair because you didn't want to
kill the poor

like that kind of a thing you're better
off not having a family not having any
kind of social or like familial

obligations renounce the World Go off
into a forest and be a

saint I mean lay people that want to
follow Buddhist ethics

perfectly is it's not very realistic

maybe if you're lucky you know you just
got a family that's never threatened by
anything dangerous or any such thing you
know you can just be like the the holy
fool like uh Prince Michigan and dov's
novel The Idiot but even Prince Michigan
I mean he did dislike people some

sometimes he forgave them eventually but
he still disliked them at
times

so yeah I mean theoretically you could
compassionately kill someone to prevent
greater harm theoretically you could fly
through the sky

too but as a general rule it doesn't
work out that way so I wouldn't go
around compassionately killing people
just on the going with the idea that so
long as you're doing it compassionately
you're not doing anything wrong I mean
look at leftist politics I mean maybe
the people at the top are just ruthless
and

Machiavellian in a lot of their thinking
but a lot of the like the college
educated white women in the west you
know they're going along with
Conformity but also just compassion
unrefined feminine sentiment and it
results in making things
worse so trying to kill
compassionately um I mean trying to do
something humanely except that you're
going to make Bad Karma you know you're
GNA let's say you're going to take full
responsibility for you and your family
eating meat and so you're going to raise
chickens you're going to raise your own
chickens and so that you know that the
chickens will be raised and killed more

humanely than the the hormonal
monstrosities grown in these warehouses
by and on factory farms so I mean it's
not like you're doing anything really
good I mean there's some goodness mixed
in I mean it's all Shades of Gray but
you're still killing the chickens I mean
you may do it very humanely you might
give them an over overdose of some
opiate so they just kind of die smiling
and hugging themselves and rocking back
and forth but still I mean there is no
way of
cheating ethics or cheating Karma that
still there's going to be effects even
if you don't think they're going to be

effects and don't want there to be
effects still there's going to be
effects so I'm just going to move on to
Austin's third

question how do Buddhists derive an is
from an ought well it goes the other way
around they derive the ought from the is
just like I was talking if you do the
certain action then there's going to be
like negative consequences and therefore
you ought not perform that action if you
don't want those negative consequences
to some degree a lay person does well to
be a stoic that you just have to own
your actions and accept okay I'm doing
this act it's going to cause negative
consequences and I'm just going to face

those negative consequences with
fortitude a certain amount of stoicism
is very valuable for a Buddhist lay
person who cannot afford or is not is
not in a position to be a perfected
saint you just got to toughen up a bit
and have some backbone and just when
when the negative consequences finally
reach me I'll face them with equinity or
at least as much equinity as I can
muster so how do Buddhist derive an is
from an ought it's it's the other way
around they derive the ought from the
is far as I mean otherwise I don't fully
understand the question I'm not sure
exactly what Austin is referring

to so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from the
sabur which might be more than one
person might be only one person and the
sabur says or
say thank you for answering about not
killing bad people but if one doesn't
react do we just sit back and get
enslaved by for example no I guess that
is the New World Order all evil needs to
succeed is that good people do nothing
do we get bad karma for reacting to evil
or bad karma for not doing your duty by
defending your family it seems like
Catch 22 incidentally I'm only one
person oh there there you go the sabur
is just one person maybe he's referring

to all of his organs as sort of a a
synergistic

hole well this is just a continuation of
the previous question I guess or the
question before

that see if one doesn't re act do we
just sit back and get enslaved well I
mean if you want to be a saint and never
do anything wrong renounce the world and
go off into a forest and meditate sit
under a tree wear

Rags beg for your food silently in the
streets because if you're going to be
living in the world you're going to have
to do negative things sometimes like
defending your family maybe Defending

Your Country defending yourself

Defending Your Home

like I got a glock in my nightstand next to my bed and if somebody breaks into the house there's a good chance I'm going to shoot that person and then I'm just going to have to accept well that's some weighty Karma that I just did I'm going to have to face that sooner or later I suppose but still it's better I mean I would prefer that to having somebody break into the house and do who knows what to my woman or to me or or to just even steal stuff I mean you just can't tolerate that kind of thing if you are taking

responsibility for a family and a
home

so yeah if if you want to be a perfected
Saint renounce the world that's that's
my best advice to you all evil needs to
succeed is that good people do nothing
but if good people are good enough then
there's not going to be a whole lot of
evil going around so it's I mean having
good karma means that there's going to
be less bad things happening to you
that's just the way Karma works the more
bad stuff you do the more bad stuff gets
done to you and of course you don't have
complete control over that some of it
subconscious stuff some of it's residual

from the distant past that kind of thing
but at least you're going to reduce it
by just living a virtuous
life so do we get bad karma for reacting
to evil or Bad Karma for not doing your
duty from the Buddhist point of view
inaction is morally neutral you never do
anything wrong by just not doing
anything you could sit on the bank of a
lake and watch a pretty girl drown I
mean there's there's cases in the
texts I I hope this never really
happened cases in the text like examples
of the monk that will sit on the bank of
the River or the or the the lake and
watch a pretty girl drown simply because
it's against the rules for mon to touch

pretty girls he'll just let her drown
and technically he hasn't done anything
wrong he hasn't done anything right
really he hasn't done
anything but it's like the trolley
problem you know the the common trolley
problem where you've got the the Train
That's heading towards 10 people and you
can just pull the lever and have the
train get diverted so it squishes just
one person instead of 10 from the
Buddhist point of view I mean you're
still guilty of killing one person if
you don't do anything you're not guilty
of killing anyone inaction is always
morally neutral but if you caus the

trolley to go and and squish one person
you're guilty of murdering one person
somebody else is guilty of murdering the
10 if you don't do
anything that is just it's very
mechanistic very straightforward easy to
understand Buddhist ethics that
westerners still don't really understand
very well sometimes because they're so
locked in to the standard Western
materialistic utilitarian ethic that
prevails in the west thank you Jeremy
benam for [__] up the ethics of the
West I mean it works fairly well if
you're just a worldly secular humanist
type person but for a Buddhist it's
delusional so again I mean be a stoic if

you think that it is the right thing to do to stand up against tyny then do it and if you if you can do it peacefully like the pen is mightier than the sword and all that that may be best but it may be if that you think that you are called upon that it is your duty as like an American citizen and a free man to bear arms against tyrannical forces or people breaking into your house or whatever it is then you go ahead and it's your choice to make you know it's like it's just that there's going to be consequences so I mean you just got to man up and accept the consequences sometimes I guess if that's what you're

going to

do so I'm just going to move on the next

question this is from Athena

sigil and Athena sigil says okay we've

talked about the Lial spaces and beings

before I'm here to first ask about your

thoughts if any on Robert andon Wilson

who wrote the Illuminati Trilogy I'm

also going to recommend a book by Eric

Davis called high weirdness a book on

the early '70s

counterculture which focuses on the

strange experiences of Robert Anton

Wilson Philip K dick and the

ethnobotanist Terrence

McKenna if you're not interested then

ignore I thought I'd throw this in as

you've talked about esoteric subjects before plus I went down a weird rabbit hole with on R aw whatever that is and related subjects today well I'm really not like very familiar with any of these people I did read one book by Robert Anton Wilson as a teenager and I read it again in my 20s called shringer cat the universe next door which is just talking about is it's sort of like a fictional account

representing like the many worlds hypothesis that you just kind of shift sideways through probability and you wind up in a world that's not quite like this one and so it was just sort of

different versions of the same the same
phenomena with the same characters and
you know it's like pocket books was like
the paperback um like it was a paperback
book that I read it was published by
pocket books and then like partway
through the novel all of a sudden you've
got this the title page again and it's
by rocket books and then a little
farther through the novel you've got the
title page again and it's locket books
you know with a different little logo a
rocket and a locket and and so it's uh
that's that's what I know about Robert
Anton Wilson um I mean they did produce
another book that I looked at and on the
cover it says this is not a

book and uh I mean obviously it was a book so it's um it's it's a way of trying to knock people loose from just kind of clinging to this version of reality as far as I can tell Robert Anton Wilson I'm pretty sure he's a physicist and just sort of moonlights as a as an

author I'm not sure about that Philip K dick obviously he was a science fiction author and I've I've seen a number of movies based on his writings so there is

that and Terence McKenna I mean I keep hearing about him but I've never really been into Terrence McKenna so I don't

think I even saw any of his YouTube videos so where's the where's the question mark here first to ask about your thoughts if any on Robert Anton Wilson yeah I guess that's really all I can say is the only thing I've ever read by Robert Anton Wilson is shringer cat the universe next door and it was it was good I liked it I read it more than once I eventually left it on uh I think it was on the Polish ship I worked on when I was 21 years old the sigita I left it in the the observer's uh cabin for like the next Fisheries Observer that worked on the ship could read it if he wanted to if he was weird and like that sort of thing because it is kind of a weird

book so I guess that's it so I'm just going to move on next question so those questions are actually kind of easy where you know what is your opinion about you know Joe Schmo and it's like I don't know I never never really never really met

joeo anyway this next question is from Newman and Newman says do human beings reincarnate within the same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic group or is it random is there if there is a kind of karmic logic is it fortuitous to be reborn within a particular ethnic group such as a member of a people that practices and has received the teachings

like ties or what have you well I don't think it's human beings don't necessarily neatly reincarnate within the same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic group but it's certainly not random it's just you know what your character is like what you need to work on in in your life it just it's sort of like water flowing in into that direction and you wind up there like I can hypothesize about my past lives and I would guess in the previous existence before this one I was American my father was completely persuaded that I was his father which makes me my own grandpa so maybe I'll just I'll just assume that as a working hypothesis um

sometime before that I think there's a
good chance I was Japanese like back in
like the 1700s like Samurai era Japan
and then I was like an
English like Catholic monk in the in the
14th century who died of Bubonic plague
theoretically uh good chance that uh I
lived in like southern Italy during the
late Republic or early Roman
Empire um maybe uh even even farther
back like some snake worshipping Shaman
in like Northwestern
India that kind of thing so I mean it's
it's not so much the culture
necessarily and and the culture has
changed I mean we're talking about you I

mean you're living a life that's maybe
80 years long and it may be that the
culture has changed so that you don't
really fit the culture when you're an
old man as much as you did when you were
20 a lot of old men just feel like they
just don't fit the culture anymore so it
may be that some other culture that
comes along will actually be a better
fit

somehow like uh Edgar Casey he was uh
doing past life readings while in trance
later on in his career
and a lot of Americans apparently came
from Rome I mean America modern America
is is to some degree like a
Reincarnation of of the Roman

civilization so that a lot of people I mean they can't be reborn as ancient Romans anymore because ancient Rome doesn't exist anymore and so America is sort of a good fit for them so let's see I mean I think a lot of people would tend to be reborn in the same lineage or Clan or tribe or ethnic group simply because that's a better fit um it's not I mean there's no real outward

Force requiring them to be reborn that way it's just that their character just fits that culture and it's just it just works and so that's what happens but outliers are going to be more sporadic

in where and how they get reborn what
kind of life and what kind of culture
and that sort of thing because it may be
that you get something down you know
you've kind of learned what you need to
learn so then you got to work on
something else which might be a
radically different
environment so there is a kind of karmic
logic and it's not really I mean it it's
not random
chance but different people's Karma
Works differently and some people may
really benefit more from like sampling
around different cultures different kind
of lives sometimes male sometimes female
this kind of thing and others might be

more conservative and just kind of stay
in the same culture and kind of go with
the The ancestral lineage and all
this so I hope I answer that one because
I'm moving on to Newman's second
question which is a follow-up question
how does filial piety and or ancestral
Worship in Buddhist East Asian societies
work are they venerating their
particular lineage is or do they have a
more Universal idea that no matter what
ethnic group they're born into every
ancestor of their current body is a
kindred being well the
only the only uh East
Asian um society that I can speak of

from like years of experience is
Burmese I didn't live in Thailand I mean
I was I spent just a few weeks in
Thailand a few months in Indonesia but
not long enough to really um see a lot
of the culture happening and and enough
to really understand what's going on and
speak the language so that people can
explain and that kind of thing but
filial p and ancestral worship in
Burmese Society it's not so much I mean
ancestor worship has pretty much died
out in Burma it's it's veneration for
your ancestors especially the ones that
you remember your parents and your
grandparents maybe your
great-grandparents that um after they

die like periodically you'll be like
doing acts of Merit and dedicating it to
your to your parents or your
grandparents or or whatever whatever
ancestors or I mean it could be even
like uncles and aunts maybe although
generally your duties your parents are
are

greater and um I mean you're just doing
acts of Merit and sharing the merit with
them to help them in whatever realm they
happen to be and it generally only works
from a terot of Buddhist point of view
if they are ghosts if they are pasas
because it only works you can only share
merit with somebody if they're actually

aware that you're sharing merit with them so if they're reborn as another human they're off oblivious just be living a new human life they don't know if you're an animal likewise if if they reborn into a heaven realm the beings in the heaven Realms got better things to do than to be like keeping an eye on on us you know they got their own lives to live up there too so it's mainly ghosts P that are kind of Haunting the area that might still be following along with their loved ones still like attached to the house or something that will be able to see that their children or grandchildren are performing these meritorious acts generally offering

stuff to monks taking precepts at the monastery and then doing the ceremony of of sharing Merit and then the ghosts rejoice in them and then their own rejoicing like uh kind of mudita it's one of the four Brahma viharas you know rejoicing in another person's um good fortune or happiness that rejoicing is their own meritorious deed and it helps them but that's about as far as it goes in Burma and with regard to ancestor worship in a place like China or Japan I think it's probably discouraged in China because of Marxism and all that and in Japan and I think the Japanese have become so

materialistic and secularized that for the most part Most Japanese people are not into ancestor worship it may be like a an old traditional thing that still exists uh for some people but I don't know that much about it but in Burma it's mainly a matter of trying to do your like filial duty to your parents and grandparents and so forth by performing acts of Merit and dedicating the the Merit to them and if they happen to be able to see what you're doing and rejoice over it then that rejoicing is creating Merit for them which then can then help them especially if they're a Paya it can help them to get out of that realm into a better

one so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from meditators library and meditator Library says I turn valuable sutas into audiobook on my channel by using

AI I've noticed that many monks including biku suat are vigorously against the use of AI are you against the use of AI what is your opinion well if I'm watching a video and it's narrated by AI I usually just stop watching it because it's just sort of like a dead voice with no understanding or wisdom behind it it's like a fake person which makes it kind of like a fake narrative or a fake video kind of I

mean it's it's just sort of like a feeling I get it's like I don't for some reason I just prefer that if a video is narrated like a YouTube video it's narrated by a real human and not just this dead voice with no mind no consciousness no sentience no understanding or if it is you know sort of like an AI like a a Proto understanding but that's about it you know it has to understand sentence structure and how to pronounce words and so forth but yeah I mean I'm not against AI on any kind of ethical grounds or anything with regard to like AI narrated videos it's just that I prefer not to

listen to them I prefer a real human who actually has some kind of understanding that you can empathize with so any empathy you get like somebody is trying to share wisdom presumably they have wisdom that they are sharing with you and I mean a lot of the transmission of information is coming from a kind of empathy you know feeling what that person is feeling and then it helps you to understand what's going on whereas the AI of course doesn't understand diddly it's just a dead voice with nothing behind it so yeah I do think that it would be less effective in transmitting wisdom

from wisdom texts aside from the fact that the AI isn't going to like be slurring its words and and messing up this kind of thing it'll be more perfect um transmission at least with regard to pronunciation of common words but still I would prefer a real human and that's that's my feelings on it I'm not necessarily against the use of AI although I do think that the technological singularity is a real possibility and there's no telling what's going to happen if AI really does become sentient so I mean it could be the end of the human race for all we know when

that happens and some people are saying
it's going to be happening within the
next few

decades some people are saying it's
already

starting so I'm just going to move on to
the next question

which is from

Romeo and Romeo says my question asks
you to take a breather from answering
questions about Buddhism and requires
you to Dawn your geopolitics Fez if you
have one well I was actually going to
wear The Fez just to to go with the the
fancy sort of pseudo embroidered waste
coat that I got for Valentine's Day so

what the hell I got it right here look
at this I think they go well together
yeah I think it's a good
combo The Fez the waste coat the shirt
the special underwear yeah this is quite
the
uniform okay so
anyways as you are probably aware
president Trump's Department of
government efficiency or
Doge recently uncovered a scandal
involving the US Aid agency literally
millions of taxpayer dollars at tens or
hundreds of millions sent overseas
including to your former home of Burma
to spread the left's radical woke
ideology this includes funds for

advancing Dei in Serbia's Workforce
money for sex changes and lgbtq activism
in Guatemala producing a Dei musical in
Ireland and Publishing a transgender
comic book in Peru as much as I'm
against it I kind of understand why our
political Elites spread their radical
agenda domestically to divide and
conquer the populace create a voter base
of vulnerable people that they can
reliably tap into for political power
among other reasons but at the risk of
sounding totally clueless about
geopolitics what the heck do our
political Elites get out of spreading
their woke ideology overseas well one

thing to bear in mind it's not so much
the left it is the globalists it is
globalism they want to create the Brave
New

World and so they want to spread this
ideology just as universally as they can
to get everybody on the same woke page I
think that is a major part of
it um but I mean it's it's really
nowadays the the main political
dichotomy isn't so much left and right
anymore it's globalists versus
nationalists and I'm happy to say the
nationalists are now on the
offensive that the globalists are now on
defense and they have so thoroughly
castrated themselves as part of their

ideology of just feminizing the world
that they can't fight for [__] all they
can do is just get hysterical and lie
and people are seeing through it now you
know they're so used to the the lying
hysteria that it doesn't have much of an
effect on them

anymore so yeah I guess it's they're
trying to create the Brave New World
which is globalist you know it's world
it's not the Brave New Country not even
the brave new continent it is the Brave
New World the New World Order and so
they want everybody as many people as
possible to be on the same page with
regard to this political correctness

hysteria cultural

Marxism uh blame everything on evil hii
that kind of stuff and uh and it is true
also that it kind of weakens them I mean
it castrates the people that follow this
as a general rule there might be a few
Macho progressives out there uh at least
Macho in certain ways even though like
culturally they've had their balls cut
off

so yeah I guess the main two advantages
the main two like reasons for it are one
to just spread this ideology as as much
much as possible because it's a
globalist ideology and two it does
weaken and feminize the people who take
it to heart and makes them easier to

keep under

control and I'm happy to say it seems to
be slipping through their fingers so
that you had some

German Like official he's on like the
the security Council of Germany crying
like a girl in front of a crowd of
people just because they realize they
are losing control and being castrated
all they can do is cry about

it so I'm just going to move on the next
question so I'll just take the Fez
off it's really good Fez by the way I
mean Fez orama just Fez or.com makes
really good

fezzes okay next question is from kify

and kify says how to deal with angst from the Buddhist point of view and as I keep saying mindfulness is the Panacea mindfulness is how you deal with any kind of troublesome mental state that you observe the mental state with Detachment I mean the very fact that you are observing something means you're already detached from it it's no longer let's say angst is arising right it's you're not saying I'm anxious I'm nervous I'm feeling existential dread it's existential dread is arising and so already it's not you anymore if you are anything you're the one who's observing and not the object being observed and that's one reason that's one of the many

philosophical reasons why there is no self is because you can observe any of it you know one part of the system observes the other part of the system proving that that other part of the system isn't

you so you just observe the anst with mindfulness and the way of an ethologist observes a dead fish you know like what does it feel like how does it feel in the stomach area you know what what effect does it have on the body how does it feel emotionally what thoughts are arising you just observe it like scientifically and then you detach from it it's not you anymore and then it by

detaching from it you are depriving it
of sustenance and it causes its momentum
its karmic momentum to become less and
if you do that like consistently then
the the momentum becomes less and less
until it becomes only the pale shadow of
of the previous

anxiety so that would be the from the
Buddhist point of view I mean that's
obviously the way to do it and then cify
says how do you deal with anxiety well
when I'm at my best you know I follow I
do mindfulness is you just observe it I
mean I've been in the habit of that for
30 years as a monk so it's it's second
nature a lot of the time if something
just comes up and I start getting pissed

off or upset a lot of the time not
always but a lot of the time it's just
you just observe it arising I mean
cussing helps too cussing does kind of
it serves as a pressure release valve
when I'm at work I cuss actually quite a
lot not at other people but it's yeah
I'm dropping F bombs to myself as I'm
whipping around on the forklift trying
to avoid collisions with 25 other people
people whipping around on
forklifts but the best way I mean based
on my own personal experience as well as
on the authority of Buddhist text
mindful
observation and so I'm just going to

move on to the next question this is
from

kundru and kundru says do you know
anything about your European ancestry
and my sweetheart who provided me with
this Valentine's Day waste

coat um she just insisted I mean she was
really into I I really had not much
interest in my my ancestry because it's
more of a I mean I don't really identify
with my family like I actually have more
like sentiment of loyalty to my
friends than to my family it's like I've
chosen my friends chosen my woman uh my
family I was just I mean it was just
you're born with them you know and
you're more likely to have more in

common with regard to interests and point of view and so forth with people that you choose than with family members who I

mean they might have like radically different attitudes than you have I mean some friends do too I mean that's there's nothing wrong with that it's good to have some variety I mean if everyone was the same it'd be pretty

boring but uh yeah she insisted that I get my DNA tested so I did and it turns out I'm about 50 or

60% English I'm about 25%

Scottish uh 6% Welsh 4% Irish and the

remainder is like Continental North
Germanic so I'm got maybe a little
Celtic blood in me but for the most part
I'm Germanic Northern Germanic north and
west Germanic
that would be almost all of my
ancestry
so there is that which which
justifies uh my intention of growing
this beard long enough to braid it with
like a m bead at the bottom
M so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from bodh sat
969 oh yeah we're recording good we've
been at it for over an hour
so bodh 969 says in the Su of the sick
and dying wakali the Buddha says come

beus we want to go to the Black Rock on
the slope where wakali the noble son
took up the knife and then when Mara
appeared after wali's well you can't say
the word starts with s and it means Auto
termination this beuz is Mara the evil
one he is looking for the consciousness
of Vali the noble son thinking where has
Wall's Consciousness found a crutch or
support or
stability but with his Consciousness
without support a crutch or stability
wakali the noble son has finally entered
nibana so suici
a damn it slipped out so Auto
termination is not a problem in Buddhism

question mark and then he's got this um
asterisk I don't know what's the right
translation in German it means he's got
something in German and then I put that
into Google translate and it says where
did his Consciousness find support but
in my own translation of the the godic
kasuta and this is I mean this could be
the godic kasuta except for the very one
statement at the beginning is where has
the consciousness of the go of the
gentleman oh where is the consciousness
of the gentleman Goda
established so wakali I mean I haven't
read the suta maybe ever I mean in the
suta of the sick and dying wakali um I
mean the Goda suta is exactly the same

as this suta except for Goda wasn't sick
Goda just kept getting getting Janna and
losing it and getting Jonna and losing
it and getting Janna and losing it until
finally he was in a state of desperation
saying well if I die with Janna which is
a a deep meditative State um I'm
guaranteed of a Brahma Realm after after
I pass away whereas if I don't have
Jonna when I when I pass away there's no
guarantees I could wind up in a lower
realm so next time he got Janna he uh
used his own straight Razer for shaving
his head
and cut through the neck area and uh he
became enlightened at the moment of

death and maybe wakali did the same thing exactly the same with exactly the same words with Mara the evil one searching for the consciousness of wakali and the Buddha is saying he's not going to find it because the consciousness of wakali is now unestablished so I mean that means he was he's enlightened his Consciousness no longer is clinging to anything which kind of means that it's it's just off the scale you know it no longer exists in a samsaric context where it can be pointed to or found by Mara the evil one so actually the question mark here is so Auto termination is not a problem in Buddhism well the Buddha says you

should not Auto terminate unless you
have already accomplished your goal and
the godika suta and this suta that the
wakali suta which I mean is strange that
it's almost verbatim exactly the same as
the Goda suta um they kind of broke the
rules they went against what the Buddha
said and then wound up kind of not going
against what he said because they became
enlightened at the moment of
death but the Buddha does say you
shouldn't be doing that until you've
like done what needs to be
done and they just kind of wound up
doing what needed to be done as they
were bleeding

out but yeah otherwise I mean the Buddha
would not encourage anybody especially
not like a a totally unenlightened
person to Auto
terminate because I mean
you're you're not
really I mean you're dying through an
act of violence against
yourself which probably means you're
going to be making more Bad Karma which
there's a good chance it means you're
going to wind up in a situation that's
even worse than the when you're in now I
mean at times it may be that auto
termination is appropriate I mean I've I
would consider it under certain
circumstances and there is a question

about that coming up so I'll deal with that when when the question comes and so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from ruie and ruie says how emotionally overpowering were your dreams during the cave dwelling Burma days and I'm not exactly sure what he means by emotionally overpowering I mean does that mean within the context of the dream itself or does it mean after you've woken up that you're still emotionally overpowered by that dream that you were having but aren't having anymore I don't know really which ruy has in mind I mean I've had emotionally overpowering dreams

in like in which I I died for
example um got very emotionally worked
up during the dream there I had a few
dreams I remember there was one weird
dream I had as a monk where I was
stealing car stereos for some
reason and then I suddenly realized I
can't be doing this I'm a monk this is
parica and I'm like I'm mind is racing
it's like what should I do I'm part of I
should put put them back you know so I'm
immediately thinking I should put the
car stereos back into the cars but it
was already too late I was already like
excommunicated for life and then it was
just the agitation caused me to wake up
and then and then I thought oh it was

just a dream okay so I'm not I'm not
kicked out of the S after
all yeah I have had dreams that were so
intense that just the shock of the dream
woke me up I remember one time and those
of you who are my age might remember who
Emma Sams was she was this British
actress who was really pretty and I had
like this erotic kind of dream with this
young woman you know I'm a monk you know
when I'm awake at the time in a cave but
I had was having this erotic dream with
this young woman and then I realized it
was Emma Sam's and just the shock of
recognition just woke me right up out of
the dream which is kind of disappointing

actually anyways um I've never had a dream that was so emotionally overpowering that I remained emotionally overpowered for more than just a few seconds after I woke up so I'm really not sure which ruy has in mind but uh I mean my dreams tended to be a little more intense when I was a monk just because there's more clarity of mind and also less going on in your life less distraction so that anything you experience seems more intense because you've got less you know going on in the background but uh yeah I did have a lot of weird dreams like some some really strange

ones I still have relatively strange
dreams sometimes but uh I usually don't
remember them and so I'm just going to
move on to ru's next question he says do
you think distraction is the natural
Universal state of the mind and would
you equate it to ignorance and by
extension

suffering and how pre-buddhist could the
remedy of Sati be okay well this is two
different questions seems to me so I'm
separating these and so ru's up to three
questions so do you think distraction is
the natural Universal state of the Mind
distraction um not necessarily the
natural state of mind I mean you look at

hunter gatherer societies which would have maybe more of a natural state of mind than some post-modern person living in a city that I mean they could have very intense concentration like they're out hunting or something it takes a lot of like non-d

distraction so I mean distraction in the sense of restless just sort of restlessness Restless dissatisfaction or just restlessness in general yeah I could I could agree with that but uh I think distraction is maybe not the best choice of

words um and I wouldn't necessarily equate it to ignorance like the Restless dissatisfaction is not the same as

ignorance you know the ignorance is more
a matter of content the Restless
dissatisfaction is more of a like a
process you know it's like ignorance is
a noun whereas the Restless dis
satisfaction is more of a verb you know
it's sort of substance for versus what
would you call it uh Form and Function
yeah Form and Function so ignorance is
more of a form and and the distraction
is more of a function which I mean they
they can combine into the same whole you
know it's just the limitations of the
human mind cause us divide to divide
things up into nouns and verbs you know
Form and Function when really they're

just it's just part of a
four-dimensional Unity that we are not
sophisticated enough mentally to fully
appreciate
so we are equate like Restless
dissatisfaction or just restlessness to
ignorance no I don't think they have the
same meaning although they're part of
the same phenomenon the the same they're
part of Sam Sara the the like the
the the characteristics of samsara I
guess and uh suffering
yeah I guess both of them both the
restlessness and the the ignorance are
key to suffering because the
restlessness is is motivated by desire
you know just dissatisfaction wanting

something else wanting something

more and I mean that's brought about by ignorance because you don't realize that you already have

Infinity so yeah kind of and so I'm just going to move on to my third question

and how pre budic yeah pre budic could the remedy of mindfulness be um I'm not sure I think mindfulness may have really been um something that the Buddha was the first philosopher in India to really emphasize I'm not sure I'm not I'm not like fully well versed in like um you know what what the brahmins were teaching in the forest when the first upanishads were coming out or you know what the

Janes were following the Janss were more of a materialistic me had more of a mechanistic approach to how Karma works and how you become enlightened I mean they were just burning off their karma through like not doing anything positive and just passively torturing themselves um so I do think that Buddhism was possibly I can't say for sure but possibly the first spiritual system are at least the first spiritual system that really went mainstream that emphasized the psychological aspects of how to become enlightened and what karma is and you know how how you how you get enlightened um so yeah I think Buddhism

may have been the first to just fully
psychologize Karma and mindfulness is a
way of becoming enlightened I think yeah
I think the Buddha may have discovered
that

that uh he didn't invent it I'm sure
that there have been like spiritual
Geniuses since the Stone Age since
prehistoric times that just had the
talent the innate spiritual ripeness to
to just be mindful and see the value of
it and benefit from the value of it but
um yeah I'm I'm not sure how much
mindfulness there was in before Buddhism
and I do think that it might be that
that's what the Buddha discovered um

according to the legend rather than
first Janna I mean there's a question
about this that hasn't I haven't got to
yet about you know this the traditional
story of how the Buddha became
enlightened you know he went to his
first he he mastered all the janas under
two teachers two different teachers
mastered all the Jonas realized it
didn't get him enlightened then he
started torturing himself for years that
didn't get him enlightened and then
according to the legend he recalled as a
child sitting under a tree when his
father was plowing a field first jna he
just spontaneously went into first jna
and then he realized that's it but I

mean he already mastered all the Jonas
first Jon is the lowest
one so there is it's a weird confusion
in in the story that um as it stands
seems to be a confused story like it's
like a like May more than one story got
cobbled together and so the pieces don't
fit very

well but it could be mindfulness that uh
is what he realized you know he had a
very lucid mindful moment as a child and
then he remembered that and then that
was what he fixed upon or you know
started doing or something but as I say
there's a question kind of about this
later so I'm just going to keep going

here oh here it is I

think no no it isn't this is from quor

quor this is a follow-up question and

quor may have asked something similar in

the past but would please like a more

in-depth understanding of the canonical

views on the topic as well as my

personal views if they differ so quor

says in the scenario of the meditator

who enters forth a jna daily but dies a

miserable death versus the non-m

meditator who has never experienced

fourth Janna except at the time of their

death the one that dies in fourth Janna

has presumably taken birth in the fourth

J realm correct me if I'm understanding

you wrong but you mention that someone

who has squeaked into a Heavenly realm
doesn't fit there very well and
therefore are not able to stay in that
realm for long can you elaborate on how
it's possible for someone to exit the J
realm early I was under the impression
that lifespans of certain Realms are
predetermined well first of all is a
non-m meditator is very unlikely to get
fourth

Jan so I mean even the person who has
never had fourth jna before and then
they get it right before they die then I
mean still they're good Med you get
fourth jna you're an Adept you are a
master meditator and I still got this

asymmetrical bump on my beard that's
kind of bugs

me so I mean it's not like Joe scho

you know who just walks into a

meditation hall for the first time just

sits down he's just plops down on the

cushion and goes into fourth Janna and

then Keels over dead it I mean it

doesn't happen that way anyone who's

going to attain for Janna is going to be

they're going to be an

Adept I mean they're going to be they're

going to be really good

meditators

so chances are if you attain fourth

genre um you go into a heaven realm and

then I mean the the these Brahma Realms

are just conducive to maintaining that kind of mental Clarity so it may be that I mean you you don't just wind up in fourth of jna accidentally right at the moment of death that I mean most cases at least most cases I mean you're going to you're going to wind up in a the appropriate Heaven realm corresponding to the these deep meditative states that you

attained

um but I mean I mean we're we're not experts I'm certainly not an expert on what Brahma Realms are like and to a large degree they are artifacts of post Buddhist time Buddhist

mythology I mean the whole 31 plans of
existence it's not mentioned in the
sutras I mean certain Realms I mean
obviously the human Realm attempts of
Heaven gets mentioned animals get
mentioned P get mentioned but this whole
scheme of 31 PLS of existence I mean
it's it's just an artifact I mean the
Buddha himself probably did not teach
this stuff and so a lot of these some of
these questions like the really
technical ones especially like the four
the four stages of sainthood and all
that it's just
academic you know it's like ABS I mean
it's information that doesn't have any
real positive benefit from knowing it

because you don't you still don't really
know it I mean

it's it's it's just like uh this idea
that arose in Buddhist philosophers
after Buddhism had started declining in
its

inspiration so let's say that you've
lived a certain kind of life and then
like on your death bed you have like
this period of like an anomalous mental
state that then kind of squeaks you in
to a a realm that where you don't fully
belong um I mean yeah it could be
unstable I mean you can say let's see
here uh quor says I was under the
impression that lifespans of certain

Realms are predetermined but I mean you can say the lifespan of a human is you know 80 years let's just say 80 years but obviously some humans die when they're a day old I mean just because you have this like a certain lifespan attributed to this plane of existence it doesn't mean that you're just I mean you you got a timer you it's like Logan's Run or something and then like the crystal starts lighting up at like for everybody at exactly the same span of life it doesn't work that way so so right when I was in the middle of that sentence I had this flash of something I should say and then it faded back out again see life span of certain

Realms are
predetermined yeah so I mean just
because the lifespan of a human in
general is going to be let's say 80
years just for the sake of argument that
doesn't mean that all humans are going
to live 80
years and so somebody can appear briefly
in a heaven Realm and they just don't
belong there like even the near-death
experiences
ndes where people will go up into a
heaven realm and then they'll just come
back down again they'll either be told
it's it's too early it's not time for
them yet or they freely choose you know

it's like I i' prefer to go back down
into this body that's on the operating
table or lying on this lying on the road
or

whatever so I mean it's yeah it's it's
not some kind of law that cannot be
broken that if you're going to be born
into some Heaven realm where the
lifespan is 10 billion years that you're
going to be there exactly 10 billion
years you're going to be there until
your con your karma is
exhausted and if you don't have much
Karma to keep you there that karma is
going to be exhausted fairly quickly and
then you're just going to pass on to
somewhere

else

so let's see is there any anything that

I left out here

let's

see followup question I may have asked

something similar in the past but would

please uh like a more in-depth

understanding of the canonical views of

the topic as well as your personal views

if they differ the canonical views I

mean in the sutas I'm unaware of any

mention of a DEA that that lives only a

very short time in the heaven realm and

then passes away this it's it's mostly

mythology you got to bear in mind that

all these this talk about Heaven Realms

and so forth is mostly mythology it's
madeup theories about stuff that most of
the people who came up with these
theories had no personal experience with
other than maybe some Visions when they
were meditating and there's no guarantee
that those Visions are
accurate so I mean these kind of
questions I mean it's like what benefit
is there in even knowing the answer how
does this help you in life
and I don't mean to scold
anybody so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is is there any
truth to Hell being a place of
punishment and repentance or can it be
just as likely for someone who has never

hurt anyone to end up in hell as it would be for a murderer I don't think it's just as likely for some just unobtrusive average guy to go to hell and that is just as likely for him to go to hell as like a serial killer but I do not think that hell is directly a place of punishment and repentance it's like when when you die let's just go with the the Buddhist idea of rebirth when you die you've got a certain momentum going like a psychic momentum that is your karma and that karma is it's going to land you in your next life and it's going to be appropriate to like your attitude just

your vibrational rate the coarseness or
or like finess of your mind the subtlety
or lack of subtlety of your mind is
going to determine what level of reality
or unreality what level of s So you're
going to wind up in so it's just a more
of a matter of how crude your mind is or
how subtle your mind is if you die with
a Heavenly kind of mind you wind up in a
heaven realm if you die with a h frame
of mind or if you just go through life
especially with a like a hellish frame
of mind there's a much higher chance of
you winding up in some kind of Hell
realm so it's just it's not like P
Divine punishment or any such thing and
heaven isn't a Divine reward unless you

want to just kind of see it that way
it's just sort of like a side effect
even but really it's just the the world
that you wind up in the version of
reality you wind up with you wind up in
is just like
mirroring the state that your mind is
in I mean you're creating your reality
and so someone with just a really crude
[__] up mind is going to create a
crude [__] up hell realm to live in
someone with a wise virtuous like subtle
kind of a mind is going to wind up in a
more Heavenly kind of Realm simply
because their mind is skillful enough to
create that kind of reality

so I think I'm just going to move on
next question this is from PSA and PSA
says how do you feel about Myanmar
recently entering the VIP Club of level
four do not travel countries it's now
the same category as notorious Bad Boys
such as Afghanistan North Korea
Venezuela and

Somalia I would just wonder what your
feelings are about this considering you
live there for a huge part of your life
and you successfully pursued Spiritual
Development there does it arouse any
sentimental or emotional reaction in you
it's also the only Buddhist country on
the level four list how do you think
Buddhism can influence the current state

of social and political Affairs in
Myanmar what role does it play in it
well this is like two questions doesn't
it this is like two different questions
I got to separate these okay so the
first

question so essentially how do I feel
about Burma being at the level four do
not travel country status and I mean
Burma's been this way before I mean it's
nothing new really I mean there were
sanctions against Burma's like brutal
and repressive military dictatorship up
until

2011 so before that I mean still it was
it maybe wasn't level four but still I

mean all foreigners got kicked out of Burma back around 1988 or 1990 when the riots the public beheadings and stuff going on Burma has always been a mess this I mean half of Burma has been controlled by Insurgent groups since World War II

practically since the British left I mean things just went to [__] almost immediately after the British left Burma and it's to some degree the british's fault because they did the divide and conquer you know they use sort of like um ethnic animosities and this sort of thing to kind of keep the Burmese people or the people what is now Myanmar from like like uniting against the British

Raj that kind of thing but on the other hand the Burmese they just they just cannot organize worth a damn I mean it's it's the state Burma is in is largely a reflection of the just the prevailing attitude of the people like some famous philosopher I think it was Voltaire says every country gets the government it deserves and one reason why Burma has the brutal and repressive military government is because the Burmese are just so passive and stoic they can put up with damn near anything so I mean it's like the Burmese can just tolerate stuff

that even I as a as a monk who had been
a monk for years it's like I was
unwilling to tolerate like some dog
barking its guts out right outside your
bedroom window the Burmese most Burmese
people will just like cover their ear up
with a blanket or something and just
sleep through it or try to sleep through
it I'd be I mean I'd have like a little
pile of rocks outside my door to to
chase dogs away I mean I couldn't make
them stop barking and Howling but at
least I could make them go off some
distance away from my
window so the burmes they're afraid of
their own shadow you know they're
they're afraid of sun they're afraid of

rain they're afraid of wind they're
afraid of cold they're afraid of heat
they're afraid of the government they're
afraid of witches they're afraid of
ghosts they're afraid of monsters in
general they're afraid to walk through a
cemetery they're just the Burmese are
easily scared

people and it's and it's not just the
government it's just it's just kind of
the way they are I'm sorry to say it I
mean in some ways they are very superior
to the average

Westerner but I mean everyone's got
their their strengths and their
weaknesses and one of the weaknesses of

the burmes in general is that they they cannot organize and they're just passive and just put up with bad situations you know it's like how many Burmese people does it take to change the light bulb the answer is none they just stumble around in the dark and are patient about it occasionally bumping into something and going

I mean there's there's lots of lots of answers to that riddle how many burmes people does it take to change a light bulb but that was one of my favorites right there I mean there was one the first time I ever heard that joke how many Burmese people does it take to change a light bulb none onsu G is going

to change it for them because that's kind of the attitude they have it's like we're not going to stand up for our own rights we might get we might get in trouble we might get disappeared by the government which does happen so they just hope America will invade and and fix things for them but it won't stay fixed I mean bur Burma it was like their first leader or who is going to be their leader was General

Onan who was on the side of the Japanese during World War II up until he realized that the Japanese were worse than the British at at at ruling Burma so then he switched sides and he became a kind of

war hero and then after World War II he just has this idea we need Independence for Burma as soon as possible while he was still popular so he could be the shoe in for the first president of an independent Burma and then so he insists I mean the British were volunteering to rebuild the infrastructure of Burma before they granted Burma Independence because Burma was a battlefield ranon was bombed out I mean it was their infrastructure was in in smoking ruins all sign suit are Onan no we want independence now now now so they get independence and then almost immediately General Onan and almost his entire cabinet were assassinated there's some

some guy with a machine gun just comes
into a cabinet meeting and just guns
them all

down so they wind up with unu as as like
their first real prime minister or
president or whatever whatever he was
and he was just incompetent he was he
was a good guy he was having he was
having like um coconut plantations
planted all over Burma and because the
Maha Min mahagiri the mahagiri who's
this daa in in Burmese folklore likes
coconuts and so that's what he was doing
and this the country was just falling
apart and so the first time unu the
incompetent but very good person he asks

the military to take over for a while to get in control so the military actually comes in and takes over you got a military dictatorship by invitation and they get things pretty much going and they get things organized you know they kind of put down the rebellions and so forth to some degree the hand control back over to unu things just start going to [__] again and so the second time they just they just moved in and Burma became a military dictatorship from then up until like 2011 with uh just brutal repression of any kind of dissent there was one time when there college students were protesting at the University of rangon

you know the the big the biggest
university in Burma the the students
were protesting in like the Student
Union building the Army just comes they
chain all the doors closed put Dynamite
all around the building and just blow up
the building just kill everybody inside
and of course people just stopped
protesting because they were
scared and it's just it's just the way
it's been it's I mean when I was in
Burma one thing that I would think about
sometimes it was kind of a worrisome
thought is just secret police showing up
at my cave saying come with us you know
I'd think about what I was going to do

in that kind of situation because that kind of thing can happen so yeah I mean Burma's always been messed up ever since it got independence from the British it just took a nose dive and 20 11 it was like the the generals just took off their military uniforms and put on like business suits or just lay lay clothing and the government didn't change all that much they had to change the Constitution a little bit but the the Army still retain like 60% of control of parliament or this kind of thing so that you know they they still got to have most of the authority and uh then several years ago

at this point or at least a few years ago things just were weren't going their way and so they just took over again and we back to the military dictatorship and I don't know if things are necessarily much worse than they were like in 1960 in 1960 there was like like Insurgent groups like fighting in the streets in in like major cities in Burma it's just been this way for a long time so it really is no surprise to me and it really doesn't bother me all that much I have no intention of going back to Burma anyway I am sorry that it's that way but that's just the way it has been

so uh psa's next

question oh this is like the the

followup on the first one it's also the

only Buddhist country on the level four

list how do you think Buddhism can

influence the current state of social

and political Affairs in Myanmar what

role does it play in it well to some

degree it gives them this passive

equinity where they're willing to just

put up with anything I mean that's part

of it it just results in kind of passive

fatalism to some degree and Buddhism

doesn't necessarily cause passive

fatalism but to some degree it does in

Burma but I think it's more of

a I think the Burmese might be this way

regardless what religion they
follow and it could be partly because of
a centuries long
tradition of just brutal governments
just trampling the people with hob
nailed Jack Boots so that the people are
just cowed and I mean they have to
really be pushed beyond all endurance
for them to really rise up because
chances are if they rise up they're just
going to be gunned down in the
street so I'm just G to move on to psa's
third

question which is as follows you said
chat GPT cannot become enlightened is it
because it doesn't have a body in order

to become enlightened we need to have a
body that serves as a witness of
eradicated impurities and Saras maybe
let's forget about chat GPT because or
chat GTP because it will only complicate
matters further and lead to confusion
could you please Focus strictly on the
necessity of a physical body to serve as
a witness in order to reach
Enlightenment is this a correct
assertion well according to Buddhist
philosophy you do have to have some kind
of body but it won't necessarily be
physical in the sense of this version of
reality like I've mentioned in a
previous Q&A ghosts are not non-physical
beings they just have a physical body

that is at a cruder level like a
cruder vibratory rate you know a
cruder frequency than ours there's just
different subtleties of matter and like
a Brahma is going to be a very refined
subtle form of matter that's very very
different from this it may seem
immaterial to us but it's just their own
kind of matter and so you have to have
some kind of form in order to become
enlightened there has to be some kind of
form it doesn't necessarily have to be
what we would consider to be a material
body but there has to be kind of like
boundaries you know some kind of
form so with regard to that GTP it's

it's not because it doesn't have a body
I mean chat G GTP has a computer as its
body just like our thoughts have you
know a brain and C the brain contained
in this body in this version of reality
you know that's that's how our our mind
arises chat GTP has like computer or a
group of computers as its body and I
think I keep calling it GPT and it's GTP
I don't know what the the letters stand
for

anyway but it's it's not that chat GTP
can't become enlightened because it
doesn't have a body it can't become
enlightened because it is not
sentient that is why it cannot become
enlightened it is not sentient I mean

it's got artificial intelligence but
it's it doesn't have like real
selfawareness
at least I assume it
doesn't but idiot scientists in idiot
scient like computer Geniuses are trying
to create sentients in a computer which
can bring about the the technological
singularity and you have no idea what's
going to happen after
that because the computers once they
become sentient and start improving upon
their own minds of their own volition
they're going to be as far beyond us as
we are Beyond amibas within a very short
time and then there's there's absolutely

no telling what's going to happen you
cannot predict what the computers are
going to do anymore than an amoeba can
predict what a human is going to
do but that's a whole different that's a
whole different issue I guess a whole
different kettle of
wax so let's see

here yeah but I mean you do have to have
some kind of form because otherwise it's
just completely dissipated and there's
going to be no significant progress
because there's no means of progress
because progress itself relies upon some
kind of

form so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from harim cthul

and harim cthul uses the one of the
taboo words in this question have you
ever

considered Auto

termination and then he continues here I
find myself in a situation where I dream
of it every day I wish no one knew my
name I wish that I were a vagabond with
no bonds or responsibilities excuse me
the only things holding me back are the
vague memory of divine ecstasy I
experienced the prospect of suffering in
even more if the soul truly goes on
after death and disappointing a
Christian Mystic who once for told me
that I fulfill a heroic

Destiny I don't think I will go through
with it I find it fascinating how this
state of being contrasts with the
ecstatic one the world Remains the Same
and yet one sees only Darkness while the
other one is overwhelmed by
light um

okay well it is true I mean as a monk I
did consider Auto termination quite
often in fact and for a while I even had
a certain toxic substance that I just
had stored in my cave just in case that
you know it's good to have like a fire
exit it's good to have an Escape Route
just in case there's some sort of
emergency where leaving the scene just
seems like the the lesser of two evils

at the very at the very worst
so yeah I mean a lot of the time um when
I was a monk I mean being a monk it's
not just you're just sitting around
chilling and and being calm and Serene
all the time I mean you can have like
really rough times as a monk you're
striving to become a saint and you know
your your character just is stubbornly
not cooperating and you can just be
frustrated and desperate and just this
sucks I don't want to do this it's going
to be 120° heat for a month straight and
it's just miserable you can't stop
sweating it's just you know weird
tropical diseases and there are times

when you just think I'd be better off
not

metabolizing and one of the main things
that kept me alive was just the idea
that it would kill my mother that if she
found out that I did that then I mean
there's it would it would just destroy
her I'm pretty sure but it's just it
just seemed

like I mean just because things are bad
now doesn't mean you should just give up
that you know the only Sure Fire way of
failing is to quit to give up that is
the the 100% certain way of
failure

so I mean it was a consideration I mean
it's something that is is always an

option it's just that I just it never
got bad enough that I decided to take
that

option I remember one time um there's a
certain kind of Lily That Grew wild
around my cave and somebody warned me
you know don't don't eat that don't eat
the bulb of this Lily because it's
deadly poison and so one time I just
casually asked a 1 supporter um you know
how many would you have to eat for it to
be lethal and um I don't remember her
answer but then shortly after that she
secretly had some friend of hers go out
and just pull up all the all the lies
around my cave just in case I decided to

take one or

two but uh yeah I mean I considered it

it was it's it was always an option but

um I'm glad I didn't I mean from from

the Buddhist point of view that you

don't really solve anything other than

it might just be like a quick fix

but your karma remains and you might

even have worse Karma because you have

laid violent hands upon yourself so to

speak which is going to have a karmic

effect and I mean you just get born

again into the same general dilemma so

your best bet is to solve the problem as

well as you can rather than just give up

and rather than just quit because I mean

even giving up and quitting It's Just

Landing you I mean it might give you 9 months vacation inside a new mama's belly but still you're just going to be reborn into the same [__] so you're you're better off learning to deal with it just learning how to accept the situation and master it then you won't need to get reborn again so I guess the only real question here was that have I ever considered that and yeah I can considered it quite a lot actually when I was a monk not recently but when I was a monk just living in a cave in central Burma um sometimes things would get pretty awful and uh you know I would consider it I

had I had like an escape plan but I
never took the escape
plan so I'm just going to move on the
next question this is from Master Poe
and master Poe says Nirvana the end of
redundancy question mark so is nirvana
the end of redundancy so that would mean
that samsara is
redundancy and in a in a way kind of I
mean samsara is is symbol samsara is
perception perception is samsara the
world we are living in that we think
we're living in is perception and
perceptions are symbols so a symbol is
like a generalization
um I think it was Sig uh I almost said
Sigman Freud U bertran Russell who said

that every word in the English language
except this and that are generalizations
so it's like what we're doing is we're
taking a bunch of experiences and
lumping them together and putting them
into one word which is a
symbol and so I mean in a way that's a
kind of redundancy you know you can't
have like a new word for every unique
experience

I mean if you live in the the absolute
particular nothing has a name because
any kind of name even to a person is
really just a
generalization like Napoleon bonapart it
wasn't just this one entity it's a

generalization of all these I mean he was changing from one moment to the next and he was composed of all these different particles and and so forth so it wasn't just one thing it was just this group of constantly changing things that for the sake of convenience we call Napoleon

bonapart and so that's just the way perception works is a kind of redundancy it's it's like generalized symbolism and symbols are kind of redundant at least they're repetitive you know it's like it's you use the same symbols to represent lots of different things which is a kind of redundancy I guess but I'm not exactly sure what

Master Po meant by

redundancy and uh I didn't look it up in the dictionary before I I started doing this Q&A and I'm not looking it up now because I'm moving on to the next question and this is from

java I don't know how to pronounce some of these names Java Java says I came across one of your reply on CT discussion about reporting theft can be paraja I was little confused there is it about the case that monk receives some sort of compensation for their theft report if monk witness a theft or robbery then he reported to police or authority would be paraja even though

the monk is not asking any reward for
the report three question marks also
what if he doesn't report theft robbery
looting any

copy okay well I guess that's two
questions so what the hell let's
separate them

up see got to separate them if it's more
than one

question okay so I do not know what a CT
discussion is and I think Java

misunderstood what I was saying um I

never would say that to to report a

theft can be part of jica I can't think

of a situation in which reporting a

theft would be part of even if you got

paid for like you got a reward let's say

a year from now there will be bounties
for reporting illegal aliens in the
United States that you'll get a reward
of \$500 \$500 for every illegal alien
report some Monk reports an illegal
alien gets the \$500 I mean that wouldn't
be part of G I mean it would be nigia
pachia for handling
money but it wouldn't be paraj jaica I
mean you have to actually kill somebody
or steal somebody or have sex with
somebody or lie to somebody about having
attained supernormal superhuman mental
States that's paraja four paragas
killing stealing sex well I guess sex is
first sex stealing murder and

deliberately lying about having attained
superhuman States and reporting a theft
is none of these and so yeah reporting a
theft would not be part of J I think
what Java is thinking of and
misunderstood is that let's say a monk
has some possession let's say it's his
Ms bowl and let's say a thief steals his
alms Bowl if that monk snatches it back
from that Thief that monk can be part of
jaica for stealing from that thief
because the monk isn't supposed to own
property so he he shouldn't have
personal property so in a way that bull
wasn't really his personal property the
monk wanted to steal it
then but I mean there is kind of a

loophole to this in that if the monk has not given up a claim to it he still considers it to be his property then by snatching it back he probably wouldn't be part of jaica but if he has given up hope on getting it back let's say somebody steals his bowl and he just considers it lost he's already like made efforts to find another Bowl you know he just has given up claim on that bowl and then he sees that bowl later if he if he takes it then he's guilty of stealing that bowl because it's now somebody else's property he has given up any claim to it and then you know he just assumes that it's gone it's not his bowl

anymore and then he sees it and tries to take it back then then he could be guilty of stealing um under certain circumstances I've been told that even just snatching back something that is snatched from you can be theft just because of the monks not supposed to own anything idea but that's I think that's debatable that that could be controversial I think there'd be serious monks taking both sides on that one so but but still I think for sure if somebody steals from a monk the monk has given up hope on getting it back and then sees it and takes it then he's stealing and then he he would be paraja because theft is one of the paraja

offenses so the next question let see
also what if he doesn't report theft
robbery looting any a no I mean not
doing anything is never against the
rules I mean no action is morally
neutral you don't break a rule by not
doing anything and except for maybe in
certain cases a a monk that grows his
fingernails too long then like if the
fingernail sticks out past the meat of
your finger then that's considered to be
too long that can be an offense so the
monk can just sit there and not do
anything and let his fingernails grow
until it's an offense I mean something
like that maybe but even that would be

morally neutral inaction in Buddhism is
morally neutral I've already discussed
this earlier on you could just sit there
and watch somebody drown and you're not
necessarily doing anything wrong at all
you could watch the trolley run over the
10 people instead of pulling the lever
so that it only runs over one person
you'd actually be doing worse by pulling
the lever from the point of view of just
ancient Indian Buddhist
ethics and a lot of modern westerners
won't like that because it goes against
their culturally conditioned ethical
code it doesn't matter so
what so I'm just going to move on to
this question this is from Kasa with a K

and Kasa spelled with a K says hello
where venerable saruta a dry Vision
arahant without having any Supernatural
power or such I've read that he was
liberated by both ways IE ubat
bagaut and how does it relate to that
thank you well that's kind of like two
questions is I got separate him we're
probably up to 50 questions at this
point so the first question is was
venerable saruta a dry Vision Aran
according to tradition no he was not he
had Jan and there's one weird sua I
think it's in the uh udana of venerable
saruta who is sitting in um the
cessation of perception and feeling you

know he was just deep deep deep deeper
than fourth Jan and some yaka like ogre
comes along and just Wallops him in the
head just for fun and that he because he
was an ogre or a yaka he hit that he hit
Sara's head so hard that it would have
split a mountain in but saruta didn't
even feel it so after um so after the
yaka does this he immediately the the
Earth just opens up he plunges into hell
for having walloped an arant upside the
head and then finally saruta comes out
of this deep meditation
and molana who's there says didn't you
notice anything just now and sorrya says
no but I do have a little bit of a
headache so the whole purpose of me

telling this story is to point out that venerable Sor paa did have definitely he was a master of Janna he had psychic powers didn't use them as much as molana did but he was definitely not a dry Vision Oran and so moving on to kasa's second question with a K mind you says without having any Supernatural power or such okay I've read that he was liberated by both ways IE ubat bagaut and how does it relate to that thank you to tell you the truth this whole idea of the different ways of Liberation including the Liberation by both ways the ubat bagaut it's obviously an artifact of later Buddhist attempts at

philosophy I'm fairly certain the Buddha
didn't teach anything remotely
resembling this it's just
more academic stuff that knowing it
might make you like more literate in
Orthodox Theravāda Buddhism but you get no
benefit whatsoever aside from that it's
just not a useful thing to be pursuing I
mean there's other things like how to
meditate well that you'd probably get
much more benefit than from studying
this kind of stuff
that it's it's found only in what
are based on the evidence later sūtras
you know it's just a later development
in Buddhist philosophy where in ancient
Indian philosophers including Buddhist

ones just could not leave well enough
alone they keep wanting to elaborate and
complicate things and systematize things
come up with new things to fill in gaps
perceived gaps this kind of thing and
this different ways of becoming
enlightened different kinds of um you
know the three different kinds of
Buddhas and the the different ways of
getting Liberation and all this it's
just I mean it doesn't
matter I never had any interest in it I
never bothered to to memorize it or
anything like that just because it just
it was just a dud you know it just it
was just a a clunk you know it didn't

really strike a cord it was just it did not appeal to me at all it just did not strike me as anything worth knowing and so I just let it slide so maybe you some like really Orthodox monk who just knows believes all of it and has studied all of it and knows all of it you'd be better off asking him question about that kind of thing but according to tradition Sara venerable Sara definitely had Jana and so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from avenity and we've already been going for two hour this is going to be at least three hours I just have this feeling avenity says when a person is addicted as they get more and more into the

addiction they gradually lose interest in their relationships Hobbies goals until the only thing that's left on their mind is to pursue the addictive substance or behavior supposing that person overcame the addiction would it be easier or harder for them to become enlightened since they got free from the only desire they had in life well I mean it wasn't really the only desire they had in life it was the main one but even like a drug addict is going to have other desires um besides that and I mean it can go either way I mean there's all kinds of people some people that have been addicted to something I mean even

dhama can be can be an addiction I mean
that's largely how people can become
enlightened through practice is they
just lose all interest and everything
else they just become obsessed with
practicing dhama and becoming
enlightened and that becomes like their
last big addiction their last big
attachment and then finally they're able
to break that attachment and then then
it's easy relatively speaking even
effortless so in a way it's kind of
almost like a like a worldly
unskillful equivalent the Dark Side of
just theomania just being addicted to
religion um so with some people I mean
who are have some root in wisdom have

some uh Insight then yeah if they've been addicted to something then they could and they break the addiction then they can apply that to Breaking the addiction to just living in samsar the addiction to worldliness the addiction to you know craving and desire you know they can just sort of use the same kind of attitude to break that addiction and then it can really help them whereas some people they just don't have much wisdom much Insight you know they just break an addiction and then they just become addicted to something else like um there was an old saying the only cure for dipso Mania is theomania which means

the only cure for alcoholism is defined
religion you know you're just replacing
one attachment with another one Carl

Young said something similar where he's
saying that you know if you eliminate
some mental like attitude or force in
your mind it has to be replaced by one
of equal

intensity so maybe you break the
addiction to a drug or whatever or sex
or whatever it is you replace that with
an addiction to Dharma then that can
help you or just the the Insight you get
the experience of knowing how to break
an addiction to a drug or whatever it is
can then help you to break the addiction
to worldliness or just s Sara in

general but not everybody's going to have that wisdom so it depends on the person but I I'm not sure if it's going to make it harder for anyone just the ability to break an addiction is a good thing but whether it will be used uh in a higher more spiritual sense or not depends on the individual so let's see

I'm just going to move on next question this is from

Michael and Michael says could you do a talk on the relationship between Buddhism and stoicism and I really don't know enough about stoicism I do think that Buddhism would come closer to

cynicism like classical cynicism than
stoicism like cynicism was like the the
predecessor the Forerunner the Prototype
of stoicism and it was more of a
renunciation like Buddhism is you know a
stoic or a a cynic philosopher like
diogenes in a way they were like a
homeless ascetic like an early Buddhist
monk you know they'd just wear wear rags
and beg for food I think the the cynics
were allowed to beg for money but they
weren't supposed to to get rich doing it
you know probably just beg for enough
money to pay for your food that
day so I do think that uh the
relationship between Buddhism and
cynicism would be more interesting the

stoics took some like the best philosophical aspects of cynicism and kind of did away with a lot of the actual practical aspect of like renunciation of the world and all that but I really don't know enough about stoicism to give like an intelligent like educated talk about it and so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from thermal squid and thermal squid um has got some long questions here or rather he's got a short question followed by a long comment on the question and at least in this first case it it will help to understand the question so I guess I'll

read the entire little paragraph following the question here so thermos squid says are there elements of predestination in Enlightenment or Buddhism and that's the question are there elements of predestination in Enlightenment or Buddhism and then uh as a kind of explanation of what he's getting at he says I have thought about this in relationship to other spiritual systems speaking of souls or people who are just intrinsically doomed to hell or non-salvation such as the Gnostic Hilik the Eternal destined suffering of some jivas in Dvanta and then finally the Calvinist ideas of predestination it seems to me that the notion of people or

beings who are intrinsically trapped without any way of Escape AP is found especially in ancient polytheistic religions too or at least resign to a poor fate and afterlife I feel that Buddhism has retained some of these elements in some ways such that I cannot think of what will happen or occur to most in the world that some people's Karma totally traps them and that it's a rare miracle that they could escape and in respect to the tendency or ability to be able to hear or receive the dhama and progress in meditation being qualifiable until one is completely enlightened Etc I am suspicious that

Karma actually plays a major role in your ability to become enlightened and that Enlightenment must be the esoteric of the esoteric in the way that you and the early text describe for some people it really is a better luck next time issue or even worse because there is no finitude of beings agnosis is seemingly generated or established eternally this thought concerns me greatly much like the metaphor of the wind blowing through the window there isn't anything we can do but open it up or pull back the drapes in that way Enlightenment as an attainment seems completely arbitrary um well let's just go way up here to the actual question are there

elements of predestination in

Enlightenment Buddhism

um first of all I would say the Buddha did reject determinism like the aivas were determinists the aicas were like a spiritual philosophical School in the Buddhist time they're now extinct but they were strict determinists they believed that you're going to live something like 84,000 lives from start to finish and then that's it you know it's just all predetermined just all cause and effect the Buddha rejected that said it was it was a wrong view that you I mean you make Bad Karma for yourself by believing that but he also

rejected Free Will so that he he pretty
much rejected both obvious
alternatives on the other hand there is
some some predestination in Buddhism in
that Buddhas can make Prophecies of the
future and I gotta get rid of this
little popup window so a Buddha can make
a prophecy of the future like any Buddha
has to be prophesied to be a future
Buddha by some previous Buddha so in
order to be bodh sat from the terava
point of view you there has to be like
what's called a bate in Burmese where a
Buddha is going to single out this
person and say in a future age you are
going to be a Buddha called such and
such and you know he'll give a few

details of the life of what this person
is going to become when he becomes a
Buddha so I mean that's kind of I mean
it seems suggestive of predestination
it's it's Destiny it seems seems like
but then at the same time in terraa
Buddhism there the future doesn't exist
so that you like a Buddha any kind of
being with like Clairvoyance or whatever
cannot see into the future because the
future is just flatly
non-existent according to Orthodox
terraa and so according to the
commentarial tradition what the Buddha
does is he uses his omniscience to
extrapolate

but it's kind of hard to extrapolate
something that's going to happen you
know eons in the future on some distant
future

Earth so it's not a very good
explanation I think the sarasti Vaden
School of Buddhism maybe were a little
more correct with a more einsteinian
view of

time but still predestination is out I
mean in the strict sense of just strict
determinism but then

thermal squid is I mean his
commentary is is seems to be going in a
different direction than just asking
about like

predestination in that I

mean it it is true that in Buddhism very
very few people become enlightened even
people who are trying to become
enlightened even people who have
dedicated their lives to it like monks
and nuns even just a tiny minority of
them less than 1% actually
succeed

so in a way you're you're kind of
Trapped being who you are you're stuck
being who you are and most people don't
even want to become enlightened so
that's that's one thing most people are
trying to remain unenlightened because
they just don't know any
better so I mean it's salvation and

non-salvation and all that it's in in
a way it's kind of Christian terminology
because in Buddhism it's it's just so
I'm sorry you just keep going and
evolving you know just going through
these various lives it's not like you
got one shot at Salvation And if you
fail you burn in hell forever and ever
it's it's more there's more Cosmic
Justice than that and that we wind up
where we want to be we wind up what is
where it is most appropriate for our
attitude like I was saying with regard
to rebirth uh in answer to a previous
question it's like we land where just I
mean we're creating our own reality so
if you have a crude mind you're creating

a crude reality if you have a more
subtle mind you create a more subtle
reality and I mean what is unjust in
that we are creating it through our own
volition even though we're too
semiconscious as a general rule to
realize that we're creating it we think
it's just we're just passively
experiencing this out external world
when actually we have put ourselves into
this
situation

so yeah I mean he says it seems to me
that the notion of people are beings who
are intrinsically trapped without any
way of Escape is found especially well

yeah I mean but they're the ones who are doing it to themselves it's not some God punishing

them we're we're putting ourselves where our own volition lands us so I mean to to say that that's

that's unfair or something It just strikes me as as kind of

ridiculous unless we're just unfair to ourselves yeah for some people it really is a better luck next time issue yeah

almost everybody I mean if that is in fact you consider Enlightenment to be the goal then almost nobody reaches the goal in this life it's just like

an I mean it's extremely long process of just people evolving spiritually

until they're at the point when they
even realize that they should be like
reaching for something higher or
better so let's see
here in that way Enlightenment as an
attainment seems completely
arbitrary yeah I'm not sure I mean in a
way it's it's not the result of a cause
Nirvana is not the result of a Cause
but it's it's just so difficult to
explain especially to someone who
insists on just like logical coherence
and so forth that I mean that in itself
is a kind of handicap or it can be at
times
so yeah I mean getting back to the

actual question up at the top here are
there elements of predestination in
Enlightenment Buddhism it seems like
unofficially unofficially yes
technically officially no but the the
idea that most people just are not in a
position they've got almost zero
potential to become Enlighten because
they're just not ripe for it yet they
don't even want it
yet that yeah I mean that's just it just
seems to be like a a fair description of
the actual situation and whether it's
whether it's just or not just it's
strikes me as almost
nonsensical because we are doing it to
ourselves through our own

volition it may not be free volition and we're just like semiconscious so that we don't most people aren't even aware that there's any kind of choice to be made but I mean even like the average person like the average lay Buddhist who isn't even trying for full Liberation they can at least try to live a virt life and wind up in you know in a better situation than the one they're in at this moment but for example let's say You' got someone born to a crack addicted black prostitute in Detroit and they just have the cards I mean they just got dealt a shitty hand from the beginning you know they have no

no exposure to dhamon even if they did
it would just strike them as [_]
the yeah yeah I mean there are beings
like that and like the the entire animal
realm or almost the entire animal realm
is like that too whereas all these
beings countless billions of them they
just got no chance in this in this life
it's going to be better luck next time
and chances are they're going to be an
animal next time so it's going to be
better luck the time after that or or
better luck after like a billion more
lifetimes as some sort of marine copap
pod some sort of Plankton who knows
but that's just the way it is I mean
whether it's whether it strikes a person

as fair or just or not is is largely irrelevant and I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's next question which is do you have wait did I skip one oh okay yeah I did no I almost I almost skipped one so his next question feelings about the naturalistic fallacy and whether or not it has any Merit and I'm not going to read the the little essay commentary to this one um the naturalistic fallacy is just the idea that if it's natural it's good that natural is necessarily better than unnatural and that's not necessarily the case I mean like modern medicine is kind of unnatural but still it's better than

just having diseases in my opinion I mean modern medicine has has had some fails but still as a general rule the lifespan of the average human human is especially in in the Civilized part of the world you know the the more developed part of the world is significantly longer and less gruesome because of say eradicating small pox or developing antibiotics and it's it's not exactly natural antibiotics I mean they kind of come from nature but still I mean making the little pill is not natural or unless you opt the Buddhist point of view where anything that happens is just natural by definition I mean humans are still in

nature and we're just creating a strange version of of it for ourselves but still it's all natural in that sense but uh the naturalistic fallacy uh yeah just because something is natural doesn't mean it's good I mean like Nature has not designed us to be happy nature uses pain and suffering to get us to do what Mother Nature wants us to do which is to stay alive long enough to propagate our Gene sequences

so I mean as a general rule I mean we are sort of naturally evolved to fit into a natural environment and so I think maybe more

than half the time what is natural would be better than what is unnatural but there are a lot of exceptions to that like modern medicine or even becoming enlightened is pretty unnatural just the the things you have to do to yourself like being celibate for example is kind of unnatural it's not completely unnatural because I'm sure there have been a lot of males especially that just never got a mate you know it's it's common throughout the many species in the animal kingdom that you have like Bachelor herds of young males that just don't mate because it's the the the alphas that get all the females so yeah I mean nature really is not

designed for us to be

happy and

so it may be that living a life that is

more conducive to happiness is just

going to have to be

unnatural and developing wisdom and so

forth that there's going to be a certain

amount of unnaturalness but like I said

in Buddhist philosophy if it happens

it's natural

like there is no unnatural or

Supernatural it's just whatever happens

is just de facto just practically by

definition it's

natural

so let's see uh I think I'm just going

to move on because this really is going to be a long a long Q&A I just have this feeling we're going to go more than three

hours so thermal squids third question do you have any chronic pain or age related pain or aches also do you find your stomach hurting at all or often and he's got sort of a shorter commentary here so I might as well says I'm 24 and I'm starting to develop back pain and such despite a highly active and non-sedentary lifestyle religious eating and Superstition so on I'm not sure if I'm a hypochondriac or have a mental disorder but I really feel old all the time no matter what I do I wonder if

tolerating or becoming more accustomed
to pain as a feet of age or if it's a
psychic thing where I'm just hyper aware
of my body I see you drink sometimes
several Red Bulls and wonder if this
hurts to do well I actually had a a Java
monster this time no Red Bull this time
but I mean it seems like the commentary
to his questions don't always fit the
actual question so let's just go up to
the question here that's all I'm
technically required to answer is the
question

do you have any chronic pain or age
related pains or aches also do you find
your stomach hurting at all or often

well I'll get to the second part for my
stomach i' in order to be a monk you
pretty much have to have a cast iron
stomach so my stomach
usually it it doesn't hurt almost never
do I have stomach
aches it has happened though that I mean
it whether it has anything to do with me
being a monk for 30 years or not I don't
know but for 30 years I ate only in the
morning so now if I eat or drink um I
mean milk is okay but some things if I
eat or drink like within two hours of
going to bed I start getting acid reflux
which is something I never really
experienced um before I dropped out of
the monk Hood where it's like the

stomach acid is accumulating to you know help you digest what's ever in your stomach and then when I lie down in bed can like burp up into my esophagus and then it kind of burns my esophagus and then I can't sleep and then I got to get up and take an acid tablets or and or Pepto Bismol and then I got to prop my head up on like three pillows just so I won't be completely horizontal it'll be enough of an angle that the stomach acid doesn't get up into my esophagus U with regard to chronic pain or age related pains or AES um yeah my joints I mean as I'm getting older there is a bit more joint pain and stiffness

which is just symptomatic of old age um
especially like in really cold weather
or like really rainy weather you get
more like pain and stiffness in the
joints um strangely right after I
stopped being a monk I had like pain in
my hip joints where like where my my
thigh bone my femur enters the pelvis
then it was it would hurt so bad it was
hard even to get into a car sometimes to
lift up my leg enough to get into a car
and it turns out that that was caused by
sitting in the full Lotus for hours
every day for so many years just sitting
cross-legged on the floor meditating and
then when I sto doing that it was just
it was like the joints or the ligaments

had to restructure

themselves um and it it was it was

painful but as a general rule I mean um

as I get older there is more stiffness

in the joints and

um I mean it's it's just something that

I just have to accept I mean there's not

much I can do about it so it's just you

just accept the situation I was an

aesthetic professional aesthetic for

long enough that a certain amount of

pain and discomfort is just is just some

it's just life really just an aspect of

life and there's going to be negativity

in life regardless of what you do or

don't do and so stiff joints I mean it's

acceptable way of burning off the
necessary negativity in my life at least
some of

it so I'm just going to move on to the
next question this is from yugao and
yugao says hello how are you how is the
new job well I'm fine and the new job is
it's it's stressful and hectic sometimes
I mean it can be a hectic job I mean
it's sometimes it's just like this
chaotic Maelstrom going on where you've
got it's like 25 or 30 forklifts all on
the same dock just unloading trailers
and loading other trailers and just I
mean you're avoiding collisions much of
the time cuz some people drive like
absolute Maniacs some people drive like

maniacal

idiots and so you got like somebody
backing out of a trailer here you zip
this way somebody's coming out this way
through a shortcut you you the other way
it's like you're just like zipping
around just trying to you know do your
job while at the same time avoiding
maniacs and sometimes you're the maniac
too I guess works that way too so I do
kind of Miss bending sheet metal I miss
running the trim Brak and making things
that way and uh but still I mean
sometimes it's like when I first get to
work sometimes I hate my job but then
after a few hours as a general rule I

kind of like it it's sort of like
playing a video game but it's like
you're I'm I'm like lazy at first you
I'm a lazy person just by nature and so
I'm all chill I'm at home everything's
calm and then I go to work and just get
plunged into the into the Maelstrom and
so I just I I react with a certain
amount of aversion but then once I get
into the flow of it then it's it's
okay so yeah yeah the new job is uh I
mean I prefer using my brain to make
things there's really not a whole heck
of a lot of intelligence required to be
a forklift operator other than just a
certain amount of finesse just like
positioning something with the tips of

the forklift that kind of thing or just learning how to load things so that it doesn't go all sideways 50 miles down the highway that some people they're just totally brainless at work I mean the average IQ of the people at this job site is double digits I mean it's just the way it is it's just what you expect you know it's not like I'm complaining or anything it's just the way it is and so some people I mean they'll load they'll load something into a trailer and I can look at it it's like that's going to be sideways within five miles that when that truck takes off that thing's just going to vibrate and fall

over and I'm not really there to like
fix everybody else's fuckups so
sometimes I just shake my head like oh
well so much for that one but um yeah
it's it's all right I mean it's okay so
I'm just going to move on to yuga's next
question which is don't you think that
in allegory of a cave person that is
free is having a harder time than one
stuck in delusional State having to
explain what he knows to them is ex
exhausting well I mean just because
you've gotten out of the cave doesn't
mean you have to explain what you know
to the people who are still in the
cave so yeah that's that may be the hard
part is coming back into the cave and

trying to explain to the people in the cave that they are in the cave and that's one of the profoundest things I've ever read in Plato I've read most of Plato's works his dialogues um never got around to reading his laws but yeah I mean it is a profound allegory the the whole allegory of the cave Plato's Cave I think it would be an excellent name for like a like a beastro or something Plato's Cave I think there was a some like a beaten dive in New York back in the day called Plato's Cave um but yeah I don't know in some ways it

might be a harder time but they're
they're better equipped to deal with
that harder time
so yeah I'm I'm not exactly sure how to
answer this

question the person who has gotten out
of Plato's Cave and then goes back into
it may have a harder time but then like
I just said they're they're better
equipped to deal with a hard time
because they're free and they're not
chained in a cave looking at flickering
Shadows on the

wall but I mean to some people they just
most people prefer to be chained up I
mean that's just the way it is that's
getting back to what I was saying to

Thermal squid earlier is I mean how unfair is it if it's people just wanting to be there are people just putting themselves in that situation through their own

volition so yeah I mean it's kind of a Fool's errand trying to get people that don't want to wake up to wake up people that don't even know that they're asleep trying to get them to wake up and it's that can really be uh Can it can really be a difficult

job and uh so I mean I think adopting my position of I'm not I'm not saying that I've completely escaped from the cave or any such thing but I mean I'm just

putting it out there for people who are inclined to listen to it and people who aren't interested I'm not going around knocking on doors like a Jehovah's Witness and I'm just going to move on

the next question this is from Mad Gringo and mad Gro says you've mentioned in previous videos um and then there's an arrow and it says mediocre lukewarm lay practice if sitting every morning and evening is the standard Baseline perhaps what might a lay practice look like that is serious one that may actually lead to some semblance of advancement marok

coup well I think what kind of lay practice is would look that serious if

it's the person's top priority in life I mean if if waking up or just cultivating wisdom you know to live a dharmic life is your top priority in life then you are doing well and your practice is good regardless of the external manifestations of that practice regardless of how many hours you sit cross-legged regardless of what books you read regardless of whether you chant or not if like cultivating wisdom is your top priority and you're going about it in a relatively wise way maybe with some guidance from actual dharma then you're doing well but if you've got other priorities

you know like practicing dhama is like
third or fourth on the list then doesn't
matter how many hours you sit doesn't
matter really much of anything else that
it's not really serious dhama practice
and I mean that's fine most people just
aren't in position most people just
aren't ready or they just have other
obligations that they consider to be
like

obligatory that they're just well I'll
just do the best I can and that's that's
that's what they're doing and I mean you
make any effort and it's going to bear
fruit any effort's going to have results
even if it doesn't seem that way at the
time but really I mean serious dhama

practice for anybody is it's your top priority so I'm just going to move on next question this is from Fred and Fred says how does procrit match up with poly and I'm not exactly sure what he means by procrit because paully itself is a procrit that

procrit is like indic languages derived from vidic Sanskrit that were spoken like in ancient up to Medieval Times so any language that is evolved from vidic Sanskrit any indic language spoken in ancient or Medieval Times in India would be procrit and so ply would be procrit the the the mugged mugged that was the precursor of ply that the Buddha himself

presumably spoke was definitely procrit
maybe Fred is referring to the language
of the Jane text which is another kind
of

procrit um how does it match up well I
mean how does Spanish match up with
Italian I mean how I don't know how does
Spanish match up to

Italian I mean it's it's a kind of
question that I'm not sure how to answer
but poly itself is a kind of procrit any
language derived from Sanskrit that was
a like a spoken language not classical
Sanskrit that wouldn't count as Pro but
just like the the language that the
people were talking that that language
was evolved from vidic Sanskrit you know

the the Indo Aran Invaders the language
that they were speaking then it it
counts as procrit and I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is
from Julie Caesar I think that's I'm not
exactly sure how to pronounce this it's
Julie Caesar I think and Julie Caesar
says why the Buddha didn't become awaken
through meditation taught by his two
previous teachers did he invented a new
form of meditation and yeah I was
mentioning this earlier and I've
mentioned this in a few Q&A videos
previously that you've got the legend
where the Buddha renounces the world he
wants to become

enlightened and then so first he goes to these two teachers or one after the other one of them teaches him all he teaches him seven Jas including three the first three formless JRE so this probably an anachronism this probably is not historically accurate this is a Legend So then he he didn't get enlightened from that so then he goes to another teacher who teaches him even the highest formless jna and then the Buddha says I mean he realized he still wasn't enlightened and so then he tries six years of self- torture like the like what the Janes and the aicas were doing just trying to burn off his karma that way and become enlightened by burning up

his karma that didn't work and then
according to the to the tradition
according to the legend he recalls as a
child oh wait okay he recalls as a child
sitting under the the shade of a rose
apple

tree and he just spontaneously went into
first jna and then the Buddha or the
buddhis SAT at this point thinks that's
it that's how that's how to become
enlightened and it just doesn't make
sense because he had already mastered
first Janna realized it was not
conducive to Enlightenment so there's
something missing in this Legend and it
may be that what he invented was

mindfulness meditation or sa

batana but it may be that the the people
who like the legend and you guys stop it
back

there the the two little dogs are in
heat and so they're continually raping
each

other yeah you're silly

so let's see here where was I before
before that

happened let's see oh yeah so it may be
that the people who formulated the
legend were just really keen on Janna
and so they had him go back to Janna as
a way of becoming lightened but um it
just doesn't make good sense and so it
could be that it was like s batana that

the Buddha really um you know like weasa
was what separated um Buddhist
Meditation from the previous
unenlightening kinds of meditation and
it is a kind of myth or belief among a
lot of Buddhists that that is what sets
Buddhist Meditation above other kinds of
meditation is that the Buddhists have
weasa you know they've got Insight
Meditation where you can get liberating
Insight but Insight can just happen
spontaneously after you've practiced
Janna so I don't not sure that that
would be it but like mindfulness or sa
batana might be really what the Buddha
like I don't know if he invented it or

you know I mean be more like he
discovered it or maybe he learned it
from some other teacher that just never
got famous it's hard to
say

so I guess I answer that question and so
I'm just going to move on to Julie's
Caesar's second question what kind of
puzzle games are popular in Burma chess
go

Sudoku well puzzle games I mean chess
there is chess in Burma in fact there's
two kinds of Chess in Burma there's
Western kind of Chess and then there's
like a specifically Burmese version of
Chess which was derived independently of
Western chess from the original Indian

chess chess comes originally from India and so the burmes have this other kind of Chess which is played on a chess board I think it's the same number of squares I'm not 100% sure on that and it's got the same pieces you know like the the eight pawns and the two Rooks two Bishops two knights king and queen except I'm pretty sure the the movements that that the pieces can make are different and also I think each player gets to position his pieces on the board as he likes you know on his side of the board so you can set them up they don't have to be like in the two two rows that you

can sort of strategize in the way you
you start out with your
pieces so aside from that I mean I
wasn't really into games when I was a
monk in Burma I did see a lot of times
guys sitting at t- Shops playing some
kind of like Skittle pool where it's
instead of balls on a big pool table it
was like a smaller square with like
wooden discs that they flick with their
fingers so I mean they played that
there's a lot of like dice they gamble
they gamble for money with dice and uh
now I'm kind of distracted by what the
the Poopers are doing back there because
I don't want them to be doing anything
inappropriate on this video even though

they're doing inappropriate things in
the backyard pretty much all the
time

so yeah I guess that would be it I mean
I really don't know what kind of puzzles
Burmese people do but they they do play
chess not a lot of them I it's sort of
like how many people in America play
chess but there is like it's a
specifically

burmes traditional kind of Chess that is
different from the chess that we play in
the west although both kinds can be
found there so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Stellar
Supreme former known as Libra lamb and

occasionally still known as Libra lamb
and he says do you suppose there could a
parallel between Powers over the
material world and debts to the material
world where in the tragedy of the story
of Maham mogana would be emblematic of
such Powers the context of my question
is of astrology depicting forces Beyond
ordinary comprehension or control and
these forces being perceived as being
like hungry Titans well from the
Buddhist point of view it's all Karma I
mean a ology is a kind of from a
Buddhist point of view it's a kind of
animal knowledge and I do think that
Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra
lamb and occasionally still known as

Libra lamb has been obsessed with astrology on the Discord server for several days at this point and personally I am skeptical of astrology I mean it could be some kind of Cipher but the position of some planet or asteroid I just do not see how it's going to have any formative effect on my personality I think that uh it started off as just a kind of I don't know in a way kind of like a more or less superstitious way of trying to get a grip on certain mysterious and potentially scary aspects of life and I mean it works well enough to satisfy people and I mean from the Buddhist

point of view it's it's all a matter of
karma or

Karma I did write an essay years ago
when I was a monk in Burma um that talks
about tarot cards and astrology and
Ouija boards and compared that with how
Karma works and it's it's like you
already have a certain knowledge deep
down but you your your conscious ego
doesn't believe it has this knowledge
and doesn't have a way of tapping into
that knowledge directly and so it forms
an outward gimmick like tarot cards
Ouija boards astrology charts and then
it uses that as a kind of gimmick you
know you can't believe that you have the
the knowledge in your subconscious mind

but you do believe that this these cards
can help you to understand this
knowledge or the Ouija board or
channeling or whatever it is the the
astrology like the natal charts and all
this and I mean it's it's just like a
crutch to help you use your own innate
psychic abilities to apply it to
whatever it is you're going to apply it
to and the thing is
um like even spiritual teachings work
the same way where if it's your karma to
hear something that means it's already
potentially inside you in a way you
already deep down know it if you're
going to learn something that it's your

karma to hear this and therefore you've already got like the latent knowledge inside of you which is just brought to the surface that was like the main point of the the essay that I wrote but uh yeah I think astr I really don't have much appreciation for astrology even though it may work to a certain degree in a way it's it's like a cipher for something else cuz I really cannot I really cannot comprehend how the position of some asteroid in the asteroid belt for example is going to have any effect whatsoever on my conscious mind or my destiny anything like that maybe like Seasons but even I mean

astrology is kind of messed up like the
due to a a phenomenon called precession of
the equinoxes that a Leo like I'm a Leo
but I wasn't born under Leo the sun was
not in Leo when I was born because
precession of the equinoxes has
everything shifted by at least one sign
so technically a Leo was now born in
Virgo so either Leos now or Leos and
Virgo it's like how's this work now I'm
confusing myself so if what a Leo used
to be is like what a Virgo is now or
vice versa just because either that or
it's it's not the sun sign at all that's
doing it because as I say Leo isn't born
under the under the sunsh sign isn't

when the sun is in Leo anymore due to precession of the equinoxes so yeah I mean it would take somebody to really just back me up against a wall and just through sheer force of of re reason and logic would to just convert me over to thinking that astrology is is legit but again we Leos are naturally skeptical so that's probably the the thing that I'm having right now and I'm moving on to a different

question well should I should I move on to another question I mean did I do justice to Stellar Supreme formerly known as lib Lam and still occasionally known as lib lands question here do you

suppose there could be a parallel
between Powers over the material material
world and debts to the material world I
don't even fully understand that which
is it's it's it's a common predicament
when Le Stell Supreme
Etc asks questions because he's just
this strangely cerebral type of
person oh yeah but I mean going with
within the context of Buddhism the whole
deal with Maham Moana I mean it was not
some Powers over the material world
other than Maham ulana's own Karma Plus
plus indirectly the karma of the people
that were bound to murder
him so I'm just I'm going to move on to

next question and we we are getting kind of close to the bottom I guess so yeah it's already three hours this could wind up being one of the longest q&as I've ever done and we really may have to shorten it down to like two questions each even though most of the people haven't asked very many questions it's just more people asking questions now which is fine you know not complaining I mean that's why we're here right of course it is so anyways next question is from Raphael and Raphael says do you know aan punam's view on the Eternal cheetah doctrine of his Thai Forest tradition and no I have not heard aan Punam discuss the the one who knows the

mind that knows this kind of self view
that Ty Forest monks um many of them
have that it seems to be fairly common
to have kind of
anotic understanding of mind or
cheah um that technically speaking is
unorthodox and heretical wrong
view but uh yeah ajan pun he's never
told me himself and I've never seen
anything on his videos I don't watch his
his I don't watch monk videos hardly at
all so I have not been exposed to his
ideas on the subject assuming that he
has uh conveyed those ideas at at any
time but um I would assume it's not that
different from what other monks ordained

in the Thai Forest tradition would say
on the subject which is that
Consciousness is a kind of crypto Soul
or self sort of like the upanishads say
with regard to the Atman the Atman is
Brahman which is essentially um infinite
formless

Consciousness and it's not Orthodox
Buddhism but then again I mean I'm not
an orthodox terot a Buddhist but I can
appreciate the the early Buddhist idea
of just not reifying the absolute the
name that can be named is not the
Eternal name trying to describe the
highest truth is just a Fool's errand it
is futility of
futilities and it just giv give somebody

something to cling to you're better off
just leaving it alone and just not
trying to wrap your head around it you
can try to experience it directly
through

meditation but you won't be able to
really validly put it into words Even If
you experience it for

yourself and I'm going to move on to the
next question this is from rpad or

rpap and he says did you ever shave your
head with a straight razor and I would
never dare take a straight razor to my
own head or face I'm I'm I'm so glad
that the safety razor was invented

before I was born because I'm kind of a

clut sometimes and it would just be a
matter of time before I would gash
myself

severely um when I was ordained every
monk at his ordination has to have all
of the requisites which includes a razor
for shaving his head and in my bowl I
had this Remington electric razor which
it turns out was not good for shaving
heads and the senior monk his name was
usil l seatt usil l who presided over um
my ordination you know he was checking
to make sure I had all the requisites
and he sees the Remington electric
shaver in my bow instead of the standard
straight Razer he says something like
yeah we are in the modern

West but I did have a straight Razer you know occasionally somebody would donate a straight razor and uh I did get shaved with my my straight razor once some some Burmese monk offered to shave my head and so I said all right and he used my Straight Razer and I had never used that straight Razer before I had never sharpened it and it was dull and it hurt like

hell but I have seen monks sh getting shaved with straight razor in fact at mahag Gand on this big school Monastery that I spent a little over a year at they would even sharpen up like a butter knife and there'd be monks that were

that were like shaving the head of
another Monk with like a a sharpened
butter

knife so I think I might have just
answered the second question from rpad
which is our straight razor is common
for monks nowadays to have one is pretty
common and among Burmese monks to use
them is pretty common although usually
they will shave each other's head
instead of shaving their own head with a
straight razor and I mean I as I said I
would not dare to even make the
attempt so um I have found and those of
you who plan on becoming monks may may
uh benefit from paying close heed to
this is that a shik injector single

blade is the best razor I ever came
across for shaving heads you don't want
double blades or triple blades I mean
now they got like you know six blades or
something all in the same little thing
but if you have more than one blade the
the hair just gets stuck in between the
blades and plugs it up and it it's it
doesn't work nearly as well well but a
shik injector single blade it works
really good for shaving heads I highly
recommend

it but uh again some a lot of Burmese
monks use straight razors so I'm just
going to move on to the next question
this is from xenoid and we're getting

close to the bottom here only two more
questioners xenoid and somebody
else and uh 306 yeah we might not even
break any records for extreme L
excruciatingly long
video so xenoid says if you were a Hindu
would you be a vaishnavite or a shite
Shiva as a destruction God seems
antithetical to Buddhism there is even a
book entitled Nicha and the dance of
Shiva by Miguel Sano Nicha said he would
only believe in a God who knows how to
dance and Shiva destroys the universe by
dancing ING with all this being said
Vishnu preserves the universe and
therefore preserves Sam Sara so maybe he
isn't much better from the Buddhist

point of view well for starters if I were a Hindu would I be a vaishnavite or a shite well I mean if I was in a Hindu in India I'd probably just follow whichever form of Buddhism or whichever form of Hinduism I should say was prevalent in my culture like vaishnavites are more of a northw Western India thing and shites are more of a Southern India thing although of course there's lots of exceptions um I do think that the shites have better music than the vaishnavites on the other hand according to the Hindus the Buddha himself was an avatar of

Vishnu which would make the Buddha
pretty much Vite or hind or Buddhists
would be kind of vaishnavites in a way
just automat
ically but I have to admit that just
intuitively I prefer Shiva to
Vishnu that Shiva is the aesthetic you
know he's the one in deep meditation in
on Kash Mount kyash you know he's he's
more mysterious more interesting to me
than

Vishnu so if I had to choose I think I
probably would go with Shiva even though
the Buddha himself is considered to be
an avatar

Vishnu but Shiva is just I don't know he
just seems more Macho or something or

more I don't know what it is I really

he's just got like

this what is it Mystique that appeals to

me so I'm going to move on to xeni

void's second question which is an easy

one what is your opinion on Yukio

Mishima and his writings not notably sun

and steel and I am completely unfamiliar

with Yuki Mishima I don't know who yukoh

Mishima is other than the fair

likelihood that he is

Japanese but aside from that he's a

Japanese person who wrote something

called sun and steel that's all I know

about yukoh

Mishima so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is also from
xenoid which is as follows who is the
most important and thought-provoking
Buddhist philosopher alive today when
aan padama was asked this he said aan
Sumo and to tell you the truth I
probably don't know who is the most
important and thought-provoking Buddhist
philosopher alive today because I really
don't keep up with this stuff you know I
don't watch like monk videos on YouTube
I don't read like many Buddhist books
anymore other than just looking up
something in Theo text
which I mean was compos they were
composed very long before anyone alive
today um but I would guess of the ones I

know I think ajan tanero would be more important in with regard to uh I mean provoking thought and also guiding an understanding of Terra Buddhism I do think that aan tanro has written a lot of philosoph opical books and he is influential whereas aan suo I'm not I mean he doesn't write very much and I've listened to a few of his talks that I mean they were he had wisdom but I mean there wasn't anything really like unusually profound or thought-provoking so of the monks alive today I would guess aan tanero but probably the the correct answer would be somebody I I don't even

I'm not even thinking of and don't know of so I'm just going to move on to Virgil and the very last question the very last one and Virgil says do you have any good recommendations for a meditation on the 32 parts of the body I heard this was one of the meditations done by Tong Pulu did he left any written materials on this practice or guided audio meditations um actually ton Pulu se's teachings on the 32 parts of the body I think are contained in living Buddhist Masters which is one of the first books written by Jack cornfield and he wrote it quite a while ago back when Tom pul was still alive so Tom Pulu died like back around n late 7s

or 1980 or something like that so it's been quite a while and it is true that Tom Pulu did teach the 32 parts of the of the body meditation and my teacher who was the direct successor of Tulu who was Tulu chelen doya um he also taught the 32 parts of the body especially to younger people who were troubled with lust it's considered to be uh an efficacious meditation technique for reducing lust and I really don't think that Virgil would be much impressed by some of the aspects of Tom pato's 32 parts of the body meditation because for the way Tom Pulu and the Tom tradition teach the 32

parts of the body meditation it's

practically just a mantra I mean you're

just reciting the body parts you know

like toes D

the and and I mean you're not even

supposed to be visualizing the parts or

where they are in the body anything like

that it's just supposedly when you get

really good at it you get into the flow

the body parts just start like appearing

in your mind

spontaneously and I really don't think

that is the best way of going about it

that probably you should be trying to

apply some meaning to the words you know

head hair body hair nails teeth skin I

mean to do it in English rather than in

poly would probably be of advantage to someone who speaks English more fluently than they speak poly and just to have some like

visualization of each body part but the rest of the tong Pulu way of doing it makes good sense it's like um the 32 parts of the body are divided up into I think it's six groups like the first group is quesa l d

D or head hair body hair nails teeth skin so the first week you go you just do the first five in order then the second week you do the you do the first five backwards you know in reverse order and then the third week you do forwards

and backwards and then the the next week after that you move on to the next group of

five so that would be uh a part of the tong Pulu method of doing the 32 parts of the body that I could recommend you know the first week you do the first group forwards next week SEC the first group backwards next week forwards and backwards and then the next week after that you move on to the next

five um but I don't think just doing it as a mantra is as useful as actually visualized ing the parts and you may refer to a book or refer to the internet to get like a good view of each of the parts that you're visualizing I mean

with regard to the the first five it's all external stuff so you can visualize head hair body hair nails teeth and skin fairly well without having to look it up in a reference book but when you start getting into like spleen and and Marrow and this kind of stuff then it helps for you to actually get a view of what it looks like in order to visualize it and kind of place it in your own body when you're when you're doing the meditation and uh I guess that's it I mean somebody donated to me a book on the 32 parts of the body that had like a photograph I mean it was all like in Japanese or Korean I can't remember now

but there was a photo of each of the 32
Parts here was like a a picture of poop
you know that's one of the 32 Parts is
is feces

so um you that was kind of useful I
suppose but you can find that sort of
thing on the internet I assume you could
probably order it online maybe Amazon
would sell something like that but um
that's it and uh I wish you luck in your
meditation and I I wish all of you
prosperity and good fortune and uh we're
done and like I always should say at the
beginning and I always space it off I
mean that's that's basically it it's
just a matter of habit at this point I
should say if you got any questions

about anything you think I can answer
especially about early Buddhism ter of
Auto Buddhism Buddhism in general
monasticism like the the rules of
monastic discipline meditation like
Eastern philosophy Western philosophy me
personally Burma you think I can answer
a question um feel free to ask it in the
comments below the video no more than
three please and I think we might have
to get down to two soon just because
these videos are getting well over three
hours
long
so um aside from everything else I just
say uh be happy and then I'm going to

hit this button right here

alrighty

then hello and welcome to question and

answer number

134 which is a relatively High number I

am your host pel

basa and last night I came home from

work with kind of a scratchy throat

which when I woke up early this

afternoon had developed had

metamorphosed if you will into a

full-blown sore throat

and now I'm starting to get like a runny

nose and like it's like traveling down

into my trachea or something and seems

like I'm catching a cold no worries

though it appears to be not

life-threatening and uh The Show Must Go
On so we're doing this I actually feel
pretty good despite the uh nasal
irritation and all
that and the throat
irritation I should say so anyways we
don't have a whole heck of a lot of
questions which is good cuz it's going
to give my throat kind of a rest to do
one of these it's less than 3 hours long
so I got the beverage which is here
paper umbrella demonstrating my class
and style and
sophistication and I just stabbed myself
in the
face accidentally with said paper
umbrella but before I start answering

questions I would like to give a shout
out to somebody named Kevin
who cash at me a donation several days
ago and unlike PayPal I haven't figured
out how to message anyone acknowledging
you know the the generosity of Their
donation and all that so I'm doing it
here because I don't know how to do it
otherwise also I would like to uh sort
of uh Express a little bit of I don't
know skeptical cynicism perhaps in the I
mentioned in the previous Q&A that I do
get like acid reflux and somebody asked
a question I didn't just blurt it out
just
unprompted and so I I get these these

comments saying if you got acid reflux
what you need is to drink more
acid like vinegar or something and it
just it just doesn't make sense to me
this seems like some kind of a scam so
anyone who suggested that I did I like
consume more acid because of acid reflux
your name is on a list
now and it doesn't seem to it doesn't
seem to be true I mean I haven't tried
the apple cider vinegar but orange juice
is one of the things that I really
cannot drink you know within like two
hours of going to bed just
because
acid citric acid in this
case plus a little ascorbic acid I

suppose anyways let's just start
answering questions and the first
question is from Master Po and Master Po
says what does ataka waga mean in
English and there are two AA wagas in
the poly toptica one is the chapter of
eights in the angura Naya which goes
it's it's divided up into groups or
chapters from 1 to two to three up to 11
so eight is in between 1 and 11 and so
there is an AA waga of the yur andaya
but the AA waga that I usually mentioned
is in the
sutan and the meaning of that Vaga means
like group or chapter but ataka ATA is
the poly word for eight so it's it's

related to the word English word eight
uh like octo as in Octopus from Greek
you know it's all based on Proto indoan
the C at the end ATA means like a group
of eight or an octad so it is the
chapter of octads and the reason why the
Tica waga is called the chapter of
octads even though it's there's 16 sutas
in there is because there's a core like
a nucleus of four sutas Each of which is
eight stanzas in length and they are
considered to be possibly the four
oldest sutas in the ATA
waga so it's the chapter of octads or
the group of octads
ah so that was relatively easy let's
move on to the next question this is

from mraa Buddha and mraa Buddha says
does karma negate the idea of free will
I don't think that Karma would negate
the idea of Free Will what does negate
the idea of Free Will is no
self um anata in p anat man in Sanskrit
because Free Will implies that there is
this entity that is separate from every
everything around it that is making its
own choices independently to some degree
of everything around it and that would
be a self Buddhism teaches there is no
self so that pretty much kicks Free Will
in the head when you don't have a
self also um the uh
anuta which is considered to be by

tradition the Buddha's second discourse after his Enlightenment he points out that you cannot say let it be this way let it not be that way to any of the five condas and have it reliably happen and one of those five condos is saraa which is volition mainly volition so even your own volitions you do not have complete control over them so that kind of negates the idea of free will also at least to some degree but what mainly kicks Free Will in the head for a Buddhist is the concept of no self because Free Will does imply that there has to be a self that has this Free Will so I'm going to move on to the next

question this is from

Romeo and Romeo says I've been

practicing Insight Meditation

consistently for a year or so for

approximately 20 minutes a day I focus

on the sensations of my breath the speed

and Rhythm of the inout and Rise fall

the temperature of the air Etc when I

get distracted by a thought body

sensation sound Etc I note what Drew

away my attention then gently bring my

focus back to my breath since I've been

meditating I can definitely say that I

feel much calmer more patient and more

centered in the present moment but I am

confused about which profound insights

into myself or reality I am supposed to be gaining can you please speak on this and I've got this divided into two questions which is erroneous so I got to fix that okay

so you see Romeo is confused about which profound insights into himself or reality he is supposed to be gaining and it I consider this I've considered this for many years to be a mistake to tell somebody in advance what kind of insight they're supposed to have because it's sort of like implanting a suggestion and then you get into some kind of hypnotic state you see exactly what you're told to see that this happens like in the mahasi method like when I when I spent

some time at at Pand Rama and rangon
upand would be telling people in advance
what kind of insights they were supposed
to be having and some of the people
would go into like these deep hypnotic
States and just dutifully see what they
were told and in one case there was a
Korean Mahayana monk there who did not
have a complete Mastery of the English
language and so he misunderstood what he
was supposed to be seeing and then he
saw through his own Insight that like
the mistaken version of what he was
supposed to be experiencing and then
upan just kind of angrily told him no
you didn't experience

that and I've considered that it would
be a good
experiment to um like at a at a place
like PA in southern Burma that you take
a group of people that don't know hardly
anything about terava Buddhism like
Taiwanese nuns or something and you just
teach them everything wrong you know you
teach them Abid dama stuff wrong it's
you know it's like 13 mind moments to
every moment of matter and all this
stuff you just teach it to them wrong
and then when they start having their
insights into the nature of reality
through the samade eye I mean is it
going to come out right or is it going
out going to come out the way they were

told it was going to come

out so

um profound insights into yourself or

reality um you're probably better off

not being told in advance what kind of

insights you're supposed to have because

then your subconscious mind can conjure

up fake insights and you can wind up

fooling yourself with

that

also the like the official list in

Burmese it's called nanzen you know it's

theana insight knowled is that you're

supposed to experience in in the correct

order in sequential order and when you

get to the final one then you've become

an Arya and one of them is namarupa

Parana something like that no it's not

par namarupa something it's like the the

Insight knowledge of distinguishing mind

from matter and I'm pretty sure when I

was at Pama I actually experienced that

one it's one of the earlier ones

and to me it wasn't really an Insight

distinguishing mind from matter it was

more of an Insight distinguishing like

Sensation from perception or like

feeling from perception you know it's

like you have this almost pristine

sensory data and then your mind just

starts interpreting it so it was like a

clear distinction like it it was really

kind of striking the distinction between

sort of the incoming data with maybe
some unavoidable preliminary you know
just automatic perception involved in
that and then there's like the like the
thinking mind just takes that ball and
runs with it and just starts like this
commentary on it and it was very clear
distinction

so I think that maybe whoever named it
namarupa Parana or whatever in
Nana um I think even they didn't really
understand what what it was that they
were describing because matter is
problematic the Mind cannot know
physical matter the mind can only know
mind because that's what it

is but I mean you can have insights that aren't necessarily on any list like one of the most important insights I experienced as a meditator as a monk is once you get to the point where you stop thinking then you realize is that you are not your thoughts because when your thinking stops you don't stop or at least you know the conscious process doesn't stop and if anything you're more conscious after you stop thinking than when you're thinking because when you're thinking your mind is narrowed down to focus on what it is that you are perceiving and you're just kind of ignoring everything else you're ignoring the entire rest of the sensorium whereas

if your mind is just wide open you're
Wide Awake you're not thinking anything
then you know it's like the entire
sensorium is equally in
Focus but again it's you're probably
better off not being told in advance
what kind of profound insights you're
going to have because then your
subconscious mind can just dutifully
generate some fact simile or
approximation of these insights and then
it's not a genuine
Insight so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Fred
and Fred
says that was interesting about your

termination potion what was it made from
and that this is uh like a follow-up
question from an answer I gave to a
question in the previous Q&A about
somebody talking about how they were
considering Auto termination and asked
if I had ever considered it and then I
said for years as a monk I did have like
a certain substance on hand just in case
you know I needed like an Escape Route
like a fire exit or something which as
you may have guessed I never used but
all it was was just a big bag of
charcoal and when you're living in a
cave with almost no air circulation I I
assume that would be
sufficient and then Fred follows up with

I am probably the oldest viewer but physically okay I also had topping thoughts which he's referring to Auto termination I suppose and then he said I had hip replacement a while ago it's General wear and tear well good luck with your health

Fred and I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from a clever fellow called chasz is who keeps changing his name and I can't pronounce his new name so we're just going with trasa is which I also don't know how to pronounce but at least I've settled on one variant of pronunciation on that one so chasz is or whatever he's calling

himself today says as a young monk have
you believed in most of the Orthodox
terava teachings maybe without Abid
dama and when I was a young monk when I
first was ordained I hadn't read very
much of the poly toptica I was not
extremely well acquainted with Orthodox
terraa Buddhist Doctrine you know I was
almost totally innocent of the
commentarial tradition for example knew
almost nothing about Abid dama I just
read some sutas you know read the sutin
the DAP

um certain verses from like or certain
sutas from the majaya the dean nikai and
this kind of stuff but um I mean I was
pretty naive and when I first became a

monk I had this idea that terraa

Buddhism like the terraa Buddhists were

so conservative they were afraid to

change anything and so with terab

Buddhism you still had the original

Buddhism

and the more I read the more I studied

the less likely that

became um like even in the sutas there

there's certain sutas I mean the talking

animals the fire breathing Cobra dragons

the Buddha just bragging and grandiose

terms about how great he is and how

people should worship him this kind of

stuff I just couldn't

really you know I I just couldn't accept

that so I just do not have like the
dogmatic follower kind of mentality you
know it's like I I still have like a
critical mind and maybe a little too
critical sometimes but you know you read
like there's a a sutta where there's a
follower of the Jains who's a master of
debate and he's bragging in advance
about how he's going to go to this this
philosopher Gośāla and just wipe the floor
with him in debate just he's just going
to take him like an elephant takes like
something in its trunk and just kind of
beats around with it just I mean he's
just going to just mess him up he's such
a a famous renowned debater he's so good
at debate he goes to the Buddha the

Buddha asks him a question couched in Buddhist terminology this Jane debater just follow just agrees with this assumption that a Jane wouldn't even agree with in reality and he just he just surrenders he quits the debate immediately he just he just immediately converts to Buddhism after just like one utterance that was doctrinally wrong view from a Jane point of view and so I'd read this kind of stuff it's like no that wouldn't happen in real life or there's a su or a su in the sutin where there's some Brahman who um he's he wants to make an offering to some Brahman holy man he

sees the Buddha sitting under a tree and
the Buddha apparently had like his head
covered with his robe or something maybe
it was a cold day so he gets closer and
then he realizes that it's a Buddhist
monk you know it's a shamina with a
shaven head or or something like this
and he just starts calling him you know
no you worthless skin head and then the
Buddha says like do you know what is a
skin head or what what is conducive to
being a skin head and then the Brahman
just immediately does a 180 and just no
venerable sir please explain to me what
makes a skin head oh he calls him an
outcast it's the outcast Su I think it's
the wasala sua of the supata and it's

like people just don't act this way

maybe on

TV where they'll just do a complete 180

just for no apparent reason whatsoever I

mean it reminds me of an old episode of

The Flintstones probably a lot of you

are too young to remember The

Flintstones you're loss I assure you

anyways Fred Flintstone this caveman

goes in a time machine you know maybe

someone from the future came back with

the time machine so that this caveman

could get into the time machine and come

into the the present day and he winds up

at this like a a stone age theme park or

it was like a theme park that had like

caveman actors you know actors
pretending to be caveman there and so he
goes to this hot like a hamburger stand
and he orders a hamburger or whatever it
is it says how much is that going to be
and then the the clerk or the you know
the the guy behind the counter sees him
in dress like a cave man says that'll be
two rocks so Fred Flintstone just lays
down two rocks because apparently that's
what they use for money in the Stone Age
and the guy just starts yelling for the
police and I mean it works in a cartoon
I guess but it just doesn't work that
way in reality and when you read sutas
where people are acting in a way that is
just contrary to human nature or like

the whole I Dream of Genie show one of my favorite shows when I was a kid I had kind of a crush on Barbara Eden when I was a little

kid here you got this beautiful blonde with superhuman powers fall who is madly in love with this guy she's like bowing down to him and calling him master and he's just like get away from me I mean he wasn't gay either Ian it's like on TV and stuff this works but if you're reading a text that you

think is potentially with an enlightened author you know the founder of your spiritual system and there I mean stuff is happening that just is like setting

off alarms it's like this wouldn't
happen in reality then immediately and
you start having to put on the brakes
with this terada is like the original
kind of Buddhism that the terraa
Buddhists were afraid to change
anything because they things got changed
um of terava
Buddhism um
today it's the most conservative School
of Buddhism by far of all the schools of
Buddhism that still
exist but just because it is the most
conservative School of Buddhism by far
still it's it's it's not really super
close to what the Buddha was originally
teaching so getting back to the question

sure ask as is or whatever he's calling himself

today uh did I believe in most of the Orthodox terot teachings as a young monk I didn't know most of the teachings I mean I was didn't know hardly anything about Buddha gism or the the commentarial tradition so

um I kind of assumed that it was mostly true without knowing a lot of it but then the more I learned and the more I read the less I could adopt that position so I'm just going to move on to trasis is or whatever he's calling himself today's second question which is when you have schizophrenia or take

hallucinogens or just have extremely
vivid dreams you know that your brain or
mind can generate everything the whole
reality with other people in it how do
you think Buddhism would explain people
with multiple personalities because when
there is no self they of course cannot
have two or three Souls well I mean if
there's no self they cannot have one
Soul so I mean how is a person with
multiple person multiple personalities
any harder to explain than a person with
a single personality considering that
personality view is a wrong view in
Buddhism that even one person is one
person too
many so how Buddhism would explain it it

would just be considered a kind of we
palasa or like a derangement of mind you
know it'd be kind of a it' just be
considered to be like a kind of insanity
or or mental

illness and um I mean how would you
explain multiple personalities when
there's no self I mean that part of it
is no harder than to explain why you
would have one personality with no self
so that's a whole different kind of
argument that multiple
personalities um you know it's it's kind
of
incidental to the whole issue or
doctrine of anat or no

self

so I guess I answer that I guess I answered that one so I'm just going to move on to tasz is or whatever name is his third question which is when you'll be a good sport and banish Our Endless questions by limit them to two for a person I was considering if this one goes more than 3 hours then I may limit it to two in future although as it turns out this one probably won't go for two hours unless I just keep yammering away about you know orange juice and and that kind of thing just go off on multiple tangents but uh so far I think we're doing all right and so the next question is from

dhama River and dama River says you said
a couple of videos back that you would
like to take rebirth in tawa timsa
heaven if you were given the choice to
speak you or realm of rebirth and suda
Wasa also known as the pure abodes for
anagami weren't an option so my question
is what do you think about some people
who have the aspiration to be reborn
into Citta heaven to be able to meet
mraa or MATA in p and learn the dharm
directly from him wouldn't you prefer to
take that rebirth um I suppose although
I'm rather skeptical of the very
existence of two to Heaven I think that
the whole concept of two SE to Heaven

comes from an obscure reference at the beginning of a sutra towards the end of the ATA waga and I can't remember which sutra that was maybe it's is it sorry puta sutra I can't remember now it's one of the last sutras of the yaka waga where it's like the Buddha came from the congregation of tusita and apparently tusita got interpreted as a heaven realm that the Buddha was reborn from that apparently it's like a tradition that like a Buddha in in his life before his final human life he spends it in T Heaven which is one Heaven realm above tawa timsa and tuus just means sort of like the contented or the delighted you know

it's it's a past participle of of being
happy

essentially and so I think there is a
possibility I mean you don't see to see
of Heaven mention much in the
texts so as I was mentioning I think it
was the previous Q&A a lot of these 31
planes of existence

some of them and there's practically no
mention at all in the sutas and it's I
mean the entire scheme of 31 planes of
existence is never enumerated in the
poly toptica it's like a later
commentarial um

artifact and to see to Heaven um I'm
personally I'm kind of skeptical of a

lot of these Heaven Realms and Hell

Realms um that I really have no

persuasive

evidence that would cause me to really

think yeah that's that's likely to be

legit that it could just be mythology it

seems to me like it could just be

mythology

so um I mean if it exists people want to

be reborn there um I mean assuming that

just being enlightened In This Very life

is not an option they wanted they aspire

to being reborn into to see to Heaven

which would be sort of almost like a

pure land Buddhism kind of attitude

then fine you know I don't I'm not like

opposed to people who aspire to be

reborn in this or that heaven realm but
Tua really isn't described much you know
it's like you're G to just sort
of um sort of what's the word commit
yourself to being reborn in this Heaven
realm that you know almost nothing about
tawa timsa is pretty well described
because that's where the main vadic Gods
lived and so that was sort of the
heaven I mean it was like the heaven for
the vidic brahmanist and then the
Buddhists just sort of accepted that and
then just added a bunch of other Heaven
Realms you know above and you know kind
of one below
it so yeah I mean I got no problem with

people let's see what do you think about
some people who have the as aspiration
to be reborn into CA heaven to be able
to meet my tra and learn the dhama
directly I mean it's for me it just
smacks of Mythology that is not
necessarily based on empirical
reality but I got no people can aspire
to all sorts of things and so long as
they're not aspiring to just make my
life a living hell then you know go for
it that's fine I got no problem with
that so I'm just going to move on to D
River second

question which is what's your opinion of
angry Abbotts and teachers that verbally
and physically abuse their students and

then he's got some commentary here I have personally met people who were seriously traumatized by their teachers as a result of this they had stopped accepting teachers all together but they continued studying the dhamma independently I have also heard stories of people I didn't personally meet but I heard of their stories nevertheless most of the time I saw this happen happening in vajrayana Buddhism but I also saw it happening in terava Buddhism in Thailand I saw terava monks hitting people angrily scolding and abusing younger monks I don't want to say their names because I don't want to bring distribute to them I

don't want to ruin their reputation
they're quite famous and you have seen
mention and you have even mentioned one
of them here in previous q&as my mention
to you is how should lay people and
newly ordained monks deal with an Abbott
or a teacher that is verbally physically
abusive in my case I would not accept it
because if the aon's mindfulness is so
poor that he's incapable of controlling
his own words and he's constantly
breaking Sama vacha or right speech and
his bodily actions are so out of control
that he can actually hit others then how
could he possibly teach me or anyone
else about mindfulness he should lead by
example what do your thoughts and your

opinion is verbally or just physically
abusing your students ever Justified
well this reminds me of a couple things
first there's a saying in Zen
Buddhism that when the Zen Masters it's
like when the meditation Hall is
resounding with the Zen Master's shouts
and blows from his stick are falling
like rain still his mind abides in
Stillness so a fierce teacher can still
be very wise potentially even
enlightened I mean that in Thailand a
man is considered to be you know the
like the archetype of the the arant monk
you know he's he's the one they point to
him and aan Cha aan manun and maybe a

aan Mahaba I mean aan manun he was
fierce you know he was
scary and in in Burma upand was like
this too I mean he just took an instant
dislike to me I mean as soon as I I I
showed up practically you know I was
just kind of singled out for as kind of
being The Whipping Boy and I mean he
would just get pissed off not just at me
but in general for for some reason or
another on pretty much of a daily basis
and I have to admit that in Up's case
regardless of how good of a teacher he
was to others I became rather skeptical
how wise can this person be even though
he obviously considers himself to be an
Arya like a Saka dami he kind of hinted

at it even though he wouldn't just come out and say it still how wise can he be if he's getting pissed off every day so I think it can go either way some people I mean like I've mentioned recently I mean even the Zen Masters who have the stick they hardly ever hit anybody anymore just because people have become so wimpy so easily traumatized that they might sue him just for just for smacking him with the stick you know they answer the [__] wrong he goes whack on head they start crying to the police or something so I mean if you come across uh a teacher who is

abusive

then I mean it's your it's your call if
you think that he's not a good teacher
then go elsewhere like neem cly Baba up
on the altar up there I consider him to
be a possibly fully enlightened being
but he was the same thing he'd yell at
people he would hit people but it was
like rumed on

got pissed off at him once because he
was just storming and raging just
scaring people that neim cly Baba was
doing this and then uh it was like ROM
do just kind of went kind of protested
against him you know kind of went on a
strike against him refused to go near
him and this kind of thing so neim Croy

Baba called him and it's like no matter what you do with other people never let them out of your heart and it's like if you're like a really Advanced being and you're just a mirror of the other person's Karma you know there's like nobody there subjectively you're just reflecting back their own Karma if they got Karma to get abused it's better off to get yelled at by someone who just like is just sort of full of love really I mean there that's all that's there kind of and that's one way of looking at it it's just sort of tough love you know it's like this fierceness that I mean some people may need that in order to

get knocked out of their rut they need
to get beaten out of their rut in Zen
Buddhism there's lots of that like I
think it's

umon famous Zen master I don't know his
original Chinese name he apparently had

his Enlightenment experience or his

Awakening experience his Satori or or

whatever you want to call it in Zen

Buddhism when his own teacher slammed

um's leg in a door and broke his leg at

the moment of his leg breaking as his

teacher was slamming it in the door on

purpose he became enlightened or or

renai you know the founder of the renai

sect of Zen Buddhism in Japan I don't

think I've ever read a story about renai

when he wasn't hitting somebody I've read several stories about renai every single story he's hitting somebody and so some people that are are like traumatized by their teachers I mean they're just kind of I mean it could be that they have this this idea of what a teacher should be like and so they're like severely disillusioned to a traumatizing degree or on the other hand it maybe that they're just brought into this kind of a degenerate culture where everybody's Wimp And wimpy and flabby and so even to get yelled at is going to traumatize them in which case they're better off

just not having a teacher or or using
books as a teacher or just going to one
of those the majority of teachers that
talk in this soft gentle voice don't
want to ruffle any feathers you know cuz
they don't want the trouble of people
freaking out at them because they said
something off color or maybe a little
bit

harsh so let's see what's what's the
actual question here there's there's
like two question marks one at the
beginning and then one at the end the
first one what's your opinion of angry
abbots and teachers that verm and
physically abuse their students it works
for some people it doesn't work for

others one size does not fit all just if
if it doesn't work for you find a
different teacher that's what I would
say although I think there should be a
distinction made between a fierce
teacher which can be a very effective
one or the just the the chronically
pissed off just you know blatantly
unenlightened teacher and then suddenly
I'm remembering um the old story of the
way of the sword where this guy wants to
be a Zen ma he wants to be a swordmaster
this is probably medieval Japan like
Samurai Japan he wants to be a
swordmaster so he goes to one of the
most re renowned sword Masters who is

living as a Hermit in the forest and he says you know teach me to be a swordmaster and so the the swordmaster looks at him and says well I could probably teach you in 20 years and and so the the students like no no I need to know fast I mean if I train really hard if you just give me maximum teaching then how long will it take and then the teacher says well in that case maybe 15 years and then the the students going no no I need to learn fast I mean teach me just maximum full blast how long will it take and he says well if you're going to go like that it's going to take 30 years so then the the guy think realizes oh okay I get it so the the Zen master just

has him just working in the kitchen he
he's like sweeping floors and washing
dishes and this kind of thing no swords
at all and he's getting kind of fed up
with this he's starting to feel
exploited like he's just being used as
free labor when all of a sudden the Zen
master or the the sword master will just
jump out from behind the corner and just
beat him up and just leave him lying
dazed on the floor and this keeps
happening until finally the student I
mean he's got to be totally alert at all
times because he doesn't know when this
maniacal swordmaster is going to jump
out from behind like a doorway and just

start wailing on him with a stick so
that was like the fastest most intensive
best way for him to learn how to be a
swordmaster is just through just taking
beatings on a regular basis and I have
to admit people are different nowadays
we are living in a degenerate age we are
living in the midst of societal
decadence and so most people they're
just going to freak out they're going to
be traumatized they're going to have to
go to a therapist
you know it's like they're going to sue
the sword master all this kind of stuff
so you just have to know from your own
personality if it's working or if it's
not working even if your ears are

ringing from from being chewed out for
the um teenth time like happened with me
at pandama where it would take like a
day or two just to settle back down
after one of these tyraids directed
against me that um I mean is it helping
you have to ask yourself I mean are you
making progress even if you don't like
it even if it's very unpleasant I mean
taking a beating or being yelled at
generally is not pleasant but sometimes
you may need

that but do do you have like the the
fortitude to to stand up to it and just
not not be traumatized by it and then at
the end there's another question mark

what are your thoughts and your opinion
is it verbally or physically abusing
your students ever Justified yeah
sometimes it's it's Justified although
it wouldn't be Abuse it might be seen as
abuse by

others I mean but if it's genuinely like
a wise teacher being Fierce to his
students like a man or neim Koli
Baba or rinai or whatever then it's
Justified if it works it's
Justified so I'm just going to move on
the next

question and it occurs to me that
spending 20 minutes on each question may
result in a very long video
so next question is from xenoid and

xenoid says if you were alive for the early Buddhist councils and had to pick between the Theravada and Sarvastivada who would you

choose well I have kind of thought about this like if I lived in ancient North India when you had like the 30 schools so-called there's all these different schools of Buddhism which would you choose I mean

realistically you generally go with the one that you have the local

Monastery um I think if I had the choice of all the early schools I probably wouldn't choose Theravada or Sarvastivada I might go with Mahayana which was one of

the more conservative schools and didn't have an Abid dama but if I had to choose between Terra and sarasti V it would be a tough choice because both of them have good points and bad points you know sarvastivada had a more einsteinian view of time rather than a more Newtonian view of of time in terraa terva says only the present moment exists the future is completely non-existent the past is completely non-existent there is only now whereas sarasti Vada believed past present and future all exist it's just that we're only aware of this present moment that's constantly changing um Terra believed that everything excuse me my my nostrils are

not cooperating that everything is like
flashing off and on a trillion times a
second whereas in

Vada impermanence applies only to
combinations of elements that the
individual elements like a like a
particle of Earth element is constant it
doesn't

change it's just that any combination of
these primordial elements these Damas or
dharma's um that those are impermanent I
think I might go with Terra more on that
one although there's like complications
philosophical complications of the whole
idea of everything flashing off and on
but with regard to Karma sasada had it

was almost like a Jane conception of karma where Karma was almost like a physical substance that was like this sticky substance that would adhere to your whatever I don't know what it would adhere

to so I don't know is if I had to choose between terava and sasada in ancient times like if I lived in ancient Northwestern India or some such um I'd probably just go with the one that had the wisest teacher that I had access to that was like local nearby you know if I have access to the monasteries I just choose which one had the better atmosphere which one had the wisest teacher and then just go with

that

one because I mean no matter which one
you choose there's always going to be a
certain amount of like Deadwood in the
system it's just going to be slightly
different Deadwood in the two two
systems of terava and

cervos so I'm just going to move on to
the xenoid second question

excuse me my nostrils are kind

of they got a mind of their own you

might say now that I'm catching this

cold okay xenoid second question where

could one get their hands on a copy of

the sarvas Vada Abid and potentially

other sarvastivada literature I know

that there I'm pretty sure there's
English translation of the sarasti Vada
Abid Dharma because they went with a
kind of Sanskrit rather than poly so
it's Abid Dharma
and not a single book of the sarvas
Vaden Abid Dharma is the same as the
terad Abid dama even though they split
apart at around the time of the third
Council which is kind of indicative of
how late Abid dama made it onto the
scene you'd think that if the Abid dama
existed before the third Council when
terava and sasada split they'd at least
have one book in common but they they
don't it was like that's one that's why
they had the split I guess it was just

sort of dueling Abid Damas the sasti
vadens you know favored this kind of
philosophy the Terra vadens favored this
kind and So eventually there was like a
Schism that was formalized at the third
Council according to my understanding
what was going on at that time so I mean
I don't know where you could find it
you're just going to have to search
around on the internet I'm sure that if
you do some diligent searching you can
find the sarasti Vaden Abid Dharma
somewhere and if it isn't translated
into English it's going to be at least
translated into French or or or German
or

something and with to other sarasti
voden literature the only sarasti voden
Literature Like the original text that I
ever read is I read the sasada version
of the the biku ptim Moka the Beeko
pratim Moka and also there's a another
like a re form movement or a branch of
sarvastivada called the mola
sarvastivada which also had its own
vinia and its own praim Moka so I read
the sarvas div vadan version of the ptim
Moka and the Mula sarvas daden version
of the Pima Mula sarvastivada
um was more in the foothills of the
Himalayas like in North India so that
they had more vinea allowances for like
how to live in cold weather

like I think it was the mul sasad monks that when they went for alms they had this stick like a walking stick they had these metal rings on the top that would jingle and they'd hit the stick against the ground to let people know that they were there when they go for alms because in the cold weather in this Northerly region they'd have their doors closed unlike some place like Burma where people just leave their Huts open you know there's as many flies inside as outside so it doesn't really matter and so there's rules you know you're allowed to to hit the stick like three times and then if nobody opens the

door you're allowed to hit like two more times and nobody opens the door then maybe like one more time and then if nobody opens the door then you just move on to the next house that kind of thing so um I can't remember the name of the book but it was a comparative study of the praim Moka and it had like several at least eight different versions of the putty mocha but where you'd find this stuff I'm not exactly sure maybe motil bonaros publishes a lot of this kind of stuff um just do a search on like Amazon you know do a search for sarasti Vada on Amazon you might come up with something um just look around I'm sure you can find

something and I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from xenoid also and Zen xenoid says I've heard you mention that there is technically one sarvastivada Temple left but it has Mahayana influences where is it and if you could would you please post a Google Maps link of its location in the description um I think it's called ritsu or R risu it's called ritsu or like something like rich rishu in in Japanese which is the word for vinia and there are a few temples near Nar in like Southern Japan which used to be the capital of Japan back in early medieval times when Buddhism was first being

brought into Japan when Buddhism first
became more or less mainstream in Japan
Nara spelled n a r a i don't know how to
spell it with Japanese letters sorry
about that it was the capital and so
there were a number of different kind of
monasteries around the capital because
it was like the cultural center of Japan
at the time
and technically this Ritu school is at
least based on sasada it's a very
corrupted form you know it's like a
derived form of sarvastivada and it has
over the centuries absorbed a lot of
Mahayana influence but um I mean if you
look up like ritsu like RIT T
Su or I can't remember the other version

of the same name that that is what the school is called it still exists in southern Japan and there's still some temples around Nara and that's that's the best I can do for now and and you can you can do the search based on that information as easily as I could because that's that's the information I have on the subject I was in Japan and was reading about Japanese Buddhism and was surprised to to read that there still is technically sarvastivada Buddhism in Japan around Nara but it's very very much um influenced by Mahayana ideas and so forth at this point and I might have to blow my nose

I'm really sorry about this just a minute I should have planned ahead and I've learned from reading the the letters of Lord Chesterfield that in Good Company when you blow your nose you shouldn't look into the the the handkerchief afterwards or the kleenex in this case that's gross don't do it if you're at a fancy dinner party and don't like get your dress sword like between your legs when you're trying to walk cuz that makes you look clumsy and ridiculous furthermore as well

okay I have to blow my nose much more carefully now that I have a mustache for reasons we need not get

into so let's see next question is from Stellar Supreme formerly known as Libra Lam occasionally still known as Libra Lam and also occasionally known as shumo shumo and

Connor so now we have the situation of a person whose name is longer than the questions that he asks so we're going to have to abbreviate it in future I guess so anyway Stellar Supreme Etc says what difference would you say there is between Mara enduring multiple enduring multiple World cycles and being a clever deceiver and the Demi urge so what's the difference between Mara and a demi urge well the Demi urge

is like is like not the absolute highest
god with a capital G but is just sort of
the the creator of this phenomenal
samsara so Mara doesn't create samsara
so that would be the main thing
differing him from a demi urge a
demiurge creates the phenomenal World
whereas Mara doesn't create it he's
living in the heaven realm of the the
gods who Delight in the creations of
others that from the Buddhist point of
view it's ignorance of via or like
delusion that is creating this
phenomenal
universe and then Mara is just
exploiting
that so that would be the main

difference

there that Mara is not nearly powerful enough to create the phenomenal World. Brahma does not create the phenomenal World. Mara's or Brahma's consort Maya in Hinduism does not generate the phenomenal World in

Buddhism that Mara is just sort of exploiting the for reasons of his own trying to keep people from becoming enlightened in a way he considers himself to be like the king of samsara but he's not the creator of it any more than the like the a medieval King of France was the creator of France setting aside maybe like Charlemagne or

something we don't need to get into that
or would would be what was his name
Clovis the first king of France King of
the

Franks I don't know let's just move on
to the next question still from Stellar
Su Stellar Supreme etc etc so forth so
on ADD

infinum so Stellar Supreme etc etc says
grock AI which is elon's version of AI
generators considers this to be the
deepest question ever asked to it within
the reach that it pulls from including
other AIS I'd like you to take a crack
at it so the following question is what
grock says is the most profound question
ever asked of it and so the question is

if nibana is unconditioned does Quantum
randomness autop

poesis humet

and then let's see Stellar Supreme etc

etc says I rewarded this slightly to

make it a more charitable question he

called Quantum Randomness Quantum

seafoam so apparently this profoundest

question asked of Gro is if nibana is

unconditioned does Quantum

Randomness um no does seafoam hum it and

I don't know what humming means as a

transitive verb how do you hum something

I mean setting aside

certain like erotic

acts um yeah I don't even understand the

question so it's not particularly
profound to me because I don't know what
hum means as a transitive verb referring
to Quantum Randomness and unconditioned
nibana it just does not make sense to
me which is not this isn't the first
time that Stellar Supreme etc etc has
asked me a question that I mean it's
it's like not on the same level as the
way my mind operates so that I don't
fully grock it so to speak I mean I saw
a picture of Stellar Supreme etc etc etc
recently and he he looks completely
human but the way he thinks I mean he's
like a a gray human hybrid or
something so I mean if you can translate
that into like Standard English but then

it wouldn't be the same question that
was asked of grock I

suppose if nibana is uncon ition does

Quantum random seafoam Quantum seafoam

humet H oh maybe so I let's let's try to

work this out does Quantum Randomness

like

influence like cause ripples on the

surface of the

unconditioned um once it does that it's

not nibana anymore I mean it's two

different levels of

reality so nibana is at at the the

absolute level of reality whereas like

any kind of Multiplicity or phenomena is

happening in a different level of

reality you know it's sort of like cup
and ceramic two different levels of
reality really you've got essence of
ceramic form of cup and I mean in a way
it violates Aristotelian laws of thought
because this is a and not a
simultaneously because ceramic and cup
are not synonyms ceramic is not
necessarily the same as cup you know you
can have a plastic cup you can have a
glass cup you can have ceramic ashtrays
but here we got ceramic and cup the same
and it's they're not the same so it's a
and not a at the same time and that's
kind of the way Nirvana and Quantum
Randomness is it's just two different
levels of

reality so

I'm just going to move on next question

after specifying that in the the lame

little analogy Nirvana or nibana would

be ceramic it'd be Essence and the form

would be like the quantum Randomness

would be appearing at the cup

level so I'm just going to move on to

Austin here and Austin

says a psychopath would take a life

without experiencing negative volition

as they lack the emotional response that

would typically generate such feelings

how then would Karma affect someone with

this condition I've answered this

question before maybe Austin didn't ask

it but I have been asked the question
you if a sociopath feels like no
conscience you know he can murder
somebody with the same mental States as
he would like cut a tomato in his
kitchen then how is he going to be
getting any kind of like grave Karma by
doing that and my answer if my nostrils
will

cooperate is that a psychopath isn't
totally without karma because a
psychopath is it's like there's still a
level of empathy and compassion but the
psychopath is just like he's like
blocked off from his own subconscious
mind so the karma and all this stuff is
happening at the subconscious level

we're not fully conscious of our Karma
most of us are oblivious to most of our
Karma so the psychopath he's it's not
that he doesn't have this
like this ethical phenomenon of karma
going on it's just that he is so locked
up in like a relatively small area of
his Consciousness that there's like
what's the word he's dissociated from
deeper levels of his own mind and these
deeper levels are the ones that are
creating Karma I mean he can't be
completely oblivious to the harm he is
causing um I mean some so sociopaths
would like Delight in the harm they are
causing some are addicted to it they get

this rush like this adrenaline rush
feelings of power or or Vengeance or
whatever it is you know it's like
somebody who is
specifically targeting like homeless
runaway girls who become prostitutes for
example that I mean there's something
going on at a subconscious level even if
he doesn't fully understand it it's just
that he is
dissociated from deeper levels which are
contain most of his wisdom you know it's
like he he's just cut off from this he
just dissociated from it oblivious to it
but it's still
there so I'm just going to move on next
question maybe I'll blow my nose again

just a minute trying to get my nostrils
to cooperate fully

oh I just had I I did it didn't I I

looked into the that was a faux paaw H
probably the more cultured sophisticated
viewers are just going to like turn me
off and disgust from now on at least I
haven't tripped over my

sword and I would like to point out this
is this is going to be a total
aggression before I get to Thermal squid
that as a reflection on impermanence you
should all reflect on the idea that
sooner or later

I'm going to run out of these paper
umbrellas so that's a sobering

thought anyways thermal squid says
feelings about philosophies of radical
selfishness or
individuality especially the work of Max
Stern I've never read or other kinds
of individualistic and egoistic
philosophies such that a person is no
longer captured by any ideas or views
and actualizes their values without
anxiety or worry about punishment or
reputation well I think the only
philosopher that teaches radical
selfishness or individuality that I'm
familiar with would be like Ein Rand I
assume Ein Rand would qualify as like a
prophet of radical selfishness and
individuality n to some degree I suppose

let's just go with Ein Rand um what What
feelings about philosophies is radical
selfishness or
individuality it says here thermal squid
says such that a person is no longer
captured by any ideas or views well if
you're not captured by any ideas or
views I mean you're still going to have
ideas and Views it's just that instead
of following along with some external
ideas and Views you're just going to
create your own ideas and Views which
are still going to be based on your
cultural conditioning you know it's just
going to be indirectly derived from
other ideas and Views I mean if you're

just raised in isolation in a blank room
your entire life you're just going to be
like a gibbering idiot you're not going
to have any ideas and Views other than
maybe like primitive animalistic ideas
and Views I mean if you even survive
babyhood so it's kind of an unrealistic
idea that I mean such a person is no
longer captured by any ideas or views
they're captured by their own ideas and
Views that they cook up on their own but
which are still culturally conditioned
just not so
obviously as just adopting you know
like Progressive leftist views or
conservative Mega Republican views or or
whatever it is they're instead of just

being a follower they're going to come up with their own views but still it's views and it's still going to be culturally conditioned just indirectly so um they actualize their values without anxiety or worry about punishment or reputation I to some degree that's getting back to the sociopath question that you can actualize your values but still you are an ethical being you have like a a grounding in I mean you make Karma which is sort of an ethical phenomenon um I mean at least it can be viewed as an ethical phenomenon it's more of an empirical phenomenon I

mean once you get to the level where you can appreciate this kind of stuff I'm sure there's a lot of skeptical atheistic types who would just call that [—] but then again they may a lot of them would qualify as the same kind of person who I mean it's like they're dissociated from deeper levels of their own Consciousness they have less access to their subconscious than most people which is one reason why they're so individualistic and just kind of disregard the the ideas and beliefs of the people around them you know they're they're a little bit on the sociopathic side themself in a lot of

cases so

I mean if you don't worry about
punishment or reputation still I mean
you can get punished and your reputation
can take a nose dive um so I mean it
might reduce

anxiety at a certain level like a lot of
sociopaths don't have a whole lot of
anxiety you know it's like even like
really good surgeons some of them are
sociopaths I have read this you know
it's just that they've got like this
ruthless just like ambition driven goal
oriented kind of process oriented mind
they're really good at what they do a
lot of like high ranking like business

executives are the same kind of Ruthless sociopathic type um although in their case like in the case of the surgeon I mean he's going to have to follow along with medical ideas to a large degree because um medical science is going to come up with better ideas than he could come up with in isolation on its own and that's the case with most people and most ideas it's like if you're not even going to be eclectic and borrow bits and pieces from the ideas that are already established you're just going to insist on coming up with your own ideas in all likelihood your own ideas are going to be inferior to what other people have come up with

in some cases thousands of years ago
that have been tried and tested for
thousands of
years so let's see have I addressed this
question sufficiently feelings about
philosophies of radical selfishness or
individuality well I mean selfishness
and individuality are are both
delusional from the Buddhist point of
view so I mean there's that also I mean
if if a philosophy is based on radical
selfishness or individuality from a
Buddhist point of view and from my point
of view it's based on delusion so I mean
if you've got a a philosophy that's
based on delusion and just glorifies

this

delusion it's not going to end well

I mean they might be successful in life

but still I mean it's it's not going to

it's they're probably going to be making

more Bad Karma than Good

Karma because I mean just for starters

everything they do is going to be

motivated by a kind of gross delusion

like I'm doing this for

me and it's not going to end

well even if they get rich and famous by

doing it so I'm just going to move on to

Thermal Squid's next question are you

appearing in my dreams intentionally and

as far as I know I'm not but then again

I don't remember most of my dreams so it

might be that I'm doing it and just not remembering it the next day but I'm completely unaware of appearing in thermal Squid's dreams or anybody else's dreams my father actually experimented with this he would he was really into ESP and that kind of thing the occult as he called it and so he was doing experiments with like dream Communications and showing up in people's dreams and so forth and one time he wound up in the wrong bedroom and freaked out the wrong person cuz they actually saw like a a visualization like a a full body Apparition of my father in their bedroom he wasn't there

though I

promise he was somewhere

else but yeah as far as I know I'm not

appearing in anybody's dreams

intentionally so I'm just going to move

on to Thermal Squid's third question

feelings about epistemological nihilism

and pism question mark well

epistemological

nihilism is I it seems to me that epist

epistemological nihilism would claim

that you can't know anything for certain

but if that's the case epistemological

nihilism doesn't really have a leg to

stand on because they cannot make that

assertion they cannot be sure that that

assertion is

correct and that's kind of leads into
pism the the best thing I've read on
purism like the most authoritative text
on puristic skepticism is SE sexus
empiricus which I'm pretty sure is on
the bookcase behind me sexus empiricus
um he was like a a Roman
philosopher who I think he was a
pianistic skeptic and it's like his
books or just book is like the the
oldest like early text on the subject
that still exists that survived the
Christian book burnings and all that you
know the rooting out of paganism and
Pagan philosophical schools and all that
so P I mean sexus empiricus did the same

thing I mean he kept hammering away at the idea that you cannot know anything for sure but if that's the case how can you know that he's right I mean I mean you can just offer it up as a hypothesis to live by but you can't insist upon right because then you're claiming that there's still one thing you can know and that reminds me of the danakas dean nakasa of the sutata which uh I think is probably very ancient and it's the suta that caused saruta to become enlightened saruta was standing behind the Buddha fanning him listening to the Buddha talking to this skeptical philosopher named deaka which means long fingernails um and when saruta was

listening to the Buddha talking to Daka
he he became fully
enlightened so it's it's kind of an
important sutta and I think it's an old
one where Deaka comes to the Buddha and
he says nothing is acceptable to me and
apparently that's like no truth claim is
acceptable to me you know it's like no
idea is acceptable to me and then the
Buddha says well that idea that nothing
is acceptable to you is still acceptable
to you isn't it and it's like you still
have this one view that you're clinging
to and that's one view too many
and that's what caused Sara to become
enlightened I

guess so yeah I mean it's if if you
really are kind of a puristic
skeptic you it's best not to go around
insisting upon puristic skepticism
because then you're still clinging to
this assertion that you cannot prove
you've got this idea you cannot prove
anything that nothing is really knowable
and then you're going around insisting
that nothing is really knowable which
implies that you know that nothing is
really knowable which is undermining
your own position you're contradicting
yourself but I do disagree with the
whole idea that nothing is knowable
there is one thing that is knowable and
that is the absolute that is Ultimate

Reality anything else is just coherence
theory of truth it's it's
delusion ultimately if you believe
it so I guess I that one time to move on
to the next question this is from Wayne
and I think Wayne see one two okay Wayne
asked three questions there's someone
who who asks the transgressive fourth
question and his name is going on a list
too so I got to separate these I didn't
separate them it's all in one
paragraph and I have certain H OCD
Tendencies with regard to question
sometimes I'll actually go in and like
fix the spelling and grammar of a
question just because it bugs me that

it's it's not fixed but I don't do it
all the time so I'm not clinically
significant so Wayne says is
Enlightenment nibana and nibana there's
like two kinds of nibana or two ways of
looking at nibana you can look at it
from the ethical side in which case it
is like the attainment of Enlightenment
and then you can look at it from a more
metaphysical side in which case it's

Ultimate

Reality Orthodox terado Buddhism would
not say

is the only Ultimate Reality because of
Abid dama according to Abid dama like
nose

sensitivity like water

element like perception these all these things are ultimate realities but I don't think so I IOP more of a like a Mahan even a maama point of view

that like would be the only reality but it's just off the scale so you can't you can't assert anything about it you can't say it exists you can't say doesn't exist you can't say that it does and doesn't exist you can't say that it neither does nor does not exist any kind of claims are is just invalid because any claims you make are are samsaric that is it's just completely at a different level of reality like

ceramic and cup you can't really

describe

the ceramic through any kind of like

features of the cup like shapes like any

kind of form the cup takes you really

can't say much about the the underlying

Essence so is Enlightenment nibana yeah

I mean nibana literally means blowing

out it's like the blowing out of a

flame so the moment of Enlightenment is

like the moment of nibana in that case

but then that's just like as as an

ethical attainment whereas there's

also the like the metaphysical state

which is more of a Mahayana thing

sometimes there's implications you know

like there's these sustras that have verses

you know where where the sun doesn't
shine the moon doesn't glows the Stars
don't Sparkle where earth water Wind and
Fire Gain No foothold you know they're
talking about nibo there

also um which is not so much of an
ethical attainment that seems to be like
some kind of state you know it's like an
abiding

state but I mean it's all negative it's
like there's no this there's no that
there's no the other you can't really
make any positive claims about it
because they're all
invalid

so according to like one definition of

nibana like a word can have more than one meaning and so nibana has at least two meanings that are related one's just looking at it from a more ethical point of view like a psychological point of view and the other one is looking at it from a more metaphysical point of view so I'll just move on to Wayne's second question or does Enlightenment see nibana no it's I think I already answered that in the first one because they're the same and in a sense the the the psychological state of Enlightenment can see the metaphysical state of Enlightenment so I mean there's there's there's that too I guess but I mean talking about it is just a

Fool's errand it's all futile futility
of futilities so I'm just going to move
on to Wayne's third question and is
nibana right here right now again you
can't make claims but just let's say
we're just going to talk metaphorically
poetically you know yeah I mean it's
everywhere it's it's
reality Nirvana is reality Ultimate
Reality not this phenomenal samsara
Style

but what underlies that so it's right
here right now and we're unaware of it
much in the same way that a fish is
unaware that it is wet even though it's
just surrounded by water and suffused

with water still has no concept of
wetness it does not perceive wetness
unaware of wetness even though it's wet
all the goddamn

time so yeah I mean we're wallowing
we're in the midst of Ultimate Reality
how far away from here is Ultimate
reality you know it's like the spirit of
God to a to a theist it just pervades
the

universe so I think I'm just going to
move on next question this is from
ruie and ruie says do you think AI
represents a deeper delusional plunge or
doubling down into Sam Sor there is a
Godlike maraike if you will aspect to
the creation of realities from prompts

or Nam games we've played the Mind Over Matter games since language emerged example having someone execute a task for us on the material plane by merely uttering certain sounds which are the translations of purely mental phenomena called thoughts but AI seems to be on a whole other level or is it more of the same so let's see here let's get up to the top do I think AI represents a deeper delusional plunge or doubling down into some sof for some people yes but not necessarily for everybody it's going to depend on the wisdom of the person um I mean you can say the same thing with regard to just the internet I

mean the internet was just sort of a
revolution in my in my opinion the
Advent of the internet is the most
important event that has occurred over
the past at least 50
years I mean it's just Revolution that's
one reason why things are happening the
way they are politically it's like
people are able to see past the
propaganda because they have access to
guys sitting in their bedroom this
ranting in front of a a cheap camera who
are getting more views than the people
in suits with million dooll salaries
sitting at these like cable news
companies so anyways I'm I'm sort of
deviating I'm I'm rambling tangential

thought if you will so do I think AI
represents a deeper delusional plunge or
a doubling down into samsara I mean
potentially for some people it can be
but not necessarily I mean it doesn't
matter how subtle and advanced things
are if you're detached from it then
you're fine on the other hand I mean
somebody could be living in a a straw
Hut and they're just completely
convinced that they are living in
Ultimate Reality that is just this is it
you know they're completely invested in
this material like animal existence then
they're worse off than a wise person
with some philosophical Detachment

coming up with all kinds of stuff on AI generators so it's a matter of just how wise the person is who is exposed to this stuff more than the stuff itself so it's reminds me of a sutta in the in the text where the Buddha is saying that you've got one man who lives in a a Hut he's got an ugly foul tempered wife he eats bad food sleeps on a hard uncomfortable bed but he's attached to it so he's kind of messed up on the other hand you've got the guy living in a palace with the gorgeous wife eating gourmet food he's got all the stuff he needs all the stuff he could possibly want and he's got Detachment from it he's not clinging to

it actually the rich guy is better off than the poor guy in that case even though the rich guy he's got more privilege and and he's got more luxury and all this still I mean the poor guy's living kind of an austere existence which I mean is kind of a virtue but he's sort of rebelling against it I mean he's it's just like he's not in harmony with the situation so he's worse off than the rich guy and it's it's kind of applies to this it's like the person with no internet access who is just living in survival mode like an animal is still G to be worse off spiritually than the the sophisticated person who

you know he's exposed to Dharma he you
know he tries to live a dharmic life who
nevertheless plays on his computer
sometimes and generates AI images and
and like has long conversations with
grock or whatever still the second
person is better off is it's a matter of
how wise you are subjectively not so
much what is the external
situation so I'm just going to move on
to the next question which is also from
ruie can the three characteristics be
tinkered with that seems to be fair a
fairly Ironclad Triad governed by The
Logical principle of necessity and for
those of you who are innocent of terava
Buddhist philosophy the three

characteristics or the tilaka

are let's see here

impermanence uh what's the word Dukha

which would be like unhappiness pain

suffering

dissatisfaction Dukha is hard to pin

down with one English word I usually use

the word unease so it's impermanence or

inconstancy unease and finally no self

an so Sabara anich all conditioned

things are impermanent or Inc constant

Sab Sara Dukha all conditioned things are

unease or conducive to unease at the

very least and finally sa D anata which

is everything whether it's condition or

not is not self there is no

self

no separated individuality that is

ultimately

real so can they be tinkered with I I

assume yeah I'm sure people could Tinker

with them but it does seem to be fairly

good I mean you could probably maybe I

should have sat here and racked my

brains for a while before doing this Q&A

I don't want to do it now because I'll

just be like staring off into space

silently possibly for several minutes

possibly like drool or something coming

down we're not going to we're not going

to go there so I mean you could probably

come up with like a fourth

characteristic that would also apply to

everything but the three characteristics
are you know they're they're pretty
solid I have to
admit so I think I'm just going to move
on next question this is from quor and
quor says does somati mean to bring
together or to focus on one object and
disregard everything else well literally
samade is the prefix Sam which it
corresponds to like the Greek s y n or
the Latin co co n so it means like
together or with and the the ADI or the
the D especially it means placement so
it's like placing together or like
concentrating you know putting together
so um that's maybe one reason why it's

um it's usually translated as
concentration because literally it means
something like
concentration but still
somebody let's see does it mean really
mean to bring together or to focus on
one object and disregard everything else
it can and generally that's how it's
interpreted in terava Buddhism and it's
it's sort of related to akata or
one-pointedness and that one may be more
of a misunderstanding than samade like
AATA the mind that is one-pointed is
usually translated as one-pointed but
it's not necessarily one point is it's
sort of like
unified so so long as your mind doesn't

have a lot of moving parts so long as it
doesn't have any moving Parts you know
so long as it's just sort of a unified
hole then whether your focus is big or
small it's still

one-pointed somat I assume could go the
same way I'm like some somat is like
formless

meditation so if your mind is completely
empty that's still

somebody

so um it doesn't necessarily mean

focusing your concentration on one point

but it does kind of mean that it's like

your mind is

simplified and I mean it's not even

necessarily laser focus because it can just be like wide open so long as your mind is not diversifying you know it's sort of a relative lack of diversification would be samati at least Sama samati um any kind of focus is going to involve a certain amount of somati that somati is is pretty much you know a dog has somati you hold some treat in front of the dog he's going to be focused on that treat that's a kind of somati it's not sasat it's not right concentration but it is a kind of concentration so quor included a link to the Wikipedia article on some and I I have to admit I didn't look at it didn't want to contaminate my my point of view

with external views I

guess so somebody literally

means like emologic it means like

placement together or bringing together

more like placement together than

bringing together

literally and it can mean to focus on

one object and disregard everything else

um unless you

just you get to the point where there is

no everything else you know it's just

all just this one object that is not

Diversified if that makes any sense but

like a formless meditation your mind

ises not concentrated down to a point

because there's no form at all you know

it's just this unified hole of infinite
Consciousness Infinite Space infinite
nothingness or the sphere of neither
perception nor non-perception ception
those are the four main formless
concentrations according to Orthodox
Terra that wouldn't mean that you're
concentrating down to a point even
though that is like the highest form of
concentration or you know in the top
level of you know most advanced
concentration or sod I should
say so it's more like unifying the Mind
than like really necessarily
concentrating it although for like a
beginner the the way to unify your mind
is just focus on one thing until you can

get to the point where you can just look at the entire world and not diversify it then you then you'll have one thing just being

everything if that makes any sense it's hard to explain and so I'm just going to move on next question this is from

PSA PSA says what's your favorite non-Terra sua and why

um the the only two that really come to mind one would be the heart Sutra and one would be The Diamond Cutter Sutra the heart Sutra I don't think is necessarily in conflict with early Buddhism so the heart Sutra is I mean that could qualify as you know like

solid early Buddhism in a sense you know
the form is emptiness the very emptiness
is form now it's just sort
of sort of combining two levels of
reality because really the two levels of
reality of ultimate truth and
conventional truth or whatever you want
to call them you know the thing is it
the thing in itself and the thing is it
seems that really I mean they're they're
occupying the same space so to speak
it's just that you see them in two
different ways so form is emptiness the
very emptiness is form that is profound
and Terra rejects this Orthodox Terra
rejects it but I don't think that the
Buddha himself would reject it so so

unhesitatingly

as like an orthodox Terra Buddhist

Burmes scholar Seattle Abid Dama

master and then again The Diamond Cutter

Sutra that really inspired me more I

mean it had more of an influence on my

life than the Heart Sutra did

um it was one of the things that sort of

converted me to Buddhism to begin with I

think was The Diamond Cutter Sutra so I

mean it'd be a tossup between the Sutra

and The Diamond Cutter Sutra and my nose

is plugging up

again man excuse me I'll try really hard

not to look into the the the Kleenex

after I blow my nose though this

time ah okay

then

okay so yeah I guess I answer that

question I'm gonna move on to the next

question after checking to make sure

that there's nothing stuck in my

mustache PSA second question what are

your thoughts on the meeting between

Trump Vance and zalinski in the Oval

Office that led to the deal not being

signed yeah I mean today as at the at

the time of me making this video

especially the first half of the day

most of the headlines apparently were

about this meeting with zalinski with

President Trump and vice president Vance

in the Oval Office of the White House

and zilinski essentially got himself
torn a new butthole I mean he just got
dressed down he got I mean he was just
sort of ganged up on this sort of almost
bullied really and one of my thoughts on
that meeting I think it's just a kind of
tough guy diplomacy that zalinsky was
kind of arrogant you know he's insisting
on more billions more billions we're not
going to we're not going to have a
ceasefire we're just going to keep
fighting until the last US dollar is
spent the last Ukrainian Man is dead
we're just going to keep fighting and
Trump being a kind of businessman
realizes that just pouring billions and

billions of dollars into a black hole is
not good s

economically regardless of all the

people dying I mean 1/4 of the

population of Ukraine is now gone

they're either dead or fled as refugees

and zinski just I mean he was encouraged

by the globalists you know just never

back down we're just going to keep

backing you no matter what because we're

going to bleed Russia dry

and now there's a new sheriff in town

and and Trump's just saying no to this

[__] where there's going to have to

be peace somehow or another even if

Ukraine has to seed some of its

territories but I mean he was holding

out this opportunity that by America getting certain like land rights or minimal rights in Ukraine that's going to mean an American presence in Ukraine which would make Russia a heck of a lot less likely to start launching missiles into

Ukraine plus it's going to help pay for the billions and billions that are being sent to Ukraine or that have already been sent to Ukraine so Zinsky was kind of arrogant he was encouraged should be arrogant by the globalists including you know former Obama uh appointees and so he was cocky I guess you know he was just assuming that Trump

is like an ordinary kind of politician
and he is not and Trump I mean he's
really playing hard ball and so it was
sort of a a diplomatic case of bad cop
worst cop where they were just softening
him up and letting him know that we're
not playing your game you're we're going
to end this war somehow or
another and I I mean zinsky I mean he's
he's like an actor who is kind of
installed you know he doesn't speak
Ukrainian

he's I don't know we don't need to go
there so my thoughts on the meeting
between Trump Vance and zinsky they were
softening him up they were preparing him
for an agreement more advantageous to

America

that's the long and the short of it in my opinion so I'm going to move on next question which is from yuguo and yugu asks the transgressive fourth question and his name is going on a list so yuu's first question at least at least these are fairly simple questions Yu's first question can you please explain signs and features of objects within each six senses well signs and features um I mean anything that is perceptible I mean besides just the bare datum you hear a sound and it just kind of goes in one ear and out the other you know you acknowledge that there is

sound I mean you're aware of what the
sounds like but it's like you're not
like singling it out and focusing on it
and like interpreting it and attributing
attributes to it you know it's just the
sound goes in one ear and out the other
sort of like a vision you see something
it's like it's in front of a mirror when
it's there it's there and as soon as
it's gone it's not there anymore you're
not still like thinking about it
afterwards you're not saying oh this
part I like and that part I don't like
and you know it's or like flavors you
you eat something it's like this needs
salt I mean needing salt is not what
you're what you're tasting that's just

this attribute that you're attributing
to this flavor you're you're singling
out oh the paprika is nice no you just
it's just you taste what you're tasting
in the scene there is only the scene in
the heard there is only the heard in the
felt there is only the felt and the
mentally cognizers only the mentally
cognized thus should you train yourself
as the Buddha said to Bahia shortly
before Bahia became enlightened and then
was trampled by a
cow so can I please explain signs and
features I mean anything that
is perceptual Beyond just the first
impression is signs and features

regardless of whether you're seeing
hearing tasting thinking feeling with
your body whatever
smelling almost forgot
smelling so yeah I mean that's just the
way it is anything that is not just IM
that does not immediately present itself
anything that is like an interpretation
of that just giving it a
name you know
just anything that you single out any
kind of common any kind of perceptual
interpretation counts as signs and
features anything beyond the mere scene
is signs and features anything beyond
the mere her is signs and
features so I think I'm just going to

move on to yugu second question why is
nibana called element in some sutras
it's referring to the metaphysical
aspect of nibana as Ultimate Reality as
something that um something that abides
and in uh in Abid dama philosophy nibana
is one of the four main ultimate
realities and it's you know it's it's
permanent it's one of the the only
elements that is permanent that is that
is like not subject to
inconstancy and and Dua it's still
subject to not self but it's not subject
to impermanence and and
suffering so it's it's called an element
nibana datu is the poly which is just

referring to nibana in the metaphysical sense and not like the ethical psychological sense which I discussed a little earlier so I'm just going to move on to Yuga third question does Consciousness stop when you realize neana

no I mean you become more conscious you wake up that's what enlightenment is like the Buddha is someone who woke up you don't stop being conscious when you wake up you become more conscious when you wake up and so I'll just move on to yuga's Fourth question the transgressive one that has him out on a list who is exactly experiencing the bottom nobody I mean there is no

self so it's again it's like reality
just shines through and the reality is
more conscious than the person who is
oblivious to reality I mean you can say
there are a few old sutas that say that
Nirvana is infinite formless
Consciousness that's essentially what
the upanishads also say the main
difference is that the Buddhists as a
general rule do not reify the
absolute you just don't even go there
anything you say about it's going to be
invalid so who is experiencing nibana
nobody and I think even a materialist
would agree with that because they don't
think that they think Nana is just

[_]

so I guess I answered those questions
which I answered very briefly partly
because of the transgressive fourth
question and now I'm going to move on to
kind of an interesting question this is
from extremely rare bird an extremely
rare bird says how do you feel about the
US turning into an authoritarian regime
like Russia and I was unaware that it
was doing that so the US turning into an
author Arian regime extremely rare bird
apparently assumes that the Trump
Administration is sort of a quasi
dictatorship apparently because Trump
actually has a [_] spine he's got
balls he's not like like European world

leaders or previous American world
leaders that just go along with the
status quo to some degree he probably
would have done that if they hadn't
tried to persecute him into Oblivion for
4 years after rigging an election to
make sure he he didn't
win Trump is more he's got more respect
for the US Constitution and for
democracy than his opponents
do so I don't think the US is turning
into an authoritarian regime other than
having a leader who is actually strong
and decisive and is getting [__] done
within his limits according to the US
Constitution Joe Biden was doing more

unconstitutional stuff than Trump was but you don't hear about that much if you're listening to like left-wing or globalist propaganda which is what mainstream news actually is paid actors that are being paid to disseminate to promulgate a kind of propagandist narrative and that is collapsing largely due to the Advent of the internet so how do I feel about the US turning into an authoritarian regime like Russia well I'm glad we dodged that Bullet by having Trump get elected president instead of having this globalist Brave New World Order taking over where everyone is essentially castrated and extremely rare bird

also this is not a question but it's something that he included in the comments and I I might as well comment upon it says Trump is a man of low moral character someone taken over by greed and desire for power doing whatever he can to get it through lies or Force clearly insensitive to violence and suffering evident lately by taking sides with Russia and blaming Ukraine for being invaded by them apparently planning to take over Gaza and beginning to dismantle US democracy and there's some amazing amazing statements in here like let's see let's see clearly insensitive to violence and suffering

even though he's doing whatever he can
to stop

Wars Also let's see here uh beginning to
dismantle US democracy when the majority
are on his side democratically the
Democratic party is like like
consistently adopting the
20% and he like any position that it's
like unlimited like open borders the
majority of Americans don't want that
that the majority of Americans want
illegal aliens deported the majority of
Americans don't want trans women or
biological males competing in in female
sports it's like almost every
position the majority of Americans are
in favor of like scrupulously auditing

these corrupt bureaucracies that are
just squandering tax
money that this is what the majority of
Americans want so saying that it's
dismantling US democracy is just [__]
delusional I mean it was Biden who was
going against the Constitution it's the
left that don't like the Constitution
they don't like the first amendment they
don't like the Second
Amendment or it's yeah first and second
amendments they want to get rid of like
what is it the Senate they want to
change the Senate so it's representative
so so they don't like that they don't
like the uh the Electoral College I mean

it's it's the left the Democrats who are more

anti-constitution but some people they just follow along with the propaganda they don't look at the actual reality of what's going on to say that Trump is a man of low moral character they had to in they investigated this guy for a decade trying to find any dirt they could against him the best they can do is invent laws or just take hearsay evidence against him and use that because they they checked everything like with the whole Russia collusion hoax they were they were digging into anything they could find against him and he was clean so they had to just come up

with [_] in order to persecute the guy
they're trying to keep him like off the
the ballots that's not de Democratic is
it trying to keep him off the ballots in
like Colorado and a few other states
that's not

Democratic Biden was doing all kinds of
Terror read you ever hear of terror read
I mean she said that she was raped by
Biden or at least sexually molested by
him there's actual evidence more
evidence against Biden than was against
Trump with regard to that egene Carroll
woman they didn't care they're just
trying to destroy the man because they
knew that he was going to dismantle this

corrupt New World Order [__] that
was going on and the majority of
Americans support this they support
Trump he won by the popular
majority so I don't know where extremely
rare bird is getting his news from some
Echo chamber
apparently but Trump definitely I I
consider him to be the best president of
the United States in my lifetime I was
born when Kennedy was
President so I mean look at Kennedy I me
he was a womanizer he was having sex
with teenage girls in the white house it
was kind of okay back then it wasn't
such a big deal Joe Biden I mean he was
pedaling influence I mean he was corrupt

as hell nobody cares I mean he wasn't
running the country anyway he was so
scile that his his handlers were running
the country who are like all fully
invested in like the Obama vision of the
Brave New World

Order so I don't give me any of this

[__] about Trump as a man of low
moral character look how his children
have turned out compare that with
Biden's children
at least

Hunter plus the daughter that he was
apparently taking showers with when she
was

teenaged so I'm just

it's it's just ridiculous and so I'm
just going to go on to the very last
question last

question this is from poag tomek who
presumably is from the planet Gores
Alpha 7 because that doesn't strike me
as any kind of human name

at least uh I've never come across the
name of Pokey Tomac before I mean it
really does sound like it's from a
science fiction movie hope I didn't
offend poag Tomac it's like I consider
aliens to be at least as good as we are
so there is

that so anyways this person says it is
March already where is your new book and
I mean it's only the beginning of March

it's March 1st at the time of me uh me
doing this video so yeah it's not
finished I still have to finish writing
the introduction like all the chapters
are done my sweetie still has to
illustrate a few things she's got to do
the cover and a few like line
illustrations and that's about it so
it's almost done but um it's not done
yet so I'm still
hopeful that it'll be done by the end of
March which is I said sometime in March
May
maybe so I'm not exactly behind schedule
yet I haven't I haven't missed the
deadline yet but it's it's in the works

the new book is in the works and it's going to be more um like Memoirs like personal Memoirs more less philosophical there's going to be some Buddhist philosophy and you know what it's like being a monk living in Burma living in Asia in general Living in America that kind of

stuff and so yeah it's uh it's close to being done but not completely done yet and I do hope that it'll be done by the end of March and that's it that's that's the last question so this is a relatively short one less than two hours which is good if I hadn't been like digressing and ranting it could have been way less than an hour and a half

which would be

phenomenal so like I always should say

at the beginning and almost never do if

you have any questions about things that

you think I can answer like especially

early Buddhism Terra Buddhism Burma um

Buddhism in general Eastern philosophy

in more General philosophy in even more

general you know meditation monasticism

me personally this kind of stuff I can

fairly I'm pretty reliable with regard

to answering something with some

intelligence to it but just naming

somebody you know what what's your

what's your idea of of Martin Miller you

know what do you think about Martin

Miller and chances are I've never heard
of the guy I don't know who Martin
Miller is I wouldn't recognize him if I
saw him in the
street

so I guess that's it just uh hit the
like button or smash it if you prefer
and subscribe if you haven't already I
assume if you got this far that there's
something of interest to you and uh
aside from that I just say be happy so
be happy

EX

okay then it appears that we are
recording and therefore I should
probably start doing this Q&A video so
welcome to question and answer number
135 which is a relatively High
number I am your host poo basa and this
is my
beverage so I shall remove the little
paper
umbrella lick the coffee off of it so I
won't get coffee on my sweetheart's
desk take a sip of said
beverage kind of rearrange my beard a
little bit so it's looks almost
symmetrical and I suppose I should just
commence to answering answering

questions

after I do some like introductory digression about something or other and I might as well mention that I still do have a cold you may recall if you watch the previous Q&A that I was just coming down with the cold well I'm just now getting over it so it's it's fading out inshah so probably by next week I'll be perfectly healthy aside from like the you know the the various little sores and stuff that everybody has in Buddhism I think the Buddha called the human body the Heap of sores I assume in Ancient India people had more sores than nowadays on average so anyways we don't have a whole

heck of a lot of questions this should easily be finished in less than 3 hours so no worries on that score and I suppose I should just Wade right into this and uh before I answer any questions however I will have to read one of the questions and this is from bodhisatta 969 and bodh 969 said I recently came across a video on YouTube by varo is it not forbidden for a beu to ask for donations in the form of money or to make it possible to donate money to the beu himself uh well for starters I'm not sure which varano he's referring to

there are a number of
varos um I know of at least two Western
varos um I think one of them may have
disrobed recently though but still I'm
not exactly sure which Verano he's
referring to but fortunately for
everybody it doesn't even matter which
VAR A0 because the question is with
regard to a monk asking for monetary
donations and of course it is strictly
prohibited for monks to ask for monetary
donations to themselves or to anybody a
monk is not supposed to tell anybody
what to do with money so if if somebody
like a lay person asks a monk what
should I do with this
money according to the texts the monk is

allowed to say do whatever makes you
happy but monks are allowed to accept
money so this is uh I mean most monks do
handle money

and may be that even most terraa

Buddhist beus will ask for donations at
least to the monastery which is still

forbidden but still like in Burma

approximately 98% of all monks handle
money even though it is strictly

prohibited in Thailand it might be as
low as like

95% I'm not an expert on Thai Buddhism
but it might be slightly less in

Thailand simply because Thailand or Thai
Buddhism has a little bit more respect

for vinia than Burmese Buddhism with
regard to Sri Lanka I have no idea but I
doubt that they're any better than the
Burmese and with regard to Western monks
it may be that as many as half of
Western monks don't handle money simply
because they're going against the grain
they have to go against their own
culture in order to become among so they
tend to be more serious about what
they're doing on average although of
course there are extremely serious Asian
monks so I'm not saying that all Asian
monks are not
serious so getting back to the money
issue um yeah I mean technically I've
already answered the question I guess

it's just completely prohibited to to
say to tell a lay person or to suggest
to a lay person that they should do
anything with money other than just
whatever makes them

happy and if a monk does ask for money
and gets it or he gets money even
without asking for it that's a nissia
pidia offense he's not allowed to even
confess the offense

effectively until he has first gotten
rid of all the money which most monks
don't do and so most monks do not have
pure cila at any time during their
monkhood because they are unwilling to
get rid of the money and whatever else

is against the rules that they own
in order to make the confession which
they can't really make until they get
rid of the stuff that's what Nidia means
there's two different kinds of pidia
rules in in the ptim Moka this regular
pidia would be like killing an animal
telling an ordinary lie sleeping under
the same roof as a woman that kind of
thing where all you got to do is just
make the confession but

nyaia which includes money for example
um you've got to get rid of whatever it
is it's against the rules before you can
make the confession because if you if
you confess having money while still
having it I mean you've bro you're

breaking the rule while making the
confession and you're breaking the rule
immediately after making the confession
so I mean you've never really like
gotten rid of of the the offense you
have not expediated the offense
yet so let's see is it not forbidden for
a biku to ask for donations in the form
of money or to make it possible to
donate money to the biku himself yeah
even I mean there's even limitations on
like asking for
donations that aren't money like for
example if a mon says okay I'll give a
dhama talk at your dhama Center if you
would will help us build this retaining

wall that we need that's out too it's
sort of offering Dom on exchange for
some kind of payment even if it's not
money it's still against the

rules but getting back to bodh 969

question yes it is always forbidden for
monks to ask for monetary donations for
themselves or for the sa in general for
the upkeep of the monastery for

anything so I'll just move on next

question this is from

xenoid and Zenith void says do you

believe any of the Greek philosophers
may have been

enlightened and then he says some points
of interest the Buddha and heraclitus
are noted as having similar views on how

reality operates I've seen people argue that Piro of Ellis was a Buddhist and his idea of ataraxia is the same as Nirvana diogenes is no [__] given attitude and embrace of poverty shows a lack of attachment to worldly Affairs stoicism and Buddhism have a lot in common if you Google Sena quotes for example they sound very Buddhist I'm sure there are many more parallels to be drawn well I mean philosophy I mean literally means the love of wisdom and so for philosophers especially ancient Greek philosophers um to to say wise things or to have wise Behavior

shouldn't be all that outrageous or remarkable because they were trying to cultivate wisdom as a general rule um with regard to any of the philosophers that he mentioned I don't know if any of them were enlightened I don't know if there's any way of knowing if any of them were enlightened I kind of have my doubts about heraclitus he seems to be kind of a prickly kind of guy from what little I know of him with regard to pero the founder of skepticism um again I kind of doubt that he was I think he was more like intellectual in his skepticism and not really a Mystic which is what the Buddha was people can call the Buddha a a skeptic for saying

don't believe anything but he wasn't
really a skeptic he just realized that
reality cannot be known by thinking
about it you know beliefs do not capture
the truth

with regard to diogenes I don't think he
was fully enlightened I don't think

Socrates was fully enlightened

although he was

wise I mean he apparently kind of liked

Boys Still and drank a lot

but I won't hold that against him

necessarily with regard to ancient

philosophers that like ancient Western

philosophers that had some claim to

great wisdom I mean the one that was

most famous in in ancient times even
though technically he was more of a
Roman citizen than than anything else
was

oh I was thinking it just the other day
or appollonia of Tiana appollonia of
Tiana was sort of like the Pagan
Jesus and he just didn't really catch
enough traction and Jesus wound up
winning the popularity contest in
ancient

times another um ancient philosopher who
may have had some really profound
spiritual tains would be
plotinus um I guess what was his name
edles the one that threw himself into
the volcano I mean he was sort of a

spiritual teacher in addition to being a philosopher so I mean it was like um in beron Russell's history of Western philosophy he refers to edles as is a kind of ancient Mary Baker Eddie and combined with a few other things

um let's see

Parmenides I think might have had some deep

insights uh let's see who else there was one other one I was thinking of oh yeah

Pythagoras I mean Pythagoras taught like rebirth and um you know he had some spirituality in addition to just the like the cerebral

intellectuality that um is sort of like

stereotypical of Western
philosophy but you can't really know
it's impossible to know you don't know
how accurate the accounts are of their
lives and of what they said and so forth
you can't really know this stuff it's
all just kind of
academic so let's getting back up to the
question do you believe any of the Greek
philosophers may have been enlightened
maybe I mean it wouldn't surprise me but
I don't know for sure so I'm just going
to move on the next question this also
from Zenith void can you give a Buddhist
perspective on the significance and
meaning of diogenes telling Alexander to
step out of his

sunlight and I mean it's one of the most well-known stories of Diogenes the Cynic. I think he was a slave at the time he had been like kidnapped off of a ship by pirates and sold as a slave and um so he was like the tutor to the children of this rich guy but he was still famous. I've read that after Alexander the Great he was the most famous Greek of his time like at the time and so anyways.

Alexander the Great he liked hanging out with philosophers kind of like ancient Indian kings in the Buddhist time apparently liked hanging out with philosophers and so Alexander

went to find out about this diogenes
fellow that he' heard so much about and
he has like a conversation with diogenes
who is lying in the sun like a dog just
kind of you know lying in a sunny Place
warming up his body he doesn't bother to
get up to talk to

Alexander and so Alexander is very
impressed by the wisdom of diogenes and
at the end he asks him is there anything
I can get for you you know he's like the
most powerful man in the world

practically what whatever you want what
is it and diyes just says yeah could you
move over your block in my

sunlight and the Buddhist perspective on
that I mean I don't know how Buddhist it

would be I don't think the Buddha would
have asked Alexander or you know

King

pity kosa to to get out of his light you
know I mean even that is a desire it's
it's kind of a small desire but I mean
in a way it was diogenes was just kind
of kind of showing off that he didn't
have any desire for any of the stuff
that a king could give him
really but whether it would be something
the Buddha would say simply because even
just the desire to get somebody out of
your sunlight I mean still that's like a
minor desire or craving or attachment or
whatever

so I guess I answer that one pretty much more or less sort of

so I'm just going to move on to zen's third question here he's in a Greek

vain on this one he says are there any parallel stories to that of diogenes and Alexander to be found in Buddhist or Hindu history well like I already mentioned there's a lot of stories of Kings you know powerful Kings and Generals going and hanging out with um you know the famous philosophers of the day including the Buddha asking them questions you know kind of comparing what this philosopher told him was what that philosopher told him that sort of

thing although I don't know if there's
any kind of real parallel with the
Buddha lying on the ground and some King
blocking his sunlight and then the
Buddha remarking on the fact that the
King was blocking his
sunlight so yeah there's a lot of lots
and lots of stories of you know
illustrious Kings and so forth going and
talking to wise
men um just because they're interested
in that sort of thing I
guess but I don't think there's any like
close parallel to the story of diogenes
and Alexander not not that I know of it
might be in some Hindu puran or

something but I don't know what it would be so I'm just going to move on the next question this is from

philes and Phil Ley says at the start of your videos these days you say welcome to Q&A x and x is a relatively High number but isn't every number relatively high as well as relatively no relatively low well I mean how is zero going to be a relatively High number how is one going to be a relatively High number right how is

936 octillion going to be a relatively low number doesn't work that way but I'm just in the habit of remarking on relatively High numbers it's it's something I started at work

few years ago you know somebody's you
know they they've they've got to make
like 22 Roofing panels or something
that's a relatively High number just
just for the hell of it you know just to
move the air around so I just say it
okay you okay with
that but really every every Q&A number
that I do every Q&A that I do it is a
relatively High number after about one
because I mean compared with all the
other Q&A numbers the most recent one is
always the highest number so relative to
all the other Q&A numbers it's always
the highest one it's never the lowest
one I'm never going to come out with Q&A

number zero which is going to be lower
than all the other ones it's just not
going to

happen so I'm just going to move on to
Phil's next

question which is as follows if you
teach someone everything wrong about
spirituality kind of like wimp low from
kungpow enter the fist except the
spirituality

version okay and then he goes on to
become a teacher is it possible that he
could become a great teacher after all
so you teach everything wrong to
somebody you know you just mess up you
know you give him the the three Noble
Truths right you know it's like the the

19 factors of Enlightenment and all
this and then they take that to heart
and then they become teachers and become
famous well I mean they could become a
great teacher in in the in the sense of
becoming like a famous successful
teacher even though they're teaching
wrong stuff from a Buddhist point of
view excuse
me so I mean they could be that kind of
a great teacher
or they could just somehow make progress
despite the bad teaching with regard to
philosophical stuff in their in their
meditation they can just I mean when
you're meditating you're not thinking

philosophical stuff anyway or at least you shouldn't be not when you get into a deep level of meditation you shouldn't be thinking anything really so it may be that in spite of the bad teaching that he was able to have some kind of deep spiritual um Awakening experience that he can then like teach to others and so even though a lot of the theory might be wrong still I mean he's teaching from experience with regard to something that you know he has attained so he could be a great teacher in that sense and that happens a lot I mean a lot of the teachings of terava Buddhism some of them let's say they just factually incorrect same I mean with any religion

like Roman Catholicism I've said many times that St John of the Cross may have been fully enlightened despite this uh essentially from a Buddhist point of view an unenlightened point of view just wrong view there's belief in a you know Eternal God allmighty a personal God there's belief in a like a an immortal Soul all this stuff about Mary being a virgin and Jesus dying for our sins and all this that is just irrelevant to dhamma it's it's not necessary to know this from a Buddhist point of view still they the Christians put a lot of emphasis on that and he inspire to a large degree in spite of the

teachings of his tradition he was able to get very profound attainments he was a master of fourth jna in my opinion at least it appears that way so yeah there's two ways you could become a great teacher even though you were taught your philosophy all wrong one is you just become like a famous and successful charlatan and two is you are able to practice correctly even though the theory was mistaken and sort of transcend the mistaken Theory through just getting deep attainments in spite of that mistaken incorrect Theory and so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is also from philes and philes says according to

Plato the Democratic man or the Democratic subject refuses to believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some base and is utterly unable to concentrate on any one thing now he's doing this now that and so on when he's motivated he's full of zeal for whatever has now struck his fancy but it never lasts other times he's lazy and nihilistic but at all times he is distracted what do you think of this characterization and the source is Plato's Republic um 561 C to 562a a well I don't think it's necessarily true it could just be like a broad

generalization that Plato was just observing the behavior of Athenians in particular maybe a few other like Democratic city states in ancient Greece but like for example ear the early USA you know the founding fathers of of the United States you know I don't think that they were that they refused to believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some base I mean Americans believe that some Pleasures are honorable and some Pleasures are base up until relatively recently up until cultural Marxism just kind of undermined the whole Foundation of ethics and just replaced it with unrefined feminine sentiment so I mean I don't think it's

necessarily true at all I don't think it really applies to America very well it might have applied to ancient Athens for all I know but I don't recall ever being in ancient Athens so I can't really say for

sure so let's see utterly unable to concentrate on any one thing I mean I don't think that's true it could be just sort of a tendency in that direction more so than certain other political systems like you know Spartan fascism or something not that Spartans were really fascist but kind of you know they were they were relatively fascistic compared with the Athenians

anyhow

so yeah I mean every political system is going to have its its good points and its bad points you know every Everything has got its good side and its bad side you can find negative aspects to anything that's got positive

aspects so let's see what do I think of the characterization I think that it might be a slight tendency it might apply to people living in democracy more than people living in authoritarian dictatorships for example but still it's it's it seems empirically false if I compare this characterization with the United States for the first let's say first 150 years of its

existence so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from Fred and Fred
says what's your thoughts on venerable K
and

it's kind of strange that venerable K
gets so little pressed most Buddhists
probably don't know who venerable
Kondana was but he was one of the group
of five ascetics that were the first
converts to Buddhism and sometimes
you'll see like a picture of the Buddha
like out in the forest giving a speech
to like five ascetics you know that's
symbolic of the first sermon sometimes
he's even got his hand kind of like this
he's as he's counting off the four noble

truths for the first
time and sometimes if it shows these
five Aesthetics it'll show one of them
older than the rest you know one of them
may have white hair when the rest of
them have black hair the older one is
kondan and sometimes he was called an K
which means he has
understood and that's because venerable
kondana was the first disciple of the
Buddha who became Arya during at the
first um the first sermon you know the
damaka patut in which the Buddha started
Buddhism that kond got he got uh I think
he became a soda Pao according to
tradition during the first sermon and
then the Buddha said you know I don't

remember the exact statement but he's essentially Kondha has understood you know he could see that that Kondhana had had some like Awakening insight and so Anat K or Ana K became sort of like his nickname and then he was if not the very first enlightened disciple then I mean he has the reputation for also being the first monk first Buddhist monk to become fully enlightened under the Buddha's dispensation during the second discourse of the Buddha which is the Anat Lakasut or the the the discourse on the mark of no self so Kondha was like the first Buddhist convert to get like Arya

attainment and also probably the first to become fully enlightened to become an arhant and I mean he died long before the Buddha he was considerably older than the Buddha and so he just kind of disappears from the scene relatively early on in the history of uh you know the biography of the Buddha and his teachings K I mean he was famous for being one of the group of five the first enlightened disciple and then he just kind of disappears there's lots of legends about him but probably they're more mythology than history but I've got nothing against venerable

K so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question after paying respects to venerable kond and this is from quor and quor says if the senses each have Consciousness and nibana is beyond the senses how is their Consciousness in nibana well this is you're getting into sort of a controversial sticky philosophical point in terava Buddhism according to terava Buddhism you can't have Consciousness without consciousness of something whereas nibana according to a few very ancient like fragments ments that you can find in the sutas that eventually became unorthodox and had to be

reinterpreted but nibana would be

Consciousness without an object it would

just be infinite formless

Consciousness you know unmanifest

luminous all

around and

so um it's it's not sense Consciousness

it's not wiyana it's not the it's not

the the aggregate of conscious ious

that's in the five condas um that form a

sentient

being it's just kind of Consciousness

that has just utterly like become

unfettered no more conditions no more

limitations just and and and that causes

it to just go off the scale that

anything that is formless and infinite I

mean it's just off the scale there's no way of really identifying it singling it out perceiving it

so let's let's read the question again

quator asks if the senses each have

Consciousness and nibana is beyond the

senses how is their Consciousness in

nibana well the senses don't create the

Consciousness I mean you can have like I

mean each sense has its own sensitivity

you've got nose sensitivity and tongue

sensitivity eye sensitivity ear

sensitivity like body you know tactile

sensitivity and also like mind like

thought sensitivity the the sixth the

sixth sense in Buddhism is is the mind

with mental States being called dhama
which is kind of confusing because dhama
has so many different
meanings um so I mean there would be
Consciousness in nibana but I mean you
can say that there's Consciousness in
Iana but when something becomes infinite
and formless it just goes off the scale
scale it's no longer
samsaric you know it's no longer
anything identifiable in samsara it's
something that cannot be
perceived so it's just when
Consciousness frees itself from like
sense organs and sensory systems it just
goes off the scale it just it becomes so
free that it becomes free of

like phenomenal existence and so whether
it really exists or not itself just
becomes just kind of a Dopey kind of a
question which people ask all the time
anyway no offense to
quator so I'm just going to move on to
quator second question if a meditator
develops wisdom to the extent that their
base experience of reality is so subtle
that they slip into jna regularly
without trying can their base reality
ever regress back to a gross reality in
this or future lives or will their
wisdom prevent that from happening well
until you become an Arya you can always
backslide you know like in the godika

suta Goda gets Jonna then he loses it
then he gets it then he loses it then he
gets it then he loses it until finally
he's in a state of desperation and he
thinks if I die with Jonna I'm
guaranteed to Brahma Heaven realm but if
I don't have Jonna when I die there's no
guarantees and so he decides to Auto
terminate but I mean even the the Brahma
you know you have Janna you master Janna
you wind up in a Brahma realm you stay
in this Brahma realm for billions of
years let's say and then you exhaust
your karma I mean you just get reborn
somewhere else it's it's like spiritual
advancement is not like this oneway
ratchet thing a lot of people have this

idea just evolution in general even with
regard to organic Evolution things
aren't necessarily going from simple to
complex or from lower to higher that
some some creatures they they simplify
and become more primitive in form as a
way of adaptation you know like a flea
the ancestors of fleas had wings fleas
lost their
wings just it's just that fleas the flea
Wings got in the way when they decided
to just stay on the dog instead of
flying from one dog to the other
dog so so it's the same way with
Evolution or like spiritual Evolution
you can call it evolution in a way but

still I mean it's not just one way you can go from lower Realms to Upper Realms and from upper Realms to lower Realms and it's I mean there's no guarantee until according to Orthodox tradition once you become a sōda you once you become an Arya then you're kind of locked on Target and there's no backsliding anymore but some early Buddhists even thought that Arun could backslide that you could become enlightened and then become unenlightened again that was one of the first um philosophical controversies that resulted in the first big Schism or so I have read so let's see if their experience of

reality is so subtle that they slip into JRE regularly without trying um I'm not exactly sure if that would be like complete mastery of Jon like St John of the Cross I've already brought him up I bring him up all the time you know he talked about this the three stages of Spiritual Development which is very similar to a certain Buddhist scheme not the four stages of ARA Hood but the pugina or the the common the common person and then you've got the seika the person in training who has um gotten um like Arya attainment but hasn't become fully enlightened yet and then you've got the AA one no longer in training

that is fully enlightened according to St John of the Cross you had a similar three stages you had the common person the beginner he called him the beginner then you have the Adept and the Adept is someone who can get J on whenever they want they can they can exper they can experience High contemplation as the Catholics call it and then after the Adept comes the perfect and that is the person who has

completely like they have overcome their self-will they have mortified their self-will they no longer have any self will so they always they're just like an empty vessel that acts in accordance with the will of

God so according to St John of the cross
the reason why I brought this up is that
he mentions the kind of person that can
like they can get attainment or they
they can contemplate they can get into
contemplative States and then they lose
it and then they get into contemplative
States again and then they lose it and
then they get into contemplative States
again and they lose it and I was like
that as a monk for for several years and
St John of the Cross said this thing
that kind of haunted me it was like well
if if you keep losing it you can't
consistently Master it you can't just
completely lock it down and be a master

of it for the rest of your life then God
just has other plans for
you in my case forklift
operator

so I guess I mean if if you mastered it
like if you became what St John of the
Cross called an Adept where you could
just you were just locked in you know
for the rest of your life you're solid
you can just get Jah whenever you want
it then all that does is it guarantees
that you wind up in a Brahma realm and
you may just squander your wisdom just
delighting in Bliss as a Brahma and then
wind up born again as a human with no
recollection at all of having been a
meditation Master because you burned up

all of your Arma along those lines or
you burned up so much of it that you're
back being a regular like a a meat
puppet like an upgraded
ape so Evolution isn't necessarily just
one

way and I hope I answer that question
because I'm moving on to quator third
one and quor question is I got to make
sure we are recording here yeah oh yeah
we've been going for more than half an
hour already

quor third question is can the universe
reset and all the orans go back to
Samara losing all wisdom or does wisdom
transcend all other forces

well personally I kind of go along with
a more einsteinian conception of time
and a less Newtonian conception of time
I would agree with the sarvastivada
Buddhists more than with the terraa
Buddhists on that score in which case
I mean if the past still exists then
even if you become enlightened now that
past that unenlightened past is eternal
in a sense it just doesn't go away it's
still there even though it's in the
past so I mean that would that would
apply to any enlightened
being that it's all still there and also
going with my theory of everything like
the the simile of the block of
marble the block of marble can contains

every single possible statue every
single possible unenlightened version of
you is always forever and ever and ever
going to stay in that statue because it
can so the thing is when you become
enlightened you realize that you never
really existed to begin with not like
you didn't really exist as having like
this self-existent
individuality you know is it was all
virtual it was all conditional
and that conditionality stays and the
unenlightened beings I mean they don't
really exist to begin with so nothing
fundamentally
changes all the unenlightened statues in

that block of marble remain there

forever and

ever no Mahayana Buddhist is ever going

to liberate whole beings there's always

going to be an infinite number of

unenlightened beings existing virtually

and conditionally in the uncarved block

of marble the nameless uncarved block as

the Jing puts

it so with regard to the universe

resetting and all the har Huns going

back to some start no it wouldn't work

that way except just with like time as

the fourth dimension or time as a4th

Dimension the past just doesn't poof out

of existence like it does in orth Ox

terraa Buddhist philosophy like in Abid

dama and the commentarial tradition

according to Abid dama the only moment
that exist is the present moment which
is constantly

changing but I think I'm a little more
einsteinian in my understanding of how
time

works but you can take your pick on that
one but it's not the the universe resets
that's just I mean time is cyclical

which is something it's it's in a

question further down so I'll I'll get

to that when when the question comes so

I mean in Buddhism time is kind of

cyclical but it doesn't just I mean it's

not just like this tape that you play it

and then you just reset to the beginning
like like some like a a YouTube short
when you get to the end of it it just
starts at the beginning again it it's
not like

that anyways I'm just going to move on
next question this is from

Austin and Austin says is dhma

understood as the law law of nature

dependent origination and emptiness an

objective reality that exists

independently of experience the Buddha

is said to have discovered dhma yet

maamaa philosophy teaches that all

phenomena are empty of inherent

existence and arise only dependently if

no conscious beings exist does dhama

still exist or is it merely a
designation that depends on perception
yeah it's it's it's designation that
depends on perception I mean
if there's no perceiving
mind that's perceiving dhama then dhama
is kind of has a
potential but I mean it's not ultimately
real it's still just sort of like it's
like thought images and so
forth so I mean like two and two 2 plus
2 equals 4 even that I mean it's it
doesn't exist in Plato's Heaven
independent of anybody perceiving it I
mean it it comes up when it's perceived
and then it just sort of poofs out of

existence of no one's perceiving
it so the law of nature dependent
origination
emptiness it's it's sort of like the
philosophy of Kant like the the
categories of Kant Kant I mean he he
didn't even try to touch Ultimate
Reality he didn't even try to touch the
thing in itself he figured that was
impossible so what he did is he tried to
like describe explain
understand how human delusion
works and so how human delusion works is
kind of what Dharma is all about how to
transcend the
[Music]
delusion so it's definitely a kind of

perceptual thing it's a raft made of
rubbish so yeah it's uh let's see
where's the actual question mark here is
it an objective reality that exists
independently of experience I would say
no and then let's see there's another
question mark here if no conscious
beings exist does dhama still well no
conscious beings really do exist see
that's the

thing does dhama still exist I mean yeah
I mean if no conscious beings exist that
should answer the question right there
there is no self in early Buddhism later
kinds of Buddhism cooked up with cooked
up a self but early Buddhism there is no

self so if no conscious beings exist
which is the case does dhama still exist
um no I mean it's it's it's pretty much
like majama philosophy says it's it's
like a mental construct it is a raft
made of rubbish as the early like what
is it the alagar pamut of this maiman
aaya says you know that rubbish is not
some kind of eternal you know golden
super reality it's it's rubbish that you
tie together to make a raft so you can
cross the flood and then you throw it
away you don't need the raft
anymore so I'm just going to move on to
Austin's second
question does Nirvana exist outside of
human experience in terab Buddhism

Nirvana is described as unconditioned meaning it is not dependent on causes and conditions like some soric existence some interpretations suggest that Nirvana is a real Transcendent state that exists independently of perception however nagar rejects the idea of Nirvana as an independent absolute reality he states that Nirvana and samsara are not two separate things they are both empty and arise only in relation to dependent origination Nirvana is not a place or a thing outside of experience but rather the cessation of clinging and ignorance a realization rather than an independent

state

um well when Nagar says that Nirvana and

samsara are not two separate things

they're both empty and arise only in

relation to dependent origination I mean

he's referring to the idea of

Nirvana so obviously the idea of Nirvana

and the idea of samsara they're both

worldly phenomena and that's all the

unenlightened person can really do with

regard to Nirvana is just think about it

in samsaric thoughts which don't touch

it just like

I mean the the content thing in itself

um I mean no amount of thinking is going

to come anywhere near

that I mean it just cannot and will not

touch

it so I mean you can say that Nirvana is
a reality Nirvana as a metaphysical
state is Ultimate

Reality and it's just off the scale I
mean it's some people I mean they just
absolutely have to like grasp something
intellectually and they're just [—]
it's not going to work you cannot grasp
reality intellectually all you can grasp
is

delusion so I mean you're never going to
understand Nirvana by thinking about it
you're never going to understand Reality
by thinking about it all this kind of
stuff is a kind of intellectual

masturbation in a way or it's just like
a way of you know it's it's just more
samsara so you can say that Nirvana as a
metaphysical state is Ultimate Reality
and it's like the content thing in
itself no amount of thinking or
perception or philosophizing or anything
like that is going to get anywhere near
it and then when you're calling it an IT
and trying to describe it then it's just
like narina says where it's just is
empty it is void

then again you've got Nirvana as like
the spiritual state or like the ethical
State it's like the moment of
attainment let's see where is he the
cessation of clinging and ignorance a

realization but even that is not
ultimately real I mean nag garina could
just nuke that out of existence
too so I mean you've got Sam Sara which
is the context in which we are
functioning right now which is just
not ultimately real it is conditionally
provisionally virtually real but it
doesn't have any inherent like self
essence you know it's just
empty it's just like what do you call it
dependent coor Rising just all these
dependently coor Rising conditions just
conditioning each
other with no real Sol
Foundation but it's so hard to explain I

mean no amount of explanation is going to explain it and so I mean you have no choice but to indulge in like Contra self-contradictions and so forth just because you're trying to explain what is impossible to

explain so I guess I'm just move on next question this is from covac and CAD Zona and covac and CAD Z says how was jism able to survive in India after all this time while Buddhism died out there and the other traditions in India did the same or evolved to become almost unrecognizable so how did why did jism survive in India whereas other like nonic traditions like Buddhism and aism did not survive I think jism survived

for two main reasons one is that the
Janes were like a like radical
Aesthetics that weren't like basing
their centers in in cities and so forth
you know they didn't depend on these
these vast universities like Nanda for
example and I mean they were just like
more radical in their austerity than the
Buddhists and so they were more likely
to be out in the woods and also jism was
always kind of a small fish Buddhism
when the when the Muslims was invaded
and just started genociding the
Buddhists um Buddhism was like the
predominant spiritual system and so that
was really obvious and the the Muslims

just decided to wage war against it

whereas The

Janes I mean they were just sort of

inconsequential they were just kind of a

just like this insignificant minority

that the Muslims didn't bother with

because they had bigger fish to fry

called and called

Buddhists so I assume those are like the

two main reasons why aism died out

whereas jism didn't I mean I'm not

exactly sure about that if you read um

basham's book about the aivas is just

sort of like a history of the

aeas

um the the aicas just kind of their

religion sort of evolved more into like

a

devotionalism just kind of lost touch
with with like empirical reality I think
people just couldn't relate to it as
much anymore and people are just going
crazy on on the Discord server and I
keep getting like these little popup
windows and these little boop boop boop
on this computer from just people going
back and forth back and forth back and
forth on the Discord server and it's
kind of distracting me a little bit I
should put like a moratorium on Discord
when I'm doing these
q&as but I'll just put their names on
list that'll that'll do for now I

guess so I think I'll just move on to see
action CP z a second
question which is where would you
realistically go to make friends and
meet people as an adult if you don't
care about that just take it as a
hypothetical well for me realistically
the main place where I meet people and
make friends is at work go to work
there's people there and even if I keep
to myself and don't talk much there's
always like social friendly people that
come up to me and start talking and we
wind up making friends and you know
eating lunch and I don't know sit there
talk to each other make jokes that kind
of

thing aside from

that where would you meet people as an

adult I mean me

personally if I could find like a like a

dham center or something not that I have

any intention of doing so but you know

just like go to a meditation

group um if you can find one that isn't

just crazy leftist at this point and

meet lots of nice girls there I

suppose um you know like go to a health

club I mean you'll meet superficial

people there for the most part but you

know people that just kind of looks

mogging or looks

maxing

so um aside from that I mean I mean
unless you just
really like make a a point of just like
walking up to people and making friends
I mean if you do that then the grocery
store works the laundromat works you
know going out to a a club
works but I mean if I was never really
that way I never would go out I was I
was never particularly a social sociable
person I've always been kind of a loner
and I was fine with that I mean that was
just in accordance with my nature I've
never really wanted to go out and make
friends um go back to school you meet
lots of people in
school you know just get a get a degree

go to a community college get some degree in something and meet lots of people there you don't have any choice really but uh yeah I mean I'm not really the best person to consult with regard to how to go out and make friends because it really has never been much of a problem priority like since I have lived in South Carolina I have invited like two people to friends from work over to our house and you know they brought their wives and that was it I mean that's that's it's been several months since that's happened so I'm I'm just really not a sociable

person I don't

really uh I mean it's good to have

friends you know it's like I value my

friends more than I value blood

relatives in most cases just because

I've chosen them rather than just being

accidentally born into the into a

certain

family but uh I guess I've given enough

suggestions that seac can take them or

leave them and uh if he really wants

maybe better advice he should go to

somebody who is really a more sociable

gregarious kind of person than I am and

so so I'm just going to move on to seov

action CAD Zena's third question which

is a followup of a previous question he

says your starting of the suta reading
makes sense made sense last time but can
you please continue with finishing it
because I'm still unsure how to connect
all the way through and he's referring
to an obscure

sua um I'm not even sure which nikaya
it's in it's the angin nikaya or the Sam
nikaya and he's using uh a translation
from aanan which is kind of you know
it's got it good points and his bad
points ajan tanro is sort of
idiosyncratic and self-indulgent in his
translation style uh especially earlier
on he's kind of calmed down a little bit
I think in in later years but

still um even though aan tanro probably
has much better actual dhh practice and
attainment than someone like buub buub
really is pretty solid as a translator
and he's sort of mainstream or like
Orthodox in his translations he uses
like the the standard word so that you
know what the poly word is from reading
the English translation which with ajan
tanro is not necessarily the case and
still there's like this logo Ria going
back and forth on Discord with all these
pop-up window windows that are
distracting me so
anyways getting back to uh this
suta it's see thus monks the dag when
seeing what is to be seen doesn't

construe an object as seen he doesn't
construe an unseen he doesn't construe
an object to be seen he doesn't construe
a Seer when hearing likewise when
sensing likewise when cognizing what is
to be cognized he doesn't construe an
object as cognized he doesn't construe
an

uncogent construe an object to be
cognized he doesn't construe a cognizer
thus amongst the Daga being the same
with regard to all phenomena that can be
seen heard sensed and cognized is
such and I tell you there is no other
such higher or more Sublime whatever is
seen or heard or sense and fastened on

to as true by others one who is such
among the self- fettered wouldn't
further claim to be true or even false
having seen well in advance that Arrow
where Generations are fastened and hung
I know I see that's just how it is
there's nothing of the datag fastened
well this is I mean it's really of an
archaic nature this whole sua and it
reminds me a lot of certain statements
in the ateka waga and also it reminds me
of the Buddha's like teaching to Bahia
in the Bahia suit of the udana which is
very like zenik in the scene there will
be only the scene in The Herd there will
be only the her
Etc so I mean it's

like Cog cognizing perception is is just nature taking its course and the Buddha is not really getting involved in that he's just letting nature take its course and it's it's not even a he I mean I mean really it's there's no way to describe it again it's like trying to describe two different levels of reality at the same time and it's it's I haven't figured out how to do it and even if I did the most of the people that listen to me wouldn't wouldn't understand it I explain the same things over and over and over and sometimes the same people will be asking the same kind of questions because it's especially if if

you insist on having everything make
sense and like

interconnected like on a two-dimensional
plane then you cannot discuss two

different levels of reality with

everything being coherent and like like

articulating with with everything else

it it you can't have two different

levels of reality that are at the same

level and so it's going to take some

talent I guess at like trying to work

with two different levels of reality

simult

aneously there's like ultimate truth and

there's conventional truth there's

Nirvana and there's

samsara and

like Mahayana Buddhist say ultimately
there's no difference but still I mean
relatively there is a
difference and just talking about it's
like I'm just wasting calories just
talking and talking and talking about
this stuff so anyways let's see
let see thus monks the D being the same
with regard to all phenomena that can be
seen heard sense and cognized is such
and that's like dat data can be
translated as such or thus or like that
and it's a word that's used in early
Buddhism um because you can't really
describe the ultimate and so the the
best you can say is just thus or such

it's like a kind of
makeshift term for like experiencing
reality or someone who is like at the
level of reality and is no longer
identified with all this fantasmagoria
going on at the samsaric
level he's just like that or like this I
mean you can't really describe it any
better

such so whatever is heard or seen or
sense and fastened on to as true by
others one who is such among the self-
fettered wouldn't further claim to be
true or even false yes that's like the
AA waga the teachings of the ataga you
do not insist upon anything really just
let nature take its course do not get

involved it's not
you so I really don't know how to
explain it much better than the sutra
itself explains it and so if that's not
good enough I mean you're just not going
to get it I
yes or use it as like a Zen [__] and
just keep like stewing over it and
stewing over it and stewing over until
just something snaps in your head it's
like that your cognition muscle suddenly
cramps up and suddenly you've got this
Clarity and silence that will actually
allow you to understand it way better
than any kind of thinking will help you
to understand

it

so I'm just gonna move on this question

this is from Prav and or Mr Prav

sometimes he goes by Mr

Prav so Prav says what happens to the

people who's on the list well I haven't

decided yet but it's it's going to be

something probably that's going to

happen so I'm just going to move on to

PR second question and with regard to

the people on the list it's like the

people that were giving me all this

advice about like if you've got acid

reflux at night sometimes take more acid

drink vinegar that kind of stuff their

name is on a list and also people who

ask more than three questions per

episode their name winds up on a list
also it's a different list but it's just
as serious and I haven't decided what's
going to happen but um something
probably and they're not they're not
going to like

it so PR second question is what is
patana and patana is the seventh book of
Abid dama it's the last book of the
polypa just going in order of you know
first is You' got the winia at the
beginning and the first book of winia is
sort of controversial different people
will say that the the parim Moka comes
first and other people will say the Maha
waga comes first so either paraja or the

mahaga would be the first book of vam
and then it's everything is in order you
know you get into the suas it's denaya
first then majima then samuta then angut
and then uh kudaka and and then then you
got Abid dama and then the Abid dama has
a traditional um like order with patana
being the last and seventh on the list
and patana is its purpose is to
understand causal relations and there
are 24 of them but really there's less
than 24 because whoever came up with
patana I don't think it was the Buddha
whoever came up with patana has
duplicate
like causal
relations and like let's see I'm really

rusty on my part but there's like
let's see ATI pachio and AATA pachio
have exactly the same meaning they're
two different causal relations but
they're exactly the same meaning so why
they would double up on some the the
official answer it's it's the harder
ones the more subtle and difficult to
understand ones that are mentioned more
than wants just to help people
understand it better but that's not
really the case like ATI pachio and AIO
which are synonymous ATI just means the
existence of something and a means like
not having disappeared which also means
the existence of something and that's

way easier to understand than some of
the other

pachos in in patana and I spoke with um
a young Abid dama scholar who is really
into this was really studying it and he
said that patana is unreadable that a
lot of

senior like Abid dama Scholars like
scholar seatt in Burma I mean you can't
just sit down and read a book of patana
and un I mean just it's just unreadable
it's just going into all these causal
relations and the various combinations
of these causal relations and I mean
it's just kind of gobbly go in my
opinion

but unfortunately for me in Burma there

is a phenomenon a tradition called the
patano in which monks will chant patana
over loudspeakers sometimes 24/7 for an
entire week just blasting just they're
chanting this stuff that even they don't
understand nobody understands it but
they're blasting it over loudspeakers
for days on end sometimes until I'd be
in my cave or wherever I was as a monk
in Burma just fantasizing about taking a
baseball bat into the village not
hurting anybody but just smashing the
[_] out of the loudspeaker
system so I mean the reason why the
burmes do that is it is um a
tradition that when dhama

disappears that the last thing to
disappear will be like the rules of
monastic discipline like vinia is starts
first on the list and ntica and it's
going to disappear last and so the last
is going to disappear first patana is
going to be the first thing that
disappears when dham is disappearing
from this world and for me I could live
with that easily because I don't have
any use for batana anyway but in order
to make sure that The Disappearance of
dhama doesn't start you've got monks in
Burma just chanting it at add nauseum
just to to keep it going when personally
I think like a Burmese translation of
the dapada would be much more beneficial

to everybody if you if you want to blast
some Buddhist material over loudspeaker
systems so that I mean the people living
within a block radius I mean the Teacups
are rattling on the shelves it's so loud
and sometimes they'll start at like 3:
in the morning and with the Baton plays
it's 247

so I'm kind of digressing just kind of
venting a little bit with frustration
over Paton P that I'll probably never
hear

again when I came to a Burmese Monastery
in America they were having a Paton po
where this there was just this one monk
who was like staying up late at night

just chanting Paton over like a
loudspeaker in the like the the
meditation Hall just I mean he couldn't
blast it because of course in America
the neighbors are going to be calling
the cops pretty quickly but still it was
enough to to be so noisy that I couldn't
sleep at
night and it's just I mean
there's there's no real benefit to it as
far as I know other than just the
discipline of monks just chanting this
blah blah blah that even they don't
really
understand just over and over and over
just
this it's it's not good

but that's what patana is it's it's this
thick book it's several volumes it's
called one book but it's several volumes
of all these different combinations of
these 24 causal relations that really
nobody needs to
know

so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from Romeo Romeo says I
realize that you are a Buddhist but my
questions this week ask that you tap
into your knowledge of Hinduism I asked
these questions in light of newly
appointed FBI director ash Patel
recently being sworn in with his hand on
a bagavat Gita rather than a Bible

that's interesting with Hindus like cash
Pattel Tulsi gabard and Vic ramaswami
increasingly gaining influence in the US
government I would like to become more
familiar with the religion that is
guiding such figures
spiritually can you please break down
Hinduism
in as succinct a way as
possible and that's that's difficult
it's much more difficult to
describe Hinduism succinctly than to
describe say Christianity
succinctly because Hinduism is a very
vague and nebulous term that technically
I would say the definition of Hinduism
would be any kind of religious system

that consist considers the vas to be
authoritative Doctrine and so Hinduism
goes back to the vadas originally like
in the Buddhist time there were three
vas probably originally there was one
the the rig Veda what is now called the
rig Veda then you had the Seda and the
yajurveda which it's my understanding
that the Sova and the yajurveda are are
just like copying hymns from the rigveda
I don't I don't know if there's any like
original material in the Y Veda or the
Sova but they were mainly used by
priests to be reciting these to be
chanting these when doing fire
sacrifices and this was

like very ancient like like

Indo-European

religion as it manifested in

Northwestern India like when the Indo

Arians invaded they were already had

like at least the earliest hymns from

the rig V

composed and they were recited by

priests when sacrificing at the the Holy

Fire for the sake of mainly worldly

stuff like Suns and cattle and victory

and battle and that kind of

thing

but uh when Hinduism arrived in India

there was already an existent spiritual

tradition like which manifested in in

the Buddhist time as the shamana

tradition it was all these like sh
shaven headed philosophers who did not
consider the vas to be authoritative
they tended to be more
atheistic and they considered samsara to
be a kind of bad place to be escaped
from or transcended and and there's a
lot of that in Buddhism also there was
like an emphasis on Karma how you have
to purify yourself in order to to be to
free yourself from this dirty World kind
of kind of a
philosophy and
so early um like brahmanism kind of came
into contact with this and was
influenced by it and then so brahmanism

became more and more shamanistic and more yogic like especially with regard to the the upanishads I guess the vas the vdic tradition has three levels first you've got the vas themselves and then you've got what are called the brahmanas which were like technical manuals on sacrifice which almost nobody reads anymore other than maybe a few

Brahman

priests but they're they're considered to be part of the viic literature and then after that be came the upanishads and then the upanishads are getting you know very Buddhist likee and possibly some of the later upanishads were significantly influenced by

Buddhist

philosophy and then as as this kind of
sort of yogic

vedism traveled farther into Southern
India they started interacting with more
of a kind of

devotionalism you know worshiping the
gods and I mean in a sense that was not
the same as the way the the early like
Indo orians were worshiping the gods
where they're just like making

sacrifices of the Gods in order to get
stuff it became more of just this
devotional like you just dedicate
yourself to this God you know and and
that has manifested in like modern

Indian Hinduism mainly with regard to the vaishnavites and the shites and then you got like devotees of K and devotees of certain other gods but it seems like the two main ones are Vishnu and Shiva and so it's got all these different elements and I mean you can do just about anything I mean there's there's been like like people you like Mass murderers that were supposedly like devotees of Kali or something that were still like practicing Hindus so Hinduism is just like this broad spectrum of all sorts of different elements and it has incorporated a lot of sham stuff especially through yoga yoga was

originally like I was mentioning in a previous Q&A not too long ago it was U one of these shraman Traditions called sya similar to Buddhism or or jism and it just got absorbed part of it got absorbed into the vdic tradition by these Sonia philosophers saying okay we accept the vas as authoritative and almost nobody even reads the vas anymore like the bagavat Gita is the book cash Patel had his hand on not the rig Veda because the rig Veda is so archaic that it really doesn't speak to Modern Indians anymore it's it's all hymns to gods that have pretty much I mean they're not nearly as important

anymore like the main god of of the
rigveda would be uh Indra who was like
the patron deity of the Indo orians and
I think Agy the god of fire who's like
the messenger of the Gods you know he's
like sending the the sacrifices up to
the gods through through the fire that I
think he's number two and I mean Indra
and Agy they're really not all that
important in modern Hinduism anymore and
I mean I'm sure that there are some
Hindus considered them still to be very
important but I mean Vishnu and Shiva
have pretty much taken over and
including like different incarnations of
Vishnu which would be like especially um
Krishna and

Rama and the two main um epic poems of India the mahabharata and the ramayana they're about two different avatars of Vishnu at least they have come to be interpreted that way so Hinduism I mean it's got some of the same kind of elements says Buddhism like like morality is pretty similar the concept of of karma is fairly similar although it's got way more devotionism like dedication to gods and so forth and uh I think uh like bhakti yoga is way more of a thing in Hinduism than it is in Buddhism also like Karma Yoga which is just good deeds you know feeding the hungry and helping the poor and you know

serving others is more of a thing in Hinduism than in Buddhism or at least for some Hindus some Hindus don't have any use for serving others it's just depends on just what what part of the spectrum of Hinduism you're going to prefer which is going to be largely you know dependent on you know what family you were brought up in in what kind of neighborhood and what the local temple is you know who your your Guru is your family Guru that kind of thing so Hinduism is just in a way it's kind of like Mahayana Buddhism where it's just this broad spectrum of everything from the ridiculous to the sublime but it's it's really hard to

describe it very

succinctly and so I think I'm just going

to move on next question here this is

also from Romeo and Romeo says if the

Ten Commandments of the Bible generally

guides Christian ethics what guides

Hindu ethics and I mean you do have old

like very like vadic kind of text like

the laws of Manu which are you know it's

sort of like the Jewish Torah you know

it's it pretty much describes it's got

all kinds of things like a a Brahman

should never point at a pregnant cow

this this like really weird obscure kind

of

rules um and I don't think that they're

really considered to be authoritative
I'm sure that the average Hindu is just
flouting the laws of
pretty much on a daily
basis so I think Hindu ethics is largely
just tradition you know it's like I
already mentioned they they have a
similar idea of Ethics as
Buddhism um they have a little more
devotionalism mixed in like like um the
bagavat Gita you know it it acknowledges
that there's Karma and all that but
still you've in Hinduism you've got your
ashrama Dharma which is like your s Duty
so if you're a soldier it's your sacred
duty to kill enemies even though it's
makes Bad Karma but you just according

to babag Gita you just offer up the
fruits of all of your actions to God you
just lay the fruits of your actions
before God he kind of absorbs that and
then you remain in a way
pure so there's more of that kind of
thing in Hindu ethics than in Buddhist
ethics there's no Buddhist text
certainly no terava Buddhist text saying
that you just offer up the fruits of
your actions to the Buddha and then if
you're a soldier you you kill your
enemies it just doesn't work that
way
so yeah I mean even technically somebody
like Krishna my could be considered

more or less of a Hindu in this weird way I mean some Hindus will say Buddhism is a form of Hinduism even Christianity is a form of Hinduism I think a lot of Hindu people or I mean some people will call it sanat Dharma because Hindu is so notoriously meaningless it's just so diffuse and nebulous of a term that I mean it has almost no meaning at all just means it's sort of like an Indian religion that maybe accepts the vas as authoritative so you know some some Hindus would would go so far as to say even if you don't accept the the vas that that still you can be a Hindu you know the the Hari krishnas are Hindu and I mean they don't really have much

use for of anything other than just
reciting the names of of
Vishnu I mean that's that is their their
Stairway to Heaven essentially that is
their route to Salvation is just
repeating the names of of God over and
over
again

so yeah it's it's it's so diffus of a
term Hinduism that it's hard to even
call it a single religion like you can
say the religion of Bali also is
Hinduism but you look at the religion of
Bali and it's I mean there's obvious
overlap with the religion of India of
various parts of India like South India

but still it's they're just all these
different unique or just distinct
practices and beliefs that just all fit
under the term Hindu
so what guides Hindu ethics is mainly
just tradition I don't think that
there's a single list of rules or a
single text I think it's just tradition
over thousands of years has just settled
on what is good ethics and certain rules
um like stealing not stealing um are
just kind of stereotypically notoriously
ignored in
India I mean they might not kill a a a
cockroach but so I mean some Hindus they
won't kill a cockroach but they'll steal
anything that isn't nailed down my

father used to work on ships and he said that the Hindu ships were the worst that he saw a friend of his set his coat down and all of a sudden the coat just starts lifting up because there's this Hindu sailor with a fishing pole he's he's hooked it from an upper floor like an upper level of the ship he's just reeling it up he's just ripping off the guy's coat right behind him it was it was it was not good not that I'm saying that all Indian people or all Hindus are thieves anymore than I would say that they all wipe their butt with their hand but it's just it's kind of a stereotype that is based on a certain

Trend but they do take uh
aimsa like relatively seriously at least
a lot of them
do but it's I don't I don't know if
there's any particular list of rules
anywhere in Hinduism that Hindus refer
to as a guide with regard to what they
should do and what they shouldn't do in
Buddhism L people have five precepts
sometimes eight precepts monks have got
all the vinea rules but with regard to
like Hindu monks or Hindu lay people I'm
not 100% sure what they rely on other
than
just thousand yearold
tradition so I'm just going to move on
to uh Romeo's third question which is

what does Hinduism say about non-hindus
and again it depends on the Hindu like I
was saying earlier like some Hindus
would just incorporate any kind of
genuine spirituality into Hinduism
they'd say it's all Dharma you know so
Jesus was a Hindu and the Buddha was a
Hindu U whereas other Hindus are less
tolerant and would say you know anyone
who isn't a Hindu who accepts of the vas
as authoritative even though almost no
Hindus read the vas that uh you know
they're just have wrong View and they're
going to get a bad rebirth because of
that with regard to somebody like um
cash Patel or Tulsi gabard I mean

they're not outwardly very Hindu you know you don't they don't have like the red spot or anything like that you never see cash Patel with like the ashes smeared on his forehead after giving some like offering to Vishnu anything like that so for them it might just be kind of a superficial thing or either either that or just kind of a very private thing where if they're feeling spiritual that you know when they're alone in their free time which isn't very often you know they'll just kind of interpret it along Hindu lines something like that but none of them seems none of them strikes me as like overtly Hindu in their speech or

behavior so now that I've kind of kind
of like wallowed kind of blundered my
way through a three Hinduism
questions and I didn't mean to insult
any Indian people by mentioning that
thievery is very common I I had my
sandals stolen in India they size 13
sandals they were like flip-flops they
all chewed up by Rats from when I was in
Thailand

previously this disappeared so I went
without sandal I went Barefoot most of
my stay in India just because they got
ripped off relatively early on
but it could just be one one Indian guy
that's that's doing all of it he just

gets around a lot so I'm not accusing
all Indians of of being that
way so I'm just going to move on to next
question this is from
ruie just checking the
time this is from ruie as I was saying
and ruie says to live a blameless or
virtuous life without expecting a reward
and to live a blameless virtuous life
suspecting that there is no reward at
all are slightly different things are
they not is the latter even possible
well that's two question marks that's
two questions got to separate
these okay oh what the hell
happened see now I got to separate it
again and now I got to eliminate this

space okay we're

ready so to live a blameless virtuous

life without expecting a reward and to

live a blameless virtuous life

suspecting that there is no reward at

all are slightly different things on

yeah that that would be different

obviously I mean if they weren't

different you could just say the same

thing twice instead of saying two

different

things so I mean if you there is some

overlap though I mean obviously to live

a blameless virtuous life without

expecting a

reward would be a subset no wait no it

would be the people that don't think
there is a reward would be a subset of
the people who don't don't expect a
reward cuz there's some people that
would expect that there is one but still
they're not concerned with that like
people who take the bhavat Gita
seriously you try to live according to
the bhavat Gita they might um live life
just sort of not caring any what kind of
reward there was going to
be they just offer it up to God whatever
it
is so to live a blameless virtuous life
suspecting there is no reward at all I
mean that would be a little more
tricky um because I mean there's

different people like that I mean some people you could say they suspect that there is no reward at all but maybe they're just mistaken and that deep down at the level below suspicion they still know you know what Dharma is about at least they have a deep feeling for it and so they're just kind of drawn to being virtuous even though like at this superficial level they're like nihilistic atheist and materialists but deeper down you know at the subconscious level they know better so there could be people like that who at the surface think you know all this stuff about Karma's [__] and there's no no

Rewards or punishments but still they're going to be kind to others and be honest and and this kind of thing that that can happen and then there's like another similar case where you think that there's no reward but still it makes you feel icky to tell lies or to steal I mean obviously there's still a reward even though they suspect that there is no reward and they're they're influenced by the fact that there clearly is a reward because you know they just don't feel right if they're lying or getting into trouble you know it's like obviously just living a blameless virtuous life at least it keeps you out of trouble I mean that's

even a materialist can accept that much
so it's it's kind of tricky suspecting
that there is no reward I mean you'd
have to be some kind of weird radical
philosopher to even deny that like
stealing can land you in
jail or that like insulting people to
their face can get you punched in the
nose so yeah I'm not exactly sure where
ruie would draw the
line with regard to reward and no reward
because there there's obviously rewards
to living a virtuous life um or at least
lack of
punishment that even a dog knows that
much you know the dog knows not the [__]

on the floor because it's going to get
punished if it does

it so ruie says is the latter even
possible so that's kind of what I was
getting at I suppose um people that
suspect that there is no reward I'm sure
that there are some people like at this
superficial level the intellectual level
that they suspect that there is no war
or just say um just getting just setting
aside police and reputation and that
kind of thing and they're just you're
just thinking along the lines of like
metaphysical stuff you know paranormal
stuff Karma that kind of thing then yeah
there's people that can live a spiritual
life um at The Superficial level being

you know

nihilistic atheists and materialists but

deeper down they know better you know

subconsciously they know better and they

just feel wrong if they tell a lie they

just feel like soiled or something if

they do something

shitty so yeah I mean

um most people are not fully aware of

most of their their mind that the

subconscious mind is is greater than the

conscious mind the conscious mind is

just that part of our mind that is sort

of self

self-referential and so it kind of is

able to look at itself but there's other

parts that it just can't look in that direction it doesn't know how to look in that

direction and one of the I've I've heard that sort of what wisdom is is just sort of like the wiser you are the less of a subconscious mind you have the more conscious you know the more you become aware of what uh would ordinarily be subconscious something along all those lines so technically you could say a fully enlightened being wouldn't have a subconscious

mind so I think I answered that question I'm just going to move on next question this is from Stellar Supreme at St etc etc because his name just keeps getting

longer and longer and so we just got to
have to let just we have to draw the
line somewhere we just can't let his
name keep getting longer and longer so
it's just Stellar Supreme

Etc and Stellar Supreme Etc says I

suspect that I might have

hyperthyroidism if it is the case they

typically prescribe non intoxicating

drugs called beta blockers which can

actually be healthy for the Heart Like A

supplement and are relatively cheap to

buy he's got \$4 to \$15 for a 30-day

Supply do you suspect that this could

interfere with my pursuit of the monk

life added context I plan to donate

about 5 to \$10,000 when I ordain well I mean the added context should be irrelevant because if you're going to be donating money right before you become a monk I mean there shouldn't be any strings attached it should just be a a real donation and not some like an investment you know I'll donate this money so long as you buy me medicine from the money I donated I mean you can do it that way and I think there'd probably be people going along with it but still I mean it wouldn't be like a pure donation if you're donating the money expecting something in return

so with regard to like becoming a monk
when you have a health condition that
requires relatively cheap medicine I
mean it could be a problem if you decide
to go and live in a cave in some remote
area of of Asia that then it might be a
problem you might have to like it'd
probably be fairly easy to have a donor
who can supply that stuff to you but you
might have to carry around you know more
than a month supply of it if you're
going out anywhere remote you know you
just got to make sure you've got enough
to last the time that you're out
there um I'm not sure how easy it would
be to get this kind of stuff in Thailand

I assume you can get it in Bangkok and then you can have some donor supporter in Bangkok who like sends it to you or something like that so it shouldn't be like uh I mean it shouldn't prevent you from becoming a

monk U it is unfortunate and and it can be and this happens a lot that just through dhama practice the situation clears

up and that that happens a lot I mean people have been cured of tuberculosis and like tumors and stuff through intensive dhama practice in my case it's to some degree it actually went the other way I used to have like really blotchy skin

like searc dermatitis would be the technical term for it and some of my early q&as like right after I dropped out of the monk Hood um there like there was like that one that I did from a a hotel room in New Orleans where I had just spent like two days without bathing sitting on a train and I was just I had just shaved and it was just like like this red rash on my face and I used to think where am I going to get the medication because there was this good skin cream from Korea that worked that I could get in Burma but I didn't I didn't know of any way of getting it in America I like what

am I going to do and then it just went
away I haven't had that problem it's
like the love of my woman or or
something along those lines has just
caused that condition to just stop being
an issue

so I mean it is possible though that
just through dhama practice I mean if if
you protect dhama DH protects you and
you're just going to get what you
need so yeah I don't think that it
should be any problem although I
wouldn't I mean you're going to find if
you if you are ordained it doesn't
matter if you're ordained in America or
in Asia there's going to be very
generous Asian patrons who are very

happy to support you like in Burma you
got like the the P daa who is the a
supporter and they can even like adopt
you and and like like sponsor your
ordination and everything make sure
you've got all the robes and everything
you need they're really happy about that
it's to some degree it's a kind of
spiritual materialism where they get
they're getting Merit by supporting the
SAA they're really happy to spread dhama
to the west and to westerners you know
you're like the exotic special flavor of
Monk because you're a Westerner and so
there's you're not going to have any
problem getting support especially if

you're a serious monk if you're a sincere serious monk they're going to respect that especially because most Asian monks really aren't all that serious I mean some really are but most of them aren't so I mean it's unnecessary to have money donated to the monastery with the expectation of that money being used at least in part to provide you with medicine or whatever when you should just let go and let DH protect you and if you're a good monk you're going to get more than enough support that would be my advice and so I'm just going to move on to Stellar Supreme etc's follow-up question he says

but if I plan to settle in Thailand
starting out in the US should I reserve
that donation for the monastery there
instead I asked because of the Dilemma
of setting out Provisions for the future
well if you're a monk you shouldn't be
worrying about the future give no
thought for tomorrow what you will eat
or where you will
sleep

seriously I mean don't be making these
kind of plans where you're going to have
like this stipend this allowance or
whatever it is that's that no it's
you're still thinking in terms of money
and like survival mode and I mean if you

just and this works in Hinduism and Buddhism where you just like set put yourself out at the the mercy of the universe and you live a virtuous life the universe will protect you you'll get exactly what you need so if if you're going to decide between like donating \$5 to \$10,000 to a monastery in America or to a monastery in Thailand it shouldn't have anything to do with supporting you or getting anything any monetary benefit out of that it's just which one needs the money more something along those lines so I'm just going to move on next question this is from juwels and jwes is asking for a friend

does visiting prostitutes violate the precept against sexual misconduct for Lay person and yes of course it does I mean that should be a no-brainer just think about it for a second or two I mean Buddhism is different from other religions in certain fundamental you know important ways but Buddhism is very I mean more against wallowing in sensuality than most religions I mean from a Buddhist point of view even listening to music is immoral so I mean visiting prostitutes yeah I mean the the precept against sexual misconduct or sensual misconduct kamua it's uh mainly

rules out everything except for a loving
monogamous

relationship or at least a dutiful
monogamous

relationship that any kind of sexual
promiscuity is a no no and also messing
around with women that are like already
spoken for like another man's wife
another man's

fiance um you know another man's slave
girl anything like that that's out so of
course adultery is out

but it's it's not

as Buddhism is not as strict as say
Christianity in

that marriage is just purely a secular
institution it's it's not involved in

early Buddhism that it's forbidden for a monk to even participate in a wedding ceremony that's just not Buddhism that's just something completely else and so it whether you're actually married or not is largely irrelevant so long as you are like in a loving or at least dutiful monogamous relationship and not like violating any obligations to anybody else and the person you're sleeping with isn't obligating violation U violating obligations to anybody else but going out and picking up prostitutes or just picking up drunken women in bars no it doesn't doesn't work that way one night stands are definitely sensual

misconduct from the Buddhist point of view so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from dhama river and dhama river says what's your opinion of Casina

meditation and casin meditation was a much bigger deal in ancient and early medieval times than it is today the the founder of the tradition which I was ordained Tom Pulu knew how to do Casina meditation he could teach casin meditation but I never really practiced it I mean the closest I came to casin meditation might be like just contemplating a candle flame in a way that's sort of like fire Casina or sometimes when I'd be out in the forest

you just kind of pitch you pick like a relatively circular patch of green in The Greenery that's you know a slightly different shade of green you know it's like in the shade or something that I just like rest to my Gaze on that and just kind of go empty but it wasn't really Casina

meditation Cina meditation is mainly you're meditating on a like a colored disc or or some kind of disc I mean there's also like Earth Casina where you take you take mud and you just sort of paint a circle onto some board or something and then that's like an a circle of Earth that you can meditate on

light Cina I've I've red that some monks
will just cut a circular hole in the
side of their Hut so the light shining
through is their their light Casina it's
like a circular a circle of light
essentially some some of them I'm not
sure how you'd make a circle out of like
fire Casina it be kind of tricky making
a circular flame but I I I assume you
could work it out
somehow but it's I mean if you read the
wisi Maga it's they're mainly dealing
with Cina meditation you know the wisi
ma can be considered a kind of
meditation manual and the main kind of
meditation is Cina and it's like you're
contemplating a disc I mean that is it's

like the hypnotic object and it really is kind of like hypnosis it's maybe a bit more like Advanced and complex and subtle than ordinary hypnosis but still you know it's like you you focus on this Cina disc that is the the meditative object and you you just keep staring at that contemplating it until when you close your eyes you can see it just as clearly as when your eyes are open you know it's like you've just got it like burned into your mind this circle and then you start manipulating it making it bigger and smaller and this kind of thing until it's like in a way it's sort of like a mental

exercise just strengthening your body
strengthening your concentration and
then you get you can get into jhannaic
States as a result of this but it's kind
of Fallen by the wayside I mean the main
kind of meditation in Theravada Buddhism
is pretty much meditation on the breath
on a um in Thailand um they do a lot of
Mantra Buddho or
puto um meta meditation is big in some
places among some people and Vipassana is
just pretty much out but if you want to
understand Vipassana meditation the Wimala
Pala has fairly elaborate explanations
of it um I do think that it's it's
largely a
hypnotic uh method like the Stanford

hypnosis lab in Stanford University
they've got a hypnosis lab and so
because they're trying to study hypnosis
scientifically they have to have
standardized methods you know they have
to hypnotize everyone as much the same
as possible to get rid of any kind of
like random variations so they can just
focus on what they're trying to
understand and at the the Stanford
hypnosis Lab at least at the time um
that I read the book that was written
from a guy that worked at the Stanford
hypnosis lab they start off staring at a
circle it's it's generally a very small
one it could just be like the head of a

thumbtack stuck into the wall directly in front of the person so it's smaller than the average Cina disc but still it is just focusing on a disc

SM focusing on a circle on the wall and so um there is kind of if you don't have a good guide a good teacher when when you're hypnotizing yourself I mean you can experience what you think you ought to experience and you can lead yourself astray if you do not have a skillful teacher who is guiding you through

it so yeah maybe read read up on it in the the wiui MAA or if you can find a teacher who actually teaches Cina meditation which is going to be

relatively rare in the west then maybe
you could consult with them but
personally I think you'd probably be
better off with the breath or or some
other kind of mindfulness

meditation um than Cina meditation but
it depends on what your purposes are and
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question also from dhama

river which is this F do you think there
is any University left in the US or
Canada that is not an indoctrination
Camp um well with regard to
indoctrination camps it may be that
pretty much every University in the US
to some degree is going to be an

indoctrination Camp you're always going to have a certain I don't know if any University in the west where like cultural Marxism you know progressivism is is just completely banned there's always going to be an element of that I think but some some I almost said some monasteries some universities I mean they're going to be uh safer than others in that regard like the University of Chicago has a reputation for promoting free speech so you're definitely going to have the hysterical progressives there but at the very least you're also going to have like alternate points of view there and also I read

that um um like more and more wealthy people from like New England are sending their kids to universities in the South like in Georgia South Carolina North Carolina because even though in the South also I mean University towns there's going to be lots of hysterical progressives but you're still going to have like the Conservative Christian groups there that are allowed you know they're not going to be persecuted so I mean it may be your best bet with regard to the average University is to find one where even though there's still going to be plenty of hysterical progressivism there's going to also be

uh at least a tolerance of other points
of

view and of course you've got some like
specifically right-wing kind of univers
Hillsdale College I don't know if that's
just online I don't know if they have an
actual campus or not but

I mean there there's places like that
also I think it's called Hillsdale
College it's the one that uh Victor
Davis Hansen is is uh associated
with so do I think there's any

University left in us are Canada that is
not an indoctrination Camp um it depends
on what you mean by an indoctrination
Camp because even Hillsdale College is
going to be indoctrinating you in a more

conservative Direction

that I mean there any kind of university
is going to be like teaching you
something as this is the way it is even
if you're encouraged you know at times
to like have critical thought and
question everything still it's not like
you're going to go to any University
where the professor is standing up there
and just saying well this is just a
suggestion but it may be you know and
that all of his classes are taught that
way that you know it's all just you can
take this or leave it you know it's just
an idea that that's not really much
teaching seems to

me so um I mean some universities are definitely going to have less like leftist indoctrination and even some of the ones that have good reputations like University of Chicago it's certainly going to have a certain amount of leftist indoctrination but it's also going to have like alternative points of view and hopefully uh you'll be able to take certain classes and not just get punished by a leftist professor if he finds out that you're not a leftist too that's like that would be like your main problem I think at at a university level is you're taking like liberal arts you know you're take you trying to get a degree in English or something and that

you might be in like the hysterical
Progressive bubble and if the pro
Professor finds out that you know you're
you're like a a fascist then you know he
can he can fail you just just finding
fault with anything that you
say so that's I mean stem you know
engineering physics mathematics that
kind of thing is going to be less
susceptible to leftist hysteria than
like history or English liberal arts in
general but yeah it's it's not a totally
hopeless case it is possible to still
get a university Education Without just
having your mind turned to [__] by
hysterical

leftists and so I'm just going to move
on to next question and this is
from Captain bouic Kuma and chasz is um
I think he he misheard my name of this
captain of this polish ship I worked on
his name was bouic Kuma but tasas is has
bouic and ending in the L with the line
through it which I think is like an sh
sound so it be

Bish Bish

kumka no his name was bouic it ended in
a k I'm pretty sure and Kuma it's my
understanding that Kuma in Polish means
door

handle so it's it's I don't know this
things are just getting very confused I
think I think uh tasas is is is is

becoming more and more confused with
regard to who he really
is anyways Captain mumi Kuma says when
you say that Karma lands you exactly
where you need to be does it mean that
in the concept Karma does it mean that
in that concept Karma shows knows the
future in some sense no it doesn't Karma
does not know the
future Karma just lands you where you
need to be now
so it knows the present I guess in a
sense but it's more like just water
seeking its own level water doesn't know
the future to know that it it has to
flow this way downhill instead of that

way uphill it's just nature taking its course and that's the way your karma is is your karma is like water flowing downhill in a way it's it's just sort of taking the path of least resistance and I mean you just have to be in a certain POS I mean the karma just leads you where where it needs to go so yeah it doesn't really know the future anymore than water knows the future when it flows downhill instead of uphill it's just karma is just flowing in the direction that that it needs to flow without really thinking about the future or or even the past for that matter because it's just momentum it's just the momentum of your mind and it's

not that it's Landing you in this particular like materialistic environment it's creating it really I mean materialistic environments are mindmade so I do think that a lot of people that watch my videos and a lot of like Western Buddhists in general just accept materialism as just established fact that's like their world view and then they try to fit Buddhism into that and I don't think it's that way at all I think physical matter I do not think it really exists of course that just makes me a weirdo from a modern or postmodern

American point of

view

so let's

see I think I'm just gonna move on to

the next question this is also from

Captain boui

Kuma and he says is Terra vadan concept

of time linear or recurrent I mean when

there is a big bang and then big

collapse and another big bang then maybe

we are living the exact same lives in

the next universe and the next and so on

well if that were the case there'd be no

Enlightenment at all I mean if if that

were the case there would be no

Enlightenment because You' just be

trapped into just living the same

unenlightened life over and over again
because if you did become enlightened
you already did it the first cycle
through an infinitely long period of
time ago so I mean in Buddhism they do
have a cyclical conception of time but
it's not like like an exact repetition I
think n taught something like this
eternal recurrence but it's more like
the seasons you know you've got winter
you know spring summer fall winter
spring summer fall it happens in a kind
of cycle even though every winter is not
exactly the same as the winter before it
every summer is not exactly the same as
the summer summer before it it's a kind

of cycle and it's Buddhism also talks about world Cycles you know expansion and contraction of the cosmos and in Buddhism you you've got you know every time the world evolves there's going to be an India and the Buddha like Buddhas always like they go through the same kind of life like biography you know they're they're always like a Buddha always belongs to whichever cast happens to be considered the highest at the time so the idea is the Buddha was a katria because in the Buddhist time the krias were considered to be the highest cast then later if other times if brahans are considered to be the highest cast and the Buddha is going to be a Brahman and

then he's got to renounce the world you
taking some kind of vehicle to renounce
the world and then he's G to like do
these harsh austerities the dukar aaria
and he's going to have like certain
people doing the the auster ities with
him and then he's going to get
enlightened sitting under a certain tree
after receiving milk rice from a woman
and you know it's the same kind of like
template but it's not the same Buddha
every time and there's always
differences so there's certain
patterns that are cyclically repeated in
time but it's not just an exact like
rerun because if it was an exact rerun

there would there could be really no no
dum because nobody could possibly become
enlightened unless you just like a
questioner asked earlier on he's like
you become enlightened and then reset
hits and then you're unenlightened again
and then you have to become enlightened
just over and over and over again but
Buddhism doesn't teach that and I don't
think that's the way it
works

so I guess I finished I guess I answered
that one more or less so I'm just going
to move on to the next question and
we're getting close to the bottom here
no worries there we're yeah we're going
to be way less than 3 hours not less

than two hours though so this next question is from PSA and PSA says do you like doing the gritty and I don't even know what the gritty is my woman is of the opinion that it's some kind of dance but no I don't I don't dance that much if at all and uh even if the gritty isn't a dance I'm pretty sure I don't do the gritty unless gritty is cooking something on a griddle and I don't I don't think we even have a griddle maybe we have a griddle but I don't know so yeah let's just uh skip that question because I don't even know what the gritty is next question from PSA what is your favorite sua of the

majima Naya and why well the one the first suta that comes to mind would be the dean Naka sua which I mentioned I think in the previous Q&A and the reason why I like the dean nakas suda is because the message is an archaic message you know it's apparently a very old

suta that you know it's just saying don't believe

anything and um according to the the the suta there's a non- Buddhist philosopher named Dean nakaka who is a relative of of venerable saruta who was one of the Buddha's Two Chief disciples and so venerable sarha is Fanning the Buddha while this

conversation is taking place between the
Buddha and the non- Buddhist philosopher
Dean naka

and deaga says nothing is acceptable to
me and the implication is is that no
belief no point of view is acceptable to
him that he's a radical skeptic and then
the Buddha says well this idea that
nothing is acceptable to you is
acceptable to you isn't it so I mean you
still have this belief you still have
one belief too many you still have this
one last

attachment and then it caused deaka to
have a kind of insight not he didn't
become fully enlightened but I think he

became a soda paana or some such but it caused Sara to become enlightened so this is a relatively early suta at least even going with like the traditional timeline because this is the suta that caused one of his chief disciples to become

enlightened um another one of my favorite sutas in the majaya is the alagad upam Su which I mentioned before it contains the simile of the raft the simile of the water snake it's in a way it's sort of like a compilation of well-known sayings of the Buddha that were considered to be important um and it's just like in different little chapters you know different

scenes so it's possibly a later sutta that is a compilation of older material and I mean this the simile of the raft is really an important one to bear in mind you know it's it's an important sutta or important simile to I mean to if you want to understand dhamma it helps for you to understand that dhamma is a raft made of rubbish that it's not some kind of sacred Golden Law you know that's you know just completely sublime and perfect and sacred it is a it's just this Jerry rigged contraption made of rubbish that you use to get across the flood of samsara and then you just throw it

away so um PSA this this next one isn't exactly a question it's just he he left this comment and I would like to comment upon the comment PSA says I asked chat GPT what's the meaning of your name and this is the answer so chat GPT speaks the term poasa and then in ply for some reason it has has the word the name poasa in D nagari script so the term poasa and then ply in David nagari script translates to language of wisdom or speech of wisdom it is derived from two components PA meaning wisdom or Insight basa meaning speech or language in Buddhist text P basa refers to speech or communication that reflects wisdom especially in the

context of expressing teachings
understanding and insight in a way that
leads to Enlightenment or deeper
understanding of reality the term
emphasizes the power of wise speech one
that is informed by the right
understanding of the nature of existence
leading others toward Clarity and wisdom
and chat GPT is
wrong in a way this is kind of good news
for people who are concerned about AI
becoming omniscient and just or just
sentient and taking over because chat
GPT doesn't know what the [__] it's
talking about I mean the PA part is good
that PA means wisdom or understanding

something like that but basa I mean it completely leaves out the O that it would just be paasa and not P basa if it meant you know speech of wisdom which it doesn't

obasa um I

mean basa just setting just forget the o for a second basa can have two different meanings it can mean language or it can mean

light and so obasa can have two different meanings that O is a prefix in in in Sanskrit it would be Ava Ava in in poly it's just o and it implies a downward motion so um with regard to light it means like down shine sort of like the sun shining down on us but in

language it's like speaking down which
means like

insinuation you know it's like

innuendo and pretty obviously my name
doesn't mean

innuendo of wisdom that it means

downshot poly very well let's just leave
it at

that and that wasn't even a question so
let's just move on to the next question
and this is the very last question very
last one this is from orc

boled and orc bolv says does listening
to dissonant and evil sounding music
produce negative Karma the reason why I
ask this is because I enjoy extreme

metal black metal to be specific which usually deals with morbid themes and uses dissonant chords to produce an especially infernal atmosphere I don't find myself in negative States when I listen to this stuff but I wonder if it's still affects me anyways well if it didn't affect you it would have no effect on you and then you wouldn't bother to listen to it obviously it has an

effect and as I mentioned earlier in Buddhism listening to any music is more or less immoral because it's wallowing in

sensuality so I mean for Lay people you know you're not going to be a perfected

Saint in this life so long as you remain
a lay person with a job and a family and
you know

just secular interactions to participate
in and all that that so I mean just
listening to music I listen to music
sometimes

too but um yeah listening to devil music
definitely it's going to have an effect
on you I mean I don't I don't like black
metal like this like this throat
screechy stuff I mean it's like
deliberately ugly it's deliberate
ugliness in that sense I mean some of
the guitar might be really good but and
and there might be sort of transitioning

back and forth between like real singing
and like melodic kind of music and then
just the Roaring and
screeching but listening to all that
roaring and screeching I mean it's
certainly going to have an effect on you
and I mean if it didn't have any effect
you wouldn't you wouldn't bother to
listen to
it and I mean my brother used to listen
to a lot of like really like heavy metal
like Iron Maiden kind of stuff and even
the album covers it's all these de
demonic you know what's his name Eddie
this Eddie and all these I mean he's
obviously some kind of
demon and just the metal the music

itself it's I mean it does not it's not
conducive to peace of mind it's more
conducive to
agitation

um yeah I mean I can't really just
pronounce definitively that it's going
to have a negative bad effect on anyone
who listens to it

but I mean if you listen to it like
analytically just trying to understand
the the chord patterns and all this kind
of stuff it might I mean it might be no
worse than any other kind of music but
just getting into listen like listening
to morbid lyrics and the just the
screeching and roaring and all that yeah

it's it's definitely going to have sort of like a more or less demonic kind of influence on your

mind not that I'm suggesting that you should be listening to Aba or the Bay City Rollers or something like that man but I have to admit I do like like hard metal but it has to be like melodious

like um just look at like Leo morichi and some of his covers he does like metal covers of non-metal songs like Funky Cold Medina by Leo Mor Leo morichi who's got like a a braided beard it looks really nice might I might do that someday but I mean some of the guitar playing in that is just really good even

though he does some yelling but it's
it's like good spirit I mean Funky Cold
Medina is not exactly a satanic song
it's it's about like an aphrodesiac but
it's like a joke song or Leo mori's
cover of uh Blue Monday that's good too
that's really good
or just Led Zeppelin I mean I realize
that Jimmy pige may have made a deal
with the devil you know he may have
worship demons or some such but at least
their music is you know it's musical but
then again people have different
standards some people like banjo music I
mean Foggy Mountain Breakdown is good
listening I have to admit some people

like country western music I just do not
like country western music I I've never
liked it's music is a kind of emotional
communication you know it's like an
emotional language and it it's not
really so much in words even though
you've got lyrics but it's it's more at
an emotional level it's it's like
conveying emotions to the to the hearer
and some people just like these sappy
kind of emotions like people in like I
don't know like really mellow music
doesn't really appeal to me so I I have
to admit I do prefer music as a kind of
stimulant than a sedative that if I want
to calm down I'll just listen to
silence so I don't like music That's

supposed to like mellow you out and calm
you down because silence works better
for that but some like a certain kind of
caffeine kind of effect that some some
good rock and roll I I really like
that but uh yeah I my own feeling is
this isn't really an intellectual
philosophical idea it's it's just more
of this feeling that I have that I mean
you listen to like demonic throat
screechy kind of roaring music it is
going to have more of a negative effect
than if you listen to something
uplifting
so I guess I answered that question and
so I guess I answered all the questions

and so I guess we're done and so like I
always should say at the beginning and
almost never do

if you have any questions you think I
could answer about early Buddhism about
Buddhism in general Terra Auto Buddhism
in particular like Eastern philosophy
Western philosophy monasticism
meditation me personally that kind of
stuff there's a good chance I'll be able
to answer it in something remotely
resembling and intelligent
manner but I mean if you
like YouTube personalities people that
have written a book and are kind of of
famous there's a good chance I will have
never heard of these person just like

I've never heard of doing the
gritty so just bear that in mind and no
more than three questions per person per
episode

please and uh I guess I should uh say if
uh you haven't liked this video but you
made it this far you apparently liked it
at least a little bit so you might as
well hit the like button feel free to
leave comments below uh subscribe if you
haven't already and uh be happy and now
I'm going to hit the stop recording
button

Okay

then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

136. So many question and answers so far and it's just going to get more in all likelihood. I am your host as usual,

Pony Bosa, and I have decided to kind of change things up a bit just for the sake of being

spontaneous and unpredictable. And so

I'm starting with the emergency backup

beverage tonight instead of the

designated primary beverage or

DPB. The primary primary beverage is

waiting while I drink the emergency

backup beverage first. And also for the

sake of just innovation, I guess I'm
going with a red
umbrella. So I'm just going to lick
the beverage off the
umbrella, throw it onto the desk, take a
swig. Ah,
smooth. And I'm just going to commence
to answering questions. And the first
question is from
Salina. And Sina says, "What do you
think of umbrella usage of Burmese
monks?" And I really don't think all
that much about Burmese monks using
umbrellas. I mean, some monks use a lot
of umbrellas. They use them as parasols
or sun shades as much as they use them
to keep them from rain. And it actually

works better as a sunshade because those paper umbrellas that Burmese monks use if they're new, then when they get wet, this like reddish dye drips off of them and gets onto your clothes and stuff, which is not cool.

So, I mean, with regard to umbrella usage of monks, I mean, you can say that it's kind of wimpy. A real aesthetic wouldn't bother using a parasol or a like an umbrella. And it is against the rules to use them in public. So, if you see a monk holding umbrella in public, even if it's pouring down rain, that's against the rules. Unless maybe he's sick, then he may have an excuse. Um,

but usually they're supposed to be used only like um outside of of populated areas, you know, like in the forest, like you're they're on the on the road walking from one village to another. You could use them then or you could use them inside the monastery. And it it is allowable in vineia texts. Although it may be sort of a later development as monks were getting wimpier, you know, less hardcore in their aestheticism that somebody allowed them to use umbrellas. And um yeah, I I didn't use them much. I think I had one. Yeah, I did have one. I had an umbrella. In fact, I had like a

Thai crot or sometimes it's called a
glot, which is a great big umbrella with
a detachable uh handle and there was
like a a mosquito net that would hang
down and there was a hook on the top.
You could hang it from like the branch
of a tree and then you could stay
underneath the tree without being eaten
alive by mosquitoes. So, I had one of
those. It was kind of nice. Although um
in order for the mosquito net to shed
water, it's it's like really super fine
mesh. It's like women's panty hose, you
can't really even see the holes through
it. So the water just kind of sheets off
the outside of it, but also it very much

reduces air circulation inside. So there's no breeze coming through. And then you can just I mean there was one time I was living in a forest and I was using one of these cots that imported from Thailand and it was so hot and humid that I'd sit inside the mosquito net until I was just sweltering just drenching in sweat. Then I'd have to like get out from underneath it just to get some fresh air and then just be eaten alive by mosquitoes till I couldn't stand being eaten alive by mosquitoes again. So then I'd go back under the mosquito net and just start sweltering and drenching in sweat again. It was just sort of back and

forth. But what I think is more interesting from like a sociological point of view is the use of fans in by Burmese monks because it's it's sort of falling out of fashion. It used to be like a hundred years ago that Burmese monks always carried a big fan with them and it wasn't so much to to like fan themselves in hot weather. It was used as a kind of shield like like a hundred years ago and more when a Burmese monk would give a sermon he would be holding this fan right in front of his face so that you couldn't see his face when he was given the sermon. But that wasn't the reason for it. The reason for it was

um to prevent monks from being
distracted by like young like nubile
females in the audience. So he's like
protecting himself from impure thoughts
by putting this obstacle in between
himself and the audience. But that has
fallen out of fashion since Burma got
independence from the British, I
think. So with regard to umbrella usage
in Burmese monks, um you can say that
it's kind of a sign of wimpiness, but
still it's it's allowable according to
the rules of monastic discipline. as
long as they're not doing it in among
the houses like in in like towns or
villages, which they generally do. Just
like they wear shoes in towns and

villages, it's against the rules for a monk to wear shoes in populated areas.

Also, he's supposed to go barefoot unless he's like unwell or like the pavement is so hot that you couldn't walk on it barefoot without burning your feet. Something like that.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Ulianis, one of my favorite Roman emperors, by the way. And he says, "Can you comment on your next live? How to get a job on a boat? What did you do? Tell us about your adventures." So, how to get a job on a

boat? Gosh, I mean, in my case, there were just postings. There was like a bulletin board in the biology department of my university. They just had like job postings and one of the job postings was like a biologist working on board foreign fishing vessels that were mostly fishing in the Bearing Sea, which is in between Alaska and like Siberia. And so I thought, well, it's a way of making money during the summer. So I did it. And then it just I just kept doing it because it was a convenient way of making money and you only had to work like six or seven months a year and you couldn't spend your money while you were working

because you were on a ship, you know,
just like, you know, maybe pay your rent
in advance or something. So, I mean,
that was how I got a job on a boat. Um,
and I was a fisheries biologist, which
meant that I was taking biological
samples of what mostly I worked on
Japanese ships. So, what the Japanese
were catching, you know, what species,
how many of each species, you know, the
average weight, the, you know, the
sometimes with some kinds of like high
value fish, you'd be measuring, you
know, proportions of males to females
and their their lengths and so forth. uh
if they catch prohibited species like

tanner crabs or king crabs or halibet or salmon, you know, you gotta like observe how they're treating them and what the viability is. You know, if they're going to be tossed back overboard, are they going to be alive or dead or dying, that kind of thing. and then send radio reports every week to the National Marine Fisheries Service in Seattle just uh you know giving my reports on you know what they were catching, where they were catching it, you know how much of each kind of fish they were catching, that sort of thing. Um now it's foreign fisheries are were being phased out towards like the the '9s. In the 90s, the Americans were

gearing up to catch the the low value fish like pollic. You know, it's like the biggest fishery in the world 20 years ago. I don't know what it is now. It used to be like the Peruvian anchoveta fishery was the world's biggest fishery. That got replaced by the bearing sea pollic fishery, which is what most fish sticks and like fake crab meat and stuff is made out of now. Merluchia Pradua is the scientific name of the Pacific Pollock. And uh let's see, I'm not sure what got me onto that particular tangent into that particular strain of tangential thought, but I mean the

biggest

adventures I had, it was mainly just stormy seas. I mean um during the winter time in the Bearing Sea, it's just pretty much a three-monthlong storm. So yeah, there was, you know, storms where the wind is blowing like 60 knots for two or three days straight and it's just the waves are just like these big moving hills and the it's I mean I liked it. That kind of thing was very exciting to me. You know, it's just just awe inspiring just the sheer power of nature. Although the Japanese didn't like it much. I mean, partly it's a safety hazard and all that and also what was probably even worse is they had to

shut down the fishing operations and stop making money. And the Japanese they they just work like robots or slaves, you know, it's just all about making money. The only time they would pay any attention to the Shinto shrine on in the wheelhouse, you know, every Japanese ship pretty much, at least in the fishing fleet, has a Shinto shrine in the wheelhouse. The only time they would make pay any attention to the Shinto shrine is when they wanted to make more money, you know, like they weren't catching enough fish or something. So, they'd make little offerings of saki or

whatever. But with regard to getting a fish on a getting a a job on a fishing boat, I'm not exactly sure. I mean, you have to I mean, now you can do a search on the internet for, you know, fisheries, Alaskan fisheries. And um I mean, if you if you're not like a skilled fisherman, you know, you don't know how to like men nets, that kind of thing. If you know how to men nets, you could probably get a job pretty easy. Someone who can tie nets, that's Yeah, that's that's like a a very valued skill. or if you're a good cook, you can get a job as a cook on on one of these fishing boats. And I worked on a crabbo once where the guys were, and

this was like back in the the late 80s,
late 1980s. And the guys were
complaining they were only making like
a,000 bucks a day and it wasn't even
worth the the the time and effort to be
there, you know? It's like,000 bucks a
day. That's nothing.

So, I mean, even the cook, you know,
he's going to be like a grunt laborer on
the back deck when he's not cooking. So,
I mean, he's making big money, too. But,
I mean, if you're not particularly
skilled with regard to much of anything,
you can still get a job on like a
factory trwler, you know, working down
in the factory, you know,

processing, you know, cere, which is the stuff that they turn into fake crab meat, that kind of thing. But um exactly how you go about getting a job like that nowadays, I can't really say. Your best bet would be to look up, you know, shipping companies or like uh fisheries, you know, some kind of some kind of company with like a fishing fleet, that kind of thing. If you have a degree in biology, maybe you could consult with National Marine Fishery Service, something like that, and get a job as a biologist, which would be by far the lowest paid person on the ship. Cuz when people were on on that crabbo, I was working for the Alaska Crab Coalition at

the time, just doing a study on molting king crabs. And when the same time these guys are bitching about making only a,000 bucks a day, I was making maybe a hundred bucks a day. So if you're going to be a biologist working on one of these ships, be prepared to be by far the lowest paid person on the ship cuz just grunt laborers with an IQ of 80 will be making several times more pay than you are making. Which is just it is. I'm not complaining. It's just a little bit ironic that I went to college to get paid, you know, onetenth of what some of these guys were

making. So, let's
see. The only other adventures aside
from storms,
uh, I mean, just catching people
breaking the law and you have to report
it or the Japanese, they actually go to
seminars or they used to. I mean, this
is I was I was doing this job back in
the 80s and 90s or the 80s
mainly. They go to seminars on how to
deceive the fisheries biologist, you
know, how to have him look in one one
way when you're cheating in the other
way or how much you can cheat without
being against the law, you know, within
the the the margin of error kind of
stuff. So it was the Japanese were tough

to actually catch them breaking the law. Even though they obviously were breaking the law still. I mean they were very good at just be very politely lying to your face or just you know just not saying much at all and getting away with it. The Polish ship I worked on, they were easier to catch. They weren't as good at cheating. They probably didn't go to those seminars. And let's see. Just another kind of adventury kind of thing that was kind of exciting to me but might not be exciting to other people was just sometimes weird stuff comes up. Especially if they're like trollling in

deep water. You get all this weird deep water stuff coming up like blob sculpins. There was one kind of some of the fishermen called them a jelly puss. The the American fisherman called them jelly puss. I never saw them in any any like biology book, like marine biology book. It was at first I thought it was a jellyfish cuz it was like jelly, but then if you look closely, you could see there were eight tentacles with little vestigial sucker cups embedded in the jelly. And it was just like this disc.

And to this day, I'm not exactly sure what they are, but I mean, they're obviously like

a cephalopod mollusk related to the octopus that just kind of evolved in a different

direction. So, I mean, that was kind of exciting to me, but that's about it. I mean, it was a long time ago. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question.

This from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb, etc., etc., etc., etc.

Instiller Supreme etc etc

says do you feel there is any issue with a Buddhist monk praying for others like God bless them or God lift them in spirit if it's done out of a perceived practical holistic

effect. And this is kind of a weird question. I mean a Buddhist monk doesn't really believe in God. Presumably most Buddhist monks don't. So I mean what kind of praying would it be if they're saying God bless them? I mean sometimes as a as a Buddhist monk like in a western culture I could say something like God bless you. I mean I I don't remember ever doing it but like I might think it or something. And it's sort of like translating God very loosely, you know, into something that's sort of philosophically acceptable to a Buddhist, you know, you just have to like make the translation in your head. Or I mean if you were speaking to a

westerner, you know, it might be a way of just kind of translating a Buddhist blessing into something that they would be more

like more willing to accept or able to accept, you know, something that they could understand more easily, that kind of thing.

Um, so I'm not exactly sure how Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., has envisioned the monk doing these prayers. Is he doing them out loud or is he doing them inwardly? I don't know. I mean, if you're doing them out loud, I mean, to a to another Buddhist, I mean, it'd be just kind of silly. Um, to a non

Buddhist, I mean, so long as you're being honest and just sort of like translating something into a term that they can understand and accept, it might be

okay. But, I mean,

inwardly, I mean, you'd have to do the same thing inwardly otherwise. I mean, if you're a theist, then you've picked pretty much the only religion or one of the very few religions that really does not cater to theists, let's

say. So, after taking another drink of my emergency backup beverage, which I'm having first, and making sure that we are in fact recording, and we are. I'm pretty sure we are. Seems like we're

recording that. Uh I think I'm just going to move on to the next question.

This is from Master

Poe. And Master Poe says, "Are you a spring forward or fall back type?" And he asked this question right around the time of daylight savings time taking effect in

America. And I'm not sure if he means this

figuratively, like in general, am I a spring forward or fall back type? or if he's like referring specifically to daylight savings time. And if he's referring specifically to daylight savings time, I definitely prefer fall

back, you know, setting the clock back an hour in the fall because you get an extra hour of weekend. Just recently, I was ripped off of three hours of my weekend because I had one hour of daylight savings time lost. And then I had to come to work two hours early because I've switched from 5 to 3 to 3 1, 3 in the afternoon to 1 in the morning, which works better for me, especially because I don't have to drive to work in rush hour traffic now. So, specifically with regard to daylight savings time, I much prefer setting the clock back an hour in the fall because I get a whole extra hour of weekend. And uh with regard to in

general, am I a spring forward or fall back type? Um really I'm just sort of uh kind of drifting forwards I guess. um falling back that's the sort of retreating springing forward that's just kind of foolhardy I think you know it's like one of the the first sutras of the Samutinikaya talks about how a monk he doesn't swim and he doesn't sink essentially that's that's sort of putting it into American terminology for for the moment the actual like the poly what he's saying is is uh escaping me but it means essentially you know, he doesn't run and he doesn't sink, I think, is is how it's translated

from poly into English. And, you know, it's like it's it's sort of a a thing that people read and don't know how to interpret it, so they just kind of just keep reading. Like some stuff in the New Testament, you know, some Christians will read about, you know, the the the the little bit of leaven put into the dough, which then leavens the entire thing of dough. I mean, they don't really understand what it means. So, they just kind of just read through that and get on to something that they can understand better. And in in in these sutras, it comes up more than once. You know, he doesn't run, he doesn't sink. Running. I mean, it's like you're not

going with some sorrow, but you're not just lapsing into like some sort of unconscious trance state either.

Falling back might be even worse than lapsing into a completely like neutral unconscious trance state or semiconscious almost unconscious trance state. So yeah, I'm just kind of a drifting forwards kind of a person. just kind of let let what the force of my karma just continue moving me forwards through time and uh you know dealing with issues as they arise I suppose yeah I'm not really highly directed towards future or past you know the present moment is the best moment most important

moment by far so I'm just going to move on next question this is from the saboturs and the sabaturs says, "What is the bone or bon religion? Was it original pre-B Buddha Buddhism? And was there a paganistic predecessor to ban?" Well, it's my understanding that bon is like Tibetan shamanism, which was like the primary spiritual tradition in Tibet before Buddhism moved into Tibet. And they're still bond there. I think they're called black hats.

Are they called black hats? I think they are. So there's still like a kind of bon religion in Tibet um that's probably um very much influenced by like tantric

like vajriana Buddhism like vajriana
Buddhism is heavily influenced by bon
also. So, it's not the original pre-B
Buddha Buddhism except in Tibet because
that's where Bon
flourished. Um, and was there a
paganistic predecessor to Bon? Bon
itself is paganistic, you know, it's
it's like shamanism. So, there's like
magic and that kind of stuff involved.
Um, and I have read it still exists as a
tradition in Tibet, but there's been a
lot of borrowing back and forth between
like Vajriana Buddhism and this Bong.
And one of the one of the reasons why
Tibetan Buddhism is different from like

other kinds of Buddhism is because it moved into a country where bon this kind of shamanism was the prevailing spiritual tradition. And so of course when a new religion moves into a new territory that it's going to be absorbing all sorts of cultural elements from that civilization and the same thing is happening with like terra Buddhism moving into America and becoming like the weasa movement. So yeah, the bond religion is sort of like the what's the word the indigenous shamanistic spiritual tradition of Tibet which still exists there um in vestigial form in Tibetan Buddhism and also apparently in in its

own form just separate from Buddhism
still in Tibet if China hasn't
persecuted them out of existence or some
such

So, I guess I'm just going to move on to
this question. This is from a person
whose name was in cerillic
characters. And so, I just put it into
Google Translate to see how to hoping
that Google Translate would also
transliterate so at least I'd know how
to pronounce the name. And it came out
that the name is Mongolian.

I didn't know that in Mongolia they use
a cerillic alphabet and that it means
aesthetic journey. So Mongolian

aesthetic journey says, "How do you see the situation going on in Boda lately? Buddhist monks are doing hunger strikes there." Well, I guess it's like I mean I haven't really kept up on it. I really do not know what the situation is like in Bodega right now. I went to Bogaya like in the early 90s, spent several days there, walked around a lot, was hounded by beggars a lot. Um, and this the situation in Bogaya is like right next to Bodgaya is a Shyvite temple with lots of those uh Shiva lings and stuff which was interesting. I think I walked around in there too. And Bodga Gaya was under I mean it was like buried under several feet of earth for many years

partly because it was sort of controlled by Hindus. I mean it was sort of a Hindu majority in that area anyway and so it was sort of under the control of Hindus or earlier on protohindus and then somehow maybe through the efforts of the Mahabodhi

society. This was like in the 1800s that Buddhists finally got some kind of control over the the temple area and you know the site of the bodhic tree and all that.

how the Bodhi tree was growing under. I mean, if you go to Bodgai, you see that it's like this pit where the Bodhi tree is is, you know, it's there's like

embankments of earth around it that are several feet high, which indicates that they had to dig down. So, either this Bodhi tree was planted after they dug way down or it was it was like half buried just under sediment.

So the situation going on in Bodga Gaya lately probably isn't all that different from the situation going on in Bodga Gaya for centuries with sort of a a Buddhist minority like a an enclave of Buddhists surrounded by non Buddhists and they're trying to keep their holy site you know it's the holiest the most sacred site in Buddhism and in according to general opinion I think Bodgaya where the Buddha became enlightened

And uh yeah, I mean it's just to be expected, I guess. I mean, monks going on hunger strikes for the sake of, you know, maintaining control over the Bodhi tree and the the Bodga temple and all that. I'm not exactly sure what their motives are, so I can't really can't really judge it, you know.

So it would depend on their own motives. But uh this sort of politicking has been going on for a very long time.

And uh yeah, I mean it was going on back in the times of like anti-B Buddhist Hindu kings in the Middle Ages. I'm not sure what the Muslims did, but it was I'm sure it wasn't very good.

Whatever it was that they did to Boda
when they first got there probably
wasn't very nice.

But again, I really cannot say for sure
what the situation is like at Bodga Gaya
recently because I haven't been reading
up on the news and I haven't been there
in quite a while. But it's going to
depend on the motives of the monks there
who are doing their protesting and so
forth to determine whether they are
well-guided or ill-guided. And so I'm
just going to move on to aesthetic
journey second question here.

Is any spiritual or religious benefits
for Hinduists to gain if they take over
sacred places of Buddha or manipulate

people that Buddha was some kind of
Hinduism's

figure? What would be your take on these
stuff? Well, I mean the Hindus have
already, it was like in the middle ages,
you know, late antiquity and early
medieval era, and it was like Buddhism
and Hinduism were like, you know, it was
sort of like Republicans and Democrats
in America. It was like these two
powers, these, you know, the these two,
I don't know, movements, I guess, two
religions that are like striving to, you
know, really become the the the religion
of the masses. And there was a lot of
back and forth and the the the Buddhists

were like in the ascendant you know the Buddhists were more powerful throughout much of Indian history. I mean a lot of Indians or a lot of people in general don't realize that for centuries India was a predominantly Buddhist country.

Most of India was Buddhist from the time of Ashoka, you know, the 3rd century BCE up until probably the Muslim conquest of most of India in the the middle ages. So,

uh, one thing that the the Hindus did as a kind of propaganda tool is they just converted the Buddha into being an avatar of Vishnu. So according to the Hindus, the Godma Buddha was God. He was he was one of the three main Hindu gods.

He was Vishnu. Although they then kind of twisted it so that he was the deceiver. He was like leading fake Hindus away from Hinduism, you know, to purify Hinduism, that kind of thing.

But Buddhism and Hinduism have I mean they have been like lending and borrowing and swiping you know like aspects from each other from the very beginning like in like the Buddha himself used a lot of Sanskrit like brahministic like vadic terminology and I mean there's a question about this later on I think it's the very last question where like advaita vada and especially some schools of Mahayana

Buddhism. I mean they were I mean it was like convergent evolution. they were they were getting close to each other because they were like borrowing ideas from each other and also in India ancient India especially there was a tradition of public debates with regard to philosophy and spirituality and so forth and it kept the religious system the spiritual like atmosphere of India very vibrant and strong because when you've got a monopoly with going whether it's in economics or religion then you wind up with like a lower quality product with jacked up prices. That's just the way monopolies work. But if you've got competition like all these

different schools like debating with each other and you know sort of competing against each other, it keeps everyone on their toes and it causes everyone to like fix the like the sloppy reasoning in their philosophy that I mean some some religious systems they just have like they have these doctrines that just cannot stand up to scrutiny. And one reason why they can they have the luxury of having these doctrines that can't stand up to scrutiny is they don't allow scrutiny. You know, it's like they just clamp down. They they they persecute heretics. And you know, it's just you've

got this monoculture going. That was like Catholicism in in the West for a thousand years approximately. Uh in India, it just wasn't like that. So there's a lot of borrowing ideas and lending ideas and just everyone is like continually refining their philosophy just to stand up to the attacks of all these other philosophers that are attacking them. So I guess I should get back to the question though is any spiritual religious benefits for Hinduists to gain if they I never heard the term Hinduist before but it kind of makes sense. if they take over sacred places of Buddha or manipulate people that Buddha was

some kind of Hinduism speaker. Yeah.

Well, I mean for the Hindus to say that Buddhism is just like this weird branch of Hinduism, you know, it sort of strengthens Hinduism because it includes all the Buddhists too. And it's good for propaganda, you know, that Buddhism is just some sort of schismatic sect of Hinduism, which it isn't. But still um you know you've got the the pride in you know Barat you know you've got Indian nationalism especially nowadays where they're trying to like unify the at least the main nucleus of the culture which involves you know using a little bit of religious propaganda and I mean

the Buddhists did the same thing like
they they took Indra the patron deity of
the Indo-Aryans and converted him into a
Buddhist named Saka

you know, it's it it goes both ways. You
know, there's it's just sort of like
dirty fighting going both ways to some
degree. So, spiritual or religious
benefits from Hindus to take over Bodha
in this case. I mean, they were in
control of it for centuries
already and then they kind of lost
control of it for a while. Now they're
trying to get control of it back going
with the idea that Buddhism is just a
kind of schismatic sect of Hinduism.

Anyway,

um it's mostly like politics and nationalism more than genuine spirituality. And I mean for a Buddhist, he can go and pay respects at the Bodhi Tree regardless of whether the board of directors is Hindus or Buddhists. So it's really not that important of a thing in my opinion. So that's my take on it. And so I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Meditators Library. And Meditators Library says, "Will you accept these sutas as first, second, and third sermon, genuine Buddhist teachings? First sermon, the Damachaka Poatana

Suta. Second sermon, the

Anatalakanasuta. Third sermon, the Adita

Paraya Suta, more commonly known as the

fire sermon. It's all on fire. Samsara

is

burning. I was thinking to post them on

my channel. Thank you. Well, um it's

kind of complicated like KR Norman wrote

this controversial essay pointing out

that the damachaka poet nasau which is

according to tradition the Buddha's

first sermon after he became

enlightened. It's called the damachaka

poetuta which means the setting the the

wheel of dharma in motion. the discourse

setting the wheel of dharma in motion um

that I mean this is he's first laying it

down whereas KR Norman points out that there are certain statements in this suta that presuppose already knowing certain Buddhist doctrines that it's in a way it's kind of anacronistic and so you can say the damachaka nasau I mean it's not just pristine verb verbatim quotes of the Buddha that there's I mean it was a verbal tradition for centuries before things were written down and I mean the Indian mind really isn't at least traditionally really keen on accurate recordkeeping and historical accuracy and so forth so there's been some changes made that it may very well be

there's no way of knowing for sure it
may very well be that something along
the lines of the damachaka portuta
was you know like the Buddha's first
utterance like the he in in that suta
he's talking about the four noble truths
and the middle path those are like the
two main things and those are like two
of the just the the central tenets of of
Buddhist philosophy so there's a very
good chance of it but there's no way to
know for sure with regard to the anotal
lakanasuta

um yeah I'm not sure I mean that's
mainly about no self and that was the
the discourse that caused his first five
disciples to become fully enlightened

upon hearing that
discourse. Um, but I mean there's no way
of knowing for sure that there are sutas
that I think might be earlier like sutas
of the atikawaga. Some scholars
considered the atukawaga to be so
archaic that it may have been pre
Buddhist and it was just that early
Buddhists really liked the poems or the
the sutas of the atikawaga and just
incorporated them into the canon. I
don't think so personally. I think that
the atikawaga represents very early
teachings of the Buddha.

Um, but how I mean if they're more
archaic in their message than something

like the damachaka sutta, then how do you reconcile this? How do you make a chronological order? And I don't think there's any real way of doing that. I mean, it's it's all going to be guesses. You can't know for sure. Even if you had some kind of time machine where you can go back into the past, who knows? It may be that there's an infinite number of paths and you're just going into into one possible one in which case it's even more academic whether the Buddha really did have his first three sermons being the ones that are traditionally recognized as his first three sermons you know damachaka sutta the anattaloka sutta and the fire

sermon so I mean that's what it says like in the the mahawaga of the the vineya which starts with, you know, the the early history of Buddhism, starting with the Buddha's enlightenment and what he did after he became enlightened. I mean, the those are the first three sermons that he gave. So, I mean, not including some little utterance he gave to an AIA who then walked away saying, "Well, maybe so." He's kind of shaking his head. So, yeah. I mean your best bet is just to if you're going to post these sutas as you know the three tra I mean just say that according to Buddhist

tradition these are the Buddha's first
three formal sermons after his
enlightenment but I mean there's no way
of knowing with 100% certainty I mean
there's always going to be a certain
amount of guessing
involved so
uh Uh, I think I answered that
one. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from
Thoughtfog. And Thoughtfog says, "Do you
go out of your way to go to any
conventions? Art cons, UFO cons, builder
conventions, magic, the gathering
conventions, inshallah. Do you visit any
type of conventions that have anything
to do with your taste?" No, I don't. I

can't remember ever going to a
convention ever. Not in my the course of
my entire life do I recall ever going to
a

convention. It may be that I did and it
just didn't really make an impact on me.

So that I'm it's just I'm missing it
right now. I know I'm not not seeing it
in my

memory. So yeah, I mean I've never
really been into that sort of thing. Um
I've never even been to like a Buddhist
convention, not even as a a Buddhist
monk. No, of course that's partly
because nobody ever invited me. The
person that I was ordained with, who I

think is still in robes right now, he went to a like some international Buddhist convention and gave a speech, but I wasn't asked to go, so I didn't.

So yeah,

I Yeah, I mean, for me, even going to a county fair is kind of a big deal.

That's about as close to a convention as I've as I've gone to, I think, is just going to a county fair or when I was in college, I'd go to like biology seminars, that kind of thing. So, I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Quistor. And Quistor said, "Did the Buddha reject asecicism on the grounds that the

intention behind it was not specifically to cultivate equanimity?" Well, he did not reject aśeticism. Anyone who looks at the middle path and like the 13 dūtongas which are optional aesthetic practices not required on monks but they are allowable like never lying down just sleeping in a sitting position you know eating only one meal a day that kind of thing. Um and that's relatively aesthetic for especially from like a modern western point of view. It would just be like just beyond the the pale of what would even be considered acceptable. You know, it's the middle path between self-indulgence and self

torture would be considered unacceptable self- torture by most westerners. And so you have western Buddhists wallowing in sensuality as a result. So yeah, the Buddha did not reject aeticism. He rejected like deliberate self- torture. And there is a difference. I mean Buddhist aestheticism is you just kind of throw yourself on the mercy of the universe. You're not like deliberately hurting yourself like some ancient like aesthetics were doing. Like one of my favorite stories of the Dharmapata commentary is this guy wants to become an aivaca. The Ajivaca, it was a spiritual tradition that was more popular in the Buddhist time than

Buddhism was. Now it's now extinct, but they were like hardcore aesthetics. They were so aesthetic that they would make fun of of the Buddhists as like shavenheaded

householders, shavenheaded lay people.

You know, they get to wear shoes, they get to use umbrellas, they get to use walking sticks, you know, they just sneer at the Buddhists. And anyways, this guy, he wants to become an Aivaca.

So, he goes to the Ajivacas. The first thing they do is they hold him down.

They put two planks across his chest.

And then these the biggest Aivacas there kind of sit down on these planks to hold

him down. And then this other Ajivaca takes this special comb that they use which grips the hair and just rips the hair off of his head and rips his beard and mustache off. And that was that was just to get him ready to join. So that kind of thing you you didn't see in Buddhism. So, I mean, Buddhism wasn't as aesthetic, but it certainly was aesthetic when you're wandering around homeless with no money, begging silently for your food in the streets, just sleeping under trees in the forest, that kind of thing. Then, yeah, that's relatively aesthetic. They're not sleeping on beds of nails. They're not sleeping on broken glass,

anything like that. But still they're like avoiding pleasure and pain to the extent that it's convenient. I mean some pleasures you just can't avoid. Like taking a bath is kind of pleasant. Eating food is kind of pleasant. Sleeping can be kind of pleasant. So they just kept pleasure to a minimum and just kind of just living that lifestyle. Occasionally there'd be a certain amount of pain or discomfort and then they would just accept that with equanimity without without running away from it and without like seeking it out. So that's kind of the the approach the Buddhists take is just you know you

don't run away from it, you don't seek
it out and then you just deal with
whatever comes your way.

So I don't think the Buddha rejected
extreme

aestheticism on the grounds that the
intention behind it was not spec
specifically to cultivate equanimity.

It's just it becomes a distraction. You
know, you're hurting yourself and also
you're making like bad karma against
yourself. So like the Janes, they were
trying to accelerate the burning off of
their karma. They were trying to get
their karma down to zero. Buddhists
don't bother with that. James, they're
trying to get their karma down to zero.

And so they're trying to burn off their bad karma by accelerating bad things happening happening to them on purpose. And the Buddha just says that doesn't work. You're making more karma when you do that. So it was just counterproductive. You know, when you're just messing yourself up so that you're your health is broken, for example, your mind isn't clear because of just self-starvation and so forth. You can't practice dharma as well.

So, I'm just going to move on to Quisator's second question, which is what are the origins of the concept of punishment or hell and

reward or heaven outside of Buddhism?

Well, that would probably go all the way

back into like stone age animism. You

know, it's like there'd be like taboos.

You don't piss on the ground on this

hill because the the deity there, the

spirit there doesn't like it and he's

going to [_] you up. possibly [_] up

the whole tribe if you dare to piss on

the ground there or you know you you eat

some forbidden species of animal that's

sacred to the tribe. This kind of thing

that that's probably where the concept

of punishment and reward come from. If

you do the make the offerings to the

gods properly, you get rewarded. you're

going to have better hunting, for

example, maybe better weather, you know, and if you don't make the gods happy, you know, the the the deities, the spirits that that are like more powerful than humans and are like controlling the weather and all this that I mean, if you make them happy, you get rewarded and if you make them unhappy, you get punished. And that probably goes way back, way into the stone age, back into hunter gatherer times.

And then it just got kind of refined and modified until now you've got you've got different theories instead of you know animism. So I'm just going to move on to

Quoistor's third question which is experiencing sensuality with mindfulness and equanimity seems to be an effective way of overcoming it. From your experience as a monk, do you feel that abstinence is a more effective method of losing interest in samsara? Well, it it works differently for different people. It's not one size fits-all. Like some of the best monks, including the Buddha himself, came from like a very self-indulgent kind of culture. They they had it all, you know, anything they wanted, they could get practically, you know, within the realm of possibility. And some people that are

like mature spirits, they've got some wisdom. They realize, you know, I I've lived this life of just getting everything I want and I'm still not satisfied. So then sometimes this kind of person makes a better monk than like some Burmese siato who was ordained as a child and you know he's never had sex. He's never had a drink of alcohol. He's he's never danced. You know it's like he doesn't have the resistance to this sort of thing. he comes to America and it's like like when alcohol or tuberculosis first came to North America, you know, it's like the natives there had no resistance and it just wiped them

out. So, I mean, for some people
experiencing sensuality with or without
mindfulness and equinity, I mean, just
to get your full your fill of it and
realize that it's just not going to
help. But it may be that you're already
riddled with STDs. Your health is
already broken down by the time you have
this
realization. So experiencing sensuality
of mindfulness and ego that would be
like
tantra. And I mean for some people it's
an effective way but it's it's playing
with fire metaphorically almost
literally it's playing with fire
especially if you follow the fire sermon

when samsara is in flames.

So I mean for different people it works different ways and your own karma is probably going to guide you to the most appropriate way of practicing dharma. So I mean abstinence in a way it's it's

like abstinence it's it's sort of like a jerryrigg kind of a solution to a problem. It's like you can't resist temptation. So, you just avoid the temptation until you've got enough wisdom that you can resist the temptation. And it doesn't always work that way. Like you can become a monk, you avoid all these temptations, you

know, you avoid women, you avoid money,
you avoid all this stuff, avoid all
these

luxuries. And still you've got like the
latent tendencies, the anus that just
remain like uncooked seeds inside you.

So that as soon as you're back exposed
to it again, all these latent tendencies
just come right up to the surface

again. But it may be that you have
enough wisdom that at least now you have
a little more defense against

temptation. But I'm not sure if I'm even
answering this question. Experiencing
sensuality with mindfulness and

equanimity seems to be an effective way
of overcoming it. Uh I think most people

that try tantra just get lost in it.

They just get sucked into the

sensuality. You know, they're trying to

do it with mindfulness, but there's like

this subconscious unmindful attachment

that is forming and getting stronger

without them fully realizing it until

they realize that they're addicted to to

this or that sensual indulgence that

they were doing as a kind of tantric

spiritual practice. But it doesn't

always work that way. You can deceive

yourself with

tantra probably more easily than you can

deceive yourself with just avoiding

temptation

altogether.

So I think the Buddha was a very wise man and at least for monks he he endorsed

abstinence. So he probably knows better than we do and he's the one who endorsed it to begin with. I mean he wasn't the first but for Buddhists he was the first. And so I

think best method of losing interest in samsara to be a detached monk and just observe with a critical eye what the lay people are still doing. Like as a monk the the one a as a young monk in Burma.

The one time that I was happiest about being a monk would be whenever I would hear a screaming

baby, you know, I wasn't all doped up on parenthood hormones, so I wasn't like numb to it yet or anything like that.

And it was just awful. It's like, man, I really dodged a bullet. Although, if I had to do it all over again, there's a good chance I'd I'd have kids.

So, from my experience as a monk, do I feel that abstinence is a more effective method of losing it? Yeah, I think that all in all it is the safest route even though no route is perfect. Like abstinence a lot of the time you're just avoiding the temptation and not strengthening yourself against the

temptation

necessarily. Whereas like mindful indulgence like tantra, it's so easy to just get sucked into it and deceive yourself into thinking that you're doing it right when you aren't. So all in all, I think abstinence probably is the safest route and the one that works the best for most people in the long run. At least most really serious people who are ready to renounce the world anyway. I mean you have to be ready to renounce the world even before you do the total abstinence of a monk. I mean lay people there's a certain absent. You abstain from intoxicants. You abstain from adultery. You abstain from lying

and stealing and killing. But monks take it to a whole different level where you're abstaining from just about any pleasure that is avoidable. You avoid it. And my nostrils are kind of not fully cooperating because I still have like the the last vestigages of this cold that I caught like two weeks ago. So I suppose I answered that question. So I'm just going to move on to the next one which is from and says, "Excuse me. I wish I need to blow my nose. Just a second here. You don't have to watch this. It can get ugly. One moment,

[Applause]

please." Yeah, there's hardly anything.

It's like I don't really have a cold much anymore, but still there's like like some last vestigial congestion or something. So anyways, says if we live in a world not real, be it virtual, why wouldn't a reset be viable, living the same life over facing the same challenges with the opportunity to make different choices? I guess I should mention that you did reference

Einstein's theory of relativity, but because of the web telescope making scientist eat crow and going back to the drawing board, maybe just maybe our old boy Einstein is becoming irrelevant.

Well, I don't know how the web telescope

would want to change relativity.

Maybe somehow and also Einstein was like one of the first pioneers into quantum theory with his discovery of the photoelectric effect which earned him the Nobel Prize which he didn't get for his theories of relativity.

But setting Einstein aside aside,
um, yeah, I

mean, going with my theory of the uncarved block of stone, you know, you've got the uncarved block of stone and inside that block of stone is every possible

statue. Every possible statue is already in that stone, every molecule already in

the right position, right? I mean, that shouldn't be too hard to figure out or too hard to understand.

So I mean if every possible virtual statue is in there and it's like samsara is some of these statues form stable patterns and they can interlock in stable

ways that I mean it can create a kind of virtual reality inside that block of stone even though it's not ultimately real because the statues aren't carved. It's just imagination or delusion that carves the statues.

perception. So if every single possible statue was in there, then like a recurring cycle of statues would be in

there also. But ultimately it doesn't really matter because the statues are not real. It's like a virtual conditional kind of reality. And I am reminded of one of the most mind-blowing books I've ever read called Seth Speaks. It's this woman named Jane Roberts who was channeling a multi-dimensional entity called Seth. You know, he'd be like a Brahma or something going with Buddhist terminology. And I mean, whether Seth really exists as a four-dimensional being or five-dimensional or however dimensional he was, or whether he was just like a concoction of Gene Roberts

subconscious mind, the stuff he said was mind-blowing. A lot of the stuff he said. And one thing that he did say is that rebirth doesn't necessarily work the way like Buddhism or Hinduism says it works because there's also the possibility that you can just live the same life over and make different decisions. You know, it's like you just want to master this one life and so you just keep living this one life over and over again like like Groundhog Day or something and just kind of explore the different possibilities and try to get perfect. I mean, that's a possibility, too. And I mean, it would be contained in the in the block of marble. Every

single possible statue is in there. So, yeah. I mean, I don't think that that's the way it that it has to work. That's the I don't think that's the only way that it works where there's like this reset. But, I mean, if it really was a reset, then it would just be the same universe over and over again. Unless you want to accept quantum randomness or something just kind of causing slight butterfly effect drifts in different directions there is I mean free will is logically impossible in addition to not being endorsed by Buddhism. So I mean you don't have that it' just be the same thing over and over

again like Nietzsche eternal
recurrence.

So let's see what is the actual
question. If we live in a world not
real, be it virtual, why wouldn't a
reset be viable? Well, I mean, it's
possible. It's just not the only
possible way. And so, it's not the only
way because every possible every
possibility is contained in that block
of marble. Some of them would be form
more stable patterns than others. And so
I mean if anything is going to exist for
more than a trillionth of a second it
has to form some kind of stable pattern
and like
interlocking like entities can like help

to stabilize the pattern which then winds up with a certain flavor of samsara.

So yeah I suppose I answered that question. I'm not sure how the web telescope is undermining like Einstein but it might be. And uh I guess I have to be okay with that. So I think I'm just going to move on. Next question here. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Every now and then you wear a t-shirt with a patriotic edge in your Q&As's. When you dawn your fez, you usually sneak in a plug for that feeasite. Yeah, Fezama makes really good feeasants. How about telling us

where we can purchase some of those cool t-shirts?" Oh, you mean like this one? See if you can get the whole thing in the screen there. Like that. Well, this shirt and another one that I wore a few Q&As's ago, I got for Valentine's Day from my sweetheart or for Christmas. I got them relatively recently from my sweetheart. I guess it was Christmas. And she ordered them from Infowars, like Alex, the Alex Jones site. And she said, I mean, there's other places where she could get the same kind of t-shirts, but she just wanted to support Alex Jones cuz he was being persecuted. You know, he was they

were he was at the verge of destruction. You know, he he they they he really was just right at the verge of just being sued into oblivion by leftist activist judges. Now, he was being sued literally for billions of dollars for stating his opinion, probably his honest opinion, that the Sandy Hook shooting was a kind of hoax. And I think it was Elon Musk helping to helping him to lawyer up and finding like legal irregularities in the whole bankruptcy procedure. And like the people bidding on buying InfoWars was like the Daily Onion, which was like a a satire site.

And it turned out that they didn't even make the highest bid. It was just the judge decided it would be better for society if some parody site gets control of Infowars, which was illegal. And the whole thing collapsed. And of course, Trump won. So that now is the persecution of right-wingers or just people who who are capable of like rational thought uh is is very much reduced now. Um, but also in addition to Infowars,

um, one of my favorite t-shirts, the one with the the Mulon Lab, you know, and it has like the the the ancient Corinthian Greek helmet with like a Confederate flag on it that I got that from a a

local shop called Dixie Republic, which sells all kinds of like Confederate propaganda or Confederate paraphernalia, memorabilia, let's today. Although their Confederate flags are all made in China, so I wouldn't I wouldn't buy a flag from them. I went there to get like a one of the the Betsy Ross flags with the 13 stars in a circle and they were all made in China. So, I just wound up getting the shirt. But if you're ever in the in the vicinity of Travelers Rest, South Carolina, there is a store there called Dixie Republic where you can get, you know, like famous engravings of like Confederate Civil War heroes and this

kind of thing. And I got a shirt there. So, I mean, Dixie Republic might even have a website, so wouldn't surprise me nowadays. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Dhamma River and Dama River says, "Someone asked a question about a monk asking for money." Yeah, that was the very first question of the previous Q&A. I think I'll start over because I just interrupted myself quite rudely. Dama River says, "Someone asked a question about a monk asking for money and he actually mentioned the monk's name and description, so there can be no doubt of who it was." Well, there could still be some doubt because there is more than

one monk by that name, but I just interrupted myself again. I wonder what your opinion is regarding calling out monks publicly like that. I have mentioned before that I have lived in Thai Buddhist temples and witness witnessed famous aans doing things that let's just say they shouldn't do but I never publicly denounce them. Should we call out monks publicly for misbehaving or would that bring us bad karma? I don't want to bring disrepute to the SA or discourage others from ordaining. I always thought it was better to ask the question in general terms without mentioning specific names but at the

same time I don't want to be an

accomplice to the misbehavior of monks

thoughts

well let's see here

I partly I mean

like any action physical or verbal is

morally neutral except for the volition

that is motiv motivating it. So if

you're like wanting the SA to be good

and you're calling out a monk who is

behaving very badly, if you're doing it

out of respect for the SA and desire for

the SA to prosper and to be relatively

pure, then you're not doing anything

necessarily bad. And people, lay people

in the Buddhist time were calling out

bad monks. There was like the the rule

against a monk touching a woman that
um some woman the wife of some wealthy
man I think paid to have this this courti
this you know meditation cabin built for
a monk and then the monk is showing her
that this cabin that she had built or
she's showing him you know they're both
there alone together and he keeps like
rubbing up against her and stuff you
know just for the sake of, you know,
getting pleasure from the contact,
rubbing up against this presumably
attractive woman. She goes home and
complains to her husband about how that
monk was touching me the way you touch
me. And then he starts complaining, you

know, to just anyone who will listen.

You know, these these Buddhist monks, you know, they're like feeling up my wife, this kind of thing. Then the Buddha made the rule, you know, when it got back to the Buddha, he made the rule, no monk is allowed to touch a woman with desire for for the contact, you know, for desire for pleasure, you know, when his mind is perverted by inflamed by lust, this kind of thing. So I mean it can result in good results to call out the misbehavior of a monk, especially if you're sure. If it's just a rumor, you heard this rumor that some monk is doing something wrong. You shouldn't be going around saying it

unless you're sure. And sometimes even if you're sure, you know, it's it's it's your own call whether to to like publicize this or not. But you shouldn't do it out of like hatred for a monk. I mean, any any action motivated by hatred is going to be immoral regardless of the action. If it's motivated by hatred, it's going to be an immoral action. But any action that's motivated by like respect and sincere, you know, sincere intention for dharma to grow and prosper, to be strong and relatively pure, then what you're doing really is not a misdeed. It's not bad karma, regardless of the [__] storm that may

ensue as a result of you saying
it.

So, what is my opinion regarding calling
out monks publicly like that? I mean, if
it's just something minor that most
monks do, like handling money, then you
might as well just make it a
generalization. 98% of Burmese monks
handle money. You don't have to like
name names unless there's just some
really

outrageous example of some monk that's
charging like exorbitant fees for giving
domattox you know like like

u I shouldn't say

it but some I mean if it's like a really
egregious case I mean if you know of

some monk somebody in robes some dude
dude in monk's robes who's like um
seducing nuns or something like that.

He's not even a monk anymore. Or if he's
stealing like I knew of a monk, I used
to know this

monk who was exchanging Burmese currency
on the black market for US dollars

before leaving the country. And
technically he was like smuggling

contraband money which was a parajika
which I'm pretty sure is a parajika

offense. you know, he's excommunicated.

He's not even really a monk anymore for
having done that. That's it's kind of
controversial whether, you know,

smuggling money out of Burma is, you know, smuggling American dollars that you got on the black market out of Burma, whether that's a parajika offense. I mean, it could qualify as what's called sunka gata parajika, which is essentially like evading customs or that kind of thing, getting something through the black market. So, let's see here. I mentioned before that I've lived in Thai. Okay. Should we call out monks publicly for misbehaving or would that bring us bad karma? Yeah, I think that if there's like some high-profile monk who's doing something really bad, like

I've called out Bubody before for supporting female reproductive rights or women's reproductive rights, this kind of thing, which is a euphemism for abortion. And from the Buddhist point of view, abortion is murder. And so if any woman at all took Bubody's advice who was motivated by what Bubody said to and got an abortion, Bikubodi would be excommunicated for the rest of his life. So, I mean, sometimes it's it may be worth the the effort or worth worth the potential trouble to call out a particularly like corrupt monk for the sake of just trying to like purify the SA to some

degree. So, yeah, I don't think it's necessarily that bad. But if you're doing it motivated by hatred against that monk or aversion for that monk that you just don't like that monk, you want to see him like get, you know, just kicked out of his monastery and disgrace, that kind of thing, then you're better off using general terms, especially if the monk's doing something that lots and lots of other monks are doing like that isn't really an like a scandal, just like handling money. And then you're better off just using generalizations because that applies to most monks and not just one. So, those are my thoughts, I guess. And

so, I'm going to move on to Dummer

River's second

question. And he says, this is also kind

of a long question. You talked about

evil sounding music and lately I've

noticed seriously demonic imagery in

some K-pop videos or Korean pop. I have

also seen this in rap music in the US.

There seems to be some kind of karmic

contractual disclosure on the part of

the artist through the display of

demonic imagery and the viewer can

choose to pay attention or choose to

ignore the demonic imagery but the

images are being shown. Nevertheless,

this is where seemingly the agreement is

made and most people just don't pay attention to it. Most people unfortunately ignore all the demonic warning signs and they just enjoy the music. Do you know if there is some kind of interdimensional energy harvesting going on through modern music? And when I read this question, it definitely reminded me of when I was in Bali in Indonesia. I met an American trumpet player. He was a black jazz musician from St.

Louis. And he was kind of a conspiracy theory guy. He had lots to say about the Rothschilds, for example. He was afraid to come back to America because he was afraid he'd just get like arrested upon

arrival in America by white supremacist security guards at the airport or some such. But anyways, so I mean bearing that in mind, he did say that it's the almost the only way to really make it big in the music industry lately is through joining this cult. And I think the the being he referred to is Baffomet that there's like, you know, it runs rampant in the music industry, the secret worship of Baffomet. And I mean, take it or leave it. I have no way of of proving or disproving what he told me. I mean, he was a musician. He's a good musician. And he's kind of living in exile in Indonesia.

And I mean, he's the one that maybe he had some in inside exposure to this. You know, they're trying to get him to to like offer the the the chicken to the statue or something and he just wouldn't do it and just left the country or whatever. But um yeah, I'm not entirely sure why there's so much satanic and demonic stuff. I mean, anyone who remembers back in the 80s, I mean, I think Black Sabbath was one of the first bands to really start this stuff up. And I mean, even Black Sabbath wasn't necessarily taking the side of the devil, you know? I mean, they were like talking about how the devil is going to run rampant because of the the

degeneracy and corruption of society and all that. It wasn't until later like you know AC/DC if you're into evil you're a friend of mine and all this kind of you know it kind of sparked the satanic panic back in the 80s I think so I'm not exactly sure why I mean some like artistic types just really like to push the envelope you know they just like to to just push things and it could be that gratuitous and for the most part insincere demonic imagery is just their attempts at being edgy, something like that. Or there could be some real like Satanism or like demonic worship stuff going on in like among

higherups in the entertainment industry.

It wouldn't surprise me at all. I just

don't know which one it is for

sure. So, I mean, it could be

interdimensional energy harvesting.

Yeah, I I do think that there are like

demonic beings that are worshiped that

are kind of egregor. It's just like all

the energy like the psychic energy

poured in from thousands of followers

just feeds this thing and gives it

existence really. You know, it's like

there could be other beings that are

coming in that aren't just purely

egregor that really are feeding on this

I don't I don't know what you'd even

call it. this cult

mentality. But which one it is, whether it's just made up or whether there really is some demonic cultish stuff going on in um the entertainment industry or is in all likelihood it's probably a combination of the two, but I really can't say for sure. So yeah, I would be careful though that about like demonic kind of music because even if just at the surface level you don't give a [__] about the imagery. I mean you're just listening to the music, you're not even watching the videos and but still I mean some of the stuff can get in like uh what's the word? uh subliminal that I mean it's

like your subconscious mind is getting
like polluted with this stuff
subliminally but I mean you gotta you're
you're big boys and girls you know
you're you're adults you can make your
own decisions and you know I I listen to
Led Zeppelin sometime like I mentioned I
think it was the previous video where
yeah Jimmy Paige he was into that kind
of I mean he he bought Alistister
Crowley's house you know where there
were like demonic images painted on the
walls falls in some kind of blood and
all this kind of stuff that uh he may
have made some kind of 10-year deal with
the devil and uh you know it's like in
through the outdoor was right after the

10 years expired I guess or maybe even
uh presence I was not impressed by their
album Presence at
all. So yeah, it's possible. I mean I
don't know for sure but it's it's
plausible. So I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
Zenusoid. And some people do ask me
questions where, you know, even
referring to early Buddhism, you know,
was the Damachaka Borosuta really the
Buddhist first sermon? I mean, you can't
really know the answer to these things.
Even someone with like clairvoyance who
looks into the past may still be
mistaken. And they may be looking into

the wrong past of an infinite number of
of equally real pasts or equally
real, equally virtually
real. So some questions you just you you
really nobody can really answer them for
sure. Not that I not that I know
of. So anyways, I'm just getting on to
the next question. This is from
Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Can you
give your opinion on chemtrails?" Well,
when I was a kid, they weren't called
chemtrails. They were called comtrails.
And it was I guess people who think that
these comtrails from jet planes flying
overhead are like laced with toxic
chemicals or something started calling
them chemtrails. I'm not sure what the

comm means, but I'm pretty sure the main ingredient in a comtrail is just condensation. You know, it's just cloud. You know, it's water vapor.

It's just I mean it's not smoke, you know, they look essentially the same as clouds. It's just a long straight line of a

cloud. So until I see some evidence that jetliners are spewing toxic chemicals out in these comtrails or chemtrails, I still prefer to call them comtrails.

um that they're just laced with some sort of toxic chemical, possibly as part of some kind of conspiracy to lower the IQ of people in Western civilization or

whatever it is, then I'm going to remain skeptical that that

chemtrails, so-called really are any kind of dangerous thing that it's I mean, there's going to be like trace amounts of jet fuel or something that wasn't fully oxidized when it was being burned. that kind of stuff. But for the most part, I think it's pretty much just water

vapor. So, I'm just going to move on to xenoid's second question, which is how [__] would America be right now if Kamala won? Well, that's hard to say, but I mean, it was I think you can just extrapolate, you know, just extrapolate from the Biden administration, just

another four years of the Biden administration with Kamala Harris not really running the country anymore than Biden was. I mean the recently they found out that most of his signatures on the bills that he he signed and everything weren't even really his signature. They were just duplicates, you know, it was just like rubber stamped. And even when he did sign something, he he probably didn't even know what he was signing. They'll just say, "Here, this is important for the country. Just this is good for the economy. Sign this." That kind of thing. So yeah, I mean, how [__] would

America be right now if Kamla won? it would be just sort of continuing in the same direction that it was that it was moving when Biden was president. Also, like the EU would be emboldened, the leftists would be emboldened. There'd probably be more of a crackdown on censorship than there is now. That the the flood of illegal migrants would just continue to flow and they'd be doing everything they could to fasttrack citizenship. They're like planting them in swing states so that the swing states will just turn blue and become, you know, leftist states reliably and then they would just kind of lock down, you know, this all this US aid stuff, US

aid, you know, sort of underground slush funds to to like prop up leftist like grassroots movements supposedly paying for leftist propag propaganda paying for leftist protesters and all this that would continue with nobody being the wiser. Nobody would know about it just like we didn't know about it a year ago that this was actually happening that I mean some people were probably suspected that something like this was going on but now we got pretty much proof of it. So yeah, we just continue down the road the road of feminization and castration of Western civilization and and pretty much all of Western civilization would

be [__] except for maybe Eastern Europe. But now we got more of a chance of actually

um maintaining at least one ball. So I'm just going to move on to this question. This this is also from Xenithoid. How long do you think it will take for Trump to actually get prices back down? Well, gas prices are already going down. Egg prices that were such a big deal are already going down, even though the raised egg prices were apparently a deliberate like a like a conspiracy. You know, it's like using bird flu as a pretext for killing off millions of chickens and then blaming Trump when the price of eggs is high.

So, I don't know how long it will take exactly. I'm no economist. Some prices are already going down. Like the prices for producers, you know, the factories, that's already going down. When fuel prices go down, the price of just about everything goes down because everything has to get trucked somewhere and you got to use like motorized farm vehicles to grow crops and so forth. So, yeah, I mean, prices are already starting to go down and they'll probably continue to go down. Um, but I'm no economist and so I really can't make any kind of decree or authoritative utterance on the subject. But apparently some prices are already

going down. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Indiana Dama. And Indiana Dama says, "How important is historicity for the validity of a religion? For example, if a an historical Jesus never existed, it wouldn't really impact the wisdom of teachings like let not your left hand know what your right hand is doing when performing acts of charity. Likewise, the validity of the fornable truths wouldn't be affected by the non-existence of the historical Godma Buddha. Well, I think he he picked I it's kind of not a very good choice what he picked for Christianity. Like for example, he says if an

historical Jesus never existed, it wouldn't really impact the wisdom of teachings like let your not your left hand know what your right hand is doing. But that's really not what Christianity is based on. What Christianity is based on much more than this little tidbit of wisdom regarding charity is that Jesus is the only begotten son of God and he died for our sins and he is the way, the only way to heaven.

And if Jesus never existed, that whole narrative just collapses, doesn't it? So how important is historicity in the validity of a religion? It depends on how much that religion insists upon

historicity and relies on that
historicity as like the foundation of
what it teaches. With regard to
Buddhism, what Indiana Dama says is
pretty much correct. Even if the Buddha
never really existed, Dharma remains an
enlightened tradition. It remains very
wise. But if you've got a religion based
on this person is the only begotten son
of God who died for our sins, then if
that person didn't exist, you're still
living in original sin no matter what
you do.

So it depends on how much the religion
is like using as a foundation the
biography of its founder or any other
kind of like historical claims if it's

purely abstract which is what Buddhism
pretty much is at least terra Buddhism
it's it's just philosophy I mean the
biography of the Buddha is pretty much
irrelevant it's there for people with a
devotionalistic tendencies
who really want to revere the founder of
the tradition. But I mean the biography
of the Godma Buddha is largely
irrelevant whereas the biography of
Jesus is certainly not irrelevant to
Christianity with regard to Islam. It's
it's kind of kind of hard to
say, but I to some degree Islam also
relies on the idea that I mean God is
one God and Muhammad is his prophet. So

if there wasn't a Muhammad, then the the Quran presumably would be suspect at least. So how important is the historicity for the validity of religion? It depends on how much the religion is like relying on historicity. If it's purely abstract, you know, like like Buddhism is or not so much purely abstract as just not relying upon the biography of this or that person or any sort of historical claims that I mean even if the Buddha just never existed at all, Dhamma still remains pretty much intact. Whereas you can't see that with regard to Christianity.

Either Jesus died for our sins or he didn't. So I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, we're in kind of a historical vein at this point. Do you think if Alexander had continued his conquests, would he have been successful in conquering India? At the time of Alexander's invasion, Mugoda was ruled by the Nandanda Empire, which was pretty powerful. I think they may had a choice to defeat him, but what do you think? Well, I don't know if the Nanda Empire was more powerful than the Persian Empire, which was pretty damn powerful. Um, I think that I mean, the only military technology that the Indians had that may have stopped the

Greeks would be war elephants. I'm not sure how familiar Alexander and his troops were with fighting against war elephants. Like a war elephant could be scary. They got like a like a a chain on the end of their trunk and they're just whipping it and just like flattening entire platoons of soldiers in front of them, then yeah, that can be scary. But I mean, once you learn how to deal with elephants like the Romans did, they weren't afraid of them anymore. All you got to do is just take a wheelbarrow full of like straw or hay, set it on fire, and then push it towards the elephants. Elephants are afraid of fire. They'll just immediately turn around and

start trampling their own troops to get away from the fire. They're afraid of fire. So, I think Alexander, he did have a military technology that was new in the world that no other army could really stand against. And that was called the flanks. you know, it was just this wall of soldiers like maybe six or eight deep with 20 foot long spears. And I mean, you couldn't get close to them. I mean, you could shoot arrows at them, but they they also had shields. And so, they just get behind the shields until you're done shooting arrows. But still, there's these 20 foot long spears that you somehow have to get

past if you're going to hurt those soldiers. Unless, of course, you're doing it with arrows. Um, and really it took a while. Finally, the Romans figured out a good way of defeating the flanks, which is one reason why Rome rose in ascendancy. I mean, it became more powerful than the Greeks, cuz they could deal with the flanks better than the Greeks could deal with a Roman legion. But the ancient Indians, I mean, pretty much the only thing they had going for them that was anything that might have caused problems for Alexander's troops would be war elephants. And I mean, according to the story, when Alexander first crossed the

Indus into what was considered Indian territory, his, you know, his first major opponent was King Porus, who, you know, it's it's some sort of like helanized version of an Indian name, I assume. And it was difficult. They they were having difficulty crossing the river. And it was a hard fight. So Alexander, I mean, it wasn't just an easy win over the first Indian army that he defeated. You know, it was it was a difficult fight. He had to like trick Porus by, you know, he was like marching his most of his men back and forth at the river, making it look like they're getting ready to cross. Whereas he sent

uh a like some of his best troops way the hell upstream, you know, miles away to cross up there where nobody was expecting them to cross and then they were able to come and make like a flank attack which then distracted them enough that that uh Alexander's troops were able to win.

But I think Alexander probably would defeat any Indian army including armies of the Nanda Empire so long as they knew how to deal with war elephants. And like Alexander's successors started relying heavily on war elephants like the the the war of the the diadeoki I think it's called like where like Alexander's chief generals were like fighting against each

other trying to get control of as much territory as they could after Alexander died they were relying heavily on war elephants and war elephants were significant uh in the victory of the winning

side. So, I don't know. It's it depends, like I keep saying, on whether the the Macedonian the Greek Macedonian army knew how to contend with war elephants or

not. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Kundrew. Let's see. I'm just scrolling down a little bit. Okay, Kundrew.

Kundrew says, "In Thailand and Laos,

I've noticed that when monks are invited to chant at a recently deceased person's home, they usually chant Patana and the Matika. Is this practiced in Burma as well? And why do you think these texts in particular are chanted during chanting

ceremonies?" Well, to tell you the truth, I'm not exactly sure what the Matika is. I mean there is no book in the typetika called the montika. There's no group of books in the typica called the matica. It's my understanding that the matika originally were a kind of protoidama and patana is the seventh and last book of the abidama pitica which like I was mentioning in a previous Q&A

is mainly dealing with causal relations
is how different things relate or how
how they have relation how they relate
to each other how they cause anything in
the other you know how causality works
is essentially what Patano is about. And
it's so abstract, so complicated that
it's pretty much unreadable even for
Abidama scholars. So this is the first
I've ever heard that in Thailand in Laos
monks like when they're invited to chant
at a recently deceased person's home,
they will chant Patana and the matika.
I've never heard of that before. In
Burma generally they just chant um
parita and parita is just like the

protection chants like the sutas
some of which are in the
pseudapitica and some of which are like
apocryphal that are chanted just to give
blessings and they're considered to have
some sort of beneficial effect on
like subduing ghosts and and keeping
trouble away that kind of thing. helping
people in their health, that sort of
thing. So, yeah, in Thailand and Laos, I
mean, you might want to ask a monk in
the the Thai or le Oceanian tradition
why it is that they do this. I mean, I
mentioned uh in the previous Q&A, I'm
pretty sure that in Burma, they do have
what's called a Patan Pu or Patana
festival where they will just chant

Patana like day and night, just constantly for days.

And the reason they do that is just to keep the typica alive. Because according to tradition that Patana being the last book of the

typica that when the typica fades out due to impermanence, it's going to be the last parts of it that fade out first. So when the Burmese are chanting batana, they're just making sure that dhamma doesn't fade out by preserving the last text because the last text is going to be the first to fade out. So why the ties would do that for a recently deceased lay person, I I have

don't have a clue. I do not know unless it's something similar to what the Burmese are doing or maybe they're just it's just some meaningless tradition or like a a tradition that used to have a meaning because it was done for a different reason and then just kind of got corrupt because the just meaningless traditions run rampant in terra Buddhism like in in Burma almost every formal act of the SA is a meaningless corruption now except for the ordination ation ceremony. The ordination ceremony still has some meaning. Almost every other formal act of the SA is so corrupt as to just be meaningless blah blah blah.

[Music]

So yeah, I I really don't know why Patana would be chanted in like honor of a recently deceased lay supporter. I just there there doesn't seem to be any obvious logical reasoning behind that. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is kind of a strange one. This is from Fred. And Fred kind of asks strange questions sometimes. Sometimes you don't even know if for sure he's even expecting an answer. But I'm going to answer this one. So Fred says, "I think the Buddha definitely showed the scaffolding to nibbana, but as you have

pointed out, there are so many contradictions. Is it really a worthy goal?" And then as a sort of commentary to that, he says, "Whether there is no self is academic. There is still a meat puppet on the receiving end. For example, hitting your thumb with a hammer, no self, no pain."

So I mean the main question see I think the Buddha definitely showed the scaffolding to nibbana and even that kind of phrasiology is kind of strange scaffolding to nibbana that I mean just sort of like the framework of practice that will help you to attain nibbana I hope is what he

meant but as you have pointed out there are so many contradictions is it really a worthy goal so you've got a treasure map showing you where Alic's treasure was

buried. You know, it's just this vast treasure and it's it was buried. The people who buried it were then put to death. Nobody knows where it is. And you've got a map that has some contradictions to it. But is it a worthy goal? Well, it's still a vast treasure, isn't it? And Nibbana is even a vaster treasure than the like the burial the burial site of all the Visigoth.

I is there anybody out there who knows

if Eric's treasure was ever found? It was like he just rampaged through the Roman Empire, you know, when Rome was in the state of collapse at the time and just I mean they got so much treasure they could hardly carry it all. And then Eric died probably of a disease. And so they just diverted a river in southern Italy from its course. And then they had some people bury all this treasure, just tons of gold and silver and pearls and jewels and stuff. And then they they got the the river redirected on its correct path and they just put to death all the people who saw where it was. And I don't know if they ever found that or not. It was this huge treasure in Italy

somewhere.

Um, but I mean it's it's such a weird question. I mean, is Nibbana really a worthy goal simply because there's like garbled

instructions from 2,500 years ago? I mean, the the the instructions that that count, the important instructions are still fairly good instructions. It's not very many people that become enlightened. So I mean I mean you can say that dharma is is really an extremely inefficient way of becoming enlightened because so few people actually succeed. I mean that's a valid argument to

make. But that doesn't mean that enlightenment is not a worthy goal.

I mean, you just want to wallow in samsara just because, well, it's there's no 100% accurate and certain and and reliable way of becoming enlightened for, you know, anyone anyone at random, then I don't know what to say.

But certainly Nibbana is a worthy goal regardless of whether you choose to go after that goal or go look for Aeric's treasure in Italy or wherever it is. So anyways, I'm just going to move Oh, wait. He says uh with regard to his commentary with no question mark. I thought it was another question at first, but there's no question mark at

all. Whether there is no no self is academic, he says. But I mean I I don't know about that one. He that there's still a meat puppet on the receiving end, but I mean the meat puppet whether it's real or not is kind of important. I mean it really does alter like the whole strategy of becoming enlightened to some degree or just it can like help to detach you from samsara and increase your odds just right off the bat if you realize that samsara isn't some kind of like set in stone ultimate reality that there's just no escape from other than just death and oblivion.

So, I mean, that wasn't really a question, so I won't dwell on it. I'll just move on to Fred's second question, which is kind of an interesting one. Fred says, "Is Agny worship the reason monks can't have fires?" And no, this that's not the reason at all. is according to the original story, the origin story for the rule against a monk building a fire to warm himself unless he is sick that there was a snake in the firewood and the snake started chasing the monks around when they're trying to build this fire or it it was like sleeping inside a hollow log and then it came out it woke up from the heat and started chasing the

monks around. And then because when you build a fire, you're very likely killing small creatures. That's the main reason. It has nothing to do with ugly worship. There might be like another contributing reason in that some philosophical groups or spiritual groups like the Janes believed fire to be a kind of primitive protolife. And so for a Jane monk, it was immoral to build a fire or put out a fire because in a way you were like making karma by creating this protoliving thing and then making like bad karma by killing this protoliving thing. And in a way that's there's a certain insight to that that fire really

is a kind of protocol life that that
respiration you know like the the
metabolism of almost all living things
other than maybe anorobic bacteria is
it's a kind of like moderated graduated
oxidation reaction which is the same as
what fire is doing. It's just that it's
done in little increments and and the
some of the the energy given off is is
then captured through molecules like ADP
becomes ATP which it it energizes the
molecule which can then be used in in in
various various functions in the cell.
So yeah, fire could be considered a kind
of proto quasi life in a
way. But and so in ancient times it may
have been like looked down upon for like

aesthetics to be putting out fires or building fires for that reason too. But the main reason in the Buddhist texts is that when you build a fire out of firewood that's been lying on the ground or whatever that there's all kinds of small creatures that live in this firewood like little beetles living under the bark and little scorpions and maybe a big snake that's inside of hollow log that I mean they can die and so you shouldn't do it just for those reasons.

So Ugnney isn't mentioned at all really.

The god Ugnney is not specifically mentioned at all in the polytopica that

I can remember. Is he certainly is not a significant figure in the polytopica. So I'm just going to move on to

PSA. And I think I think it maybe it was PSA. I can't remember who asked the question. Somebody asked me like, "Why is the Philippines spelled with a ph and a Filipino is spelled with an F?" And then somebody in the comments actually answered that question. Who has Philippine ancestry? Cuz I didn't have a clue. Turns out that the Philippine language doesn't even have the F sound. So, it's all just Western artifacts with regard to the spelling, the name, and everything.

Yeah, I think I I chose correctly in in drinking the emergency backup beverage first. I was just in the mood for it.

Smooth. So, anyways, PSA. I mean, if you want to know why um the Philippines as a country is spelled with a PH and a Filipino is spelled with an F, just look in the comments to the previous Q&A cuz he knows better than I do. I mean I I would have been clueless with regard to answering that question. So anyways, PSA says, "What's your favorite suta of the digaya and why?" That's kind of a tough one. I mean, I really do like the the saka

panya suta. And the main reason why I like it is because the central portion of it, the questions that the god saka is asking the Buddha is it strikes me as very archaic. It's like a proto padicha samupata. It's like an early prototype of the 12 nidana link of padicha samopata even though it's not really explained as that pad samopata originally wasn't this in my opinion originally wasn't this sequential list of different things but some some sutas like the digga suta are like somebody asks what is the cause of this the Buddha answers it and then say well what is the cause of that and then the Buddha answers that and then well what is the

cause of that And then you wind up with this chain of this causing this causing this causing this. Another good example is the kalaha wiiwara suta of the atakawaga in the sutin pa. And then it was these that formed a kind of nucleus for the 12 nidana theory of padicha samopata or dependent corrisising because as the Buddha correctly predicted almost nobody was really going to understand dependent core rising including most Buddhist monk philosophers and so they had to like like simplify it into something easily understandable so that even though the Buddha predicted almost nobody's going

to understand this now almost every
Burmese monk who's had a year of
schooling is going to say yeah they they
understand it because they memorized you
know the the 12 links in poly and they
don't really they don't still don't
understand

it and then anyways the saka panyasut
also contains this weird love story at
the very beginning and then at the very
end you've got this gandaba in Sanskrit
called a gandarva you know they're sort
of like an an elf or a fairy a
supernatural being like a lesser god
that serve as like musicians for the
higher gods. And so there's this
Gandarva named Panchasika or five crest

who

is Saka the king of gods wants to talk to the Buddha. He knows that the Buddha doesn't like being bothered. He doesn't like lots of noise and commotion. So first he sends this

elf Panchasika to go and kind of soften up the Buddha, you know, get prepare him for the for a visit from from Saka, king of gods. And so Panchasika goes there and he sings this erotic love story. In a way, the like the introduction to the Saka Pyasuta is like the terra Buddhist equivalent to the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament. It's like this erotic love poetry that is like got a little

bit of religion added to it and so it can be like interpreted as a kind of religious allegory but obviously I mean in both cases it's fairly runchy love poetry. I mean he's like praising the breasts and thighs of his beloved this kind of thing. And anyways, the Buddha apparently approves and so the Buddha is like like allowing Saka to come visit him. Saka comes visit him, asks him all these questions which forms a kind of archaic protoependent core rising and then at the end Saka is so satisfied that he rewards five crest the the Gandarva with this woman you know this this princess uh this goddess princess that that Saka was or that Panchasika

was mooning over.

So I mean I like that suta mainly because it contains like this large element of like apparently archaic Buddhism like pre-theravadan Buddhism which served as a kind of prototype for the later developments of dependent core rising although like the Maha para not not maha well the mahavi nibbanasutta also I mean that's it's kind of a touching moving kind of story about the final days and death and cremation

No, I don't think the cremation was included, but the final death the the final days and death of Lord Buddha is in the par maha parabrahma sutta and also the

mahasi patanosuta which I was trying to
say to begin with that I mean that's
just classic that's like the bible for
weasa meditators the maha sip patano
suta you know it's just how to do
mindfulness meditation how to do
mindfulness you know how to
weasana. So, I'm just going to have to
go to the primary the designated primary
beverage, the DPB with its own paper
umbrella. Don't want to recycle them too
much cuz it might make me look like I'm
I don't know, univilized or
something. And uh this is Well, maybe I
shouldn't say now. It's like an ultra
latte. It's like half coffee and half
milk. But there's a question about that

later on, I

think. Oh, here we go. Oh, PSA, what's your favorite suta of the Dani Kaya? Why I already mentioned Saka Pñā Suta would probably be my favorite. Also, Mahapari Nibbana Suta, very touching, moving story of, you know, the end of the Buddha's career. Um, Mahasadi Patana Suta is just the Bible for weasa meditators. Um even like the very first suta of the

digaya the uh brahala suta brahma's net the divine net where he pretty much shoots down every possible philosophy that's like proto majamaka really and also the second I think it's the second

suta of the sutin of the diggonaya which is the samaya palasuta that's that's an old cardinal suta that's an important one and you can learn a lot about dhamma from reading the samaya palasuta also but my favorite maybe I would guess would be the sakapa suta so anyways PSA's second question is could you please talk about this week's beverage in great depth this week's beverage the the primary or is it the designated primary beverage or is it the primary designated beverage designated primary beverage. I think that's the correct way of of of saying it. And this cup I gave to my sweetheart

for Valentine's Day. I I gave her two of them so that I could drink out of one of them. It's very nice. And as I already said, it's like organic Colombian coffee mixed with it's not organic milk, I have to admit, but it's whole milk, whole cow's milk, bovine glandular secretions. I don't know. I think in order to go into greater depth, I'd have to like give like a chemical analysis of it and I'm just don't have the equipment here. So, I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Pedro and Pedro says, "What's your opinion on meme

coins? We recently saw Trump launch his

own token on the Solana chain called dollar sign Trump. Many I guess it's Trump bucks. Think that they call them that. Many people seem to be making significant profits trading these, but at the end of the day, it feels like pure speculation. almost like a mix of gambling, currency trading, and art investing all wrapped in blockchain technology. So, what's my opinion on meme coins? I really just it's not really on my radar. I have no cryptocurrency at all. I don't even have Bitcoin, none of it.

So, in a way, it's sort of it strikes me like those there was like this fad and I can't even remember what it's what

they're called now. just purely digital like something that that was being sold for just for like momentto value or momento I mean I mean just I can't remember what it was called now but in a way these coins I mean there's nothing backing them up. I mean the the value is arbitrary. It's just sort of based on like popular opinion how much they're worth. And in a way it is kind of like art investing since like you can look at some painting that's just a splattered mess of modern art. And I mean it might be selling for like \$50,000. It just and I mean the value of it is just purely arbitrary. I mean it's

just like this artificial somebody decided it and other people are willing to go along with it.

So, um I mean our actual currency like the US dollar probably isn't so different now. I don't know if the if there really is still gold at Fort Knox that's supposed to be backing up American currency. I mean, obviously it's it's I mean, it's fairly fairly likely that there's nowhere near enough gold to actually back up our currency. That our currency also is just like fiat currency. That's just really nothing backing it up. At least Genghask Khan, he he had like paper money or it was like leather or something that

didn't have any intrinsic value other than if you refused to accept it, he'd have you put to death. So it was like his money was backed up by your own blood. So in a way it was there was some value to it more than to like US currency probably now.

So my opinion on memecoins I really don't have much of an opinion. I do think that it's just this weird cultural phenomenon, sort of like the tulip craze in the Netherlands back in like the 1800s or is it's a kind of fad, a kind of mania where people are just giving great value to something that it's

ultimately not valuable at all. It's just the the peop so there's enough people willing to cont to attribute a certain value to it that it causes it to have an effective value. But pretty much everything is like that to some degree. Even gold, I mean it's kind of arbitrary that it's so expensive. It's the demand makes it expensive. But what is I mean the the demand for gold itself is just kind of you know it's just a sort of a cultural artifact.

So, I think I'm just I think I'm just going to move on to Pedro's second question since I really am not a money expert. Pedro's second question is this

also raises an interesting question.

What is the Buddhist perspective on

gambling? And yeah, gambling is

considered to be immoral. There are

sutas that warn pe warn lay people

against gambling. I mean, you get a bad

reputation, you can squander your

wealth. You know this there's like a

list of various reasons why you

shouldn't gamble. Although on the other

hand, life itself is a gamble. Even a

farmer who is planting perfectly good

seed grain in the in the hopes of

getting a a big harvest next year. I

mean, that's a kind of gamble. You don't

know if there's going to be a drought

that's going to just kill off your
crops. So, I mean, life is a gamble to
some degree. So, that's unavoidable. But
the main kind of gambling that was done
in the Buddhist time in northern India I
think was with dice and that kind of
gambling is is uh really not approved of
in the

sutas. So where you're going to put like
cryptocurrency with regard to that I
mean it's it's it's going to be a
judgment call I

suppose. I mean, the Buddha is not going
to

be endorsing very much with regard to
handling money

anyway. All of his most serious

disciples were strictly prohibited from handling money at all, unless they found somebody else's money lying on the ground at the monastery, then they were obligated to pick it up and put it in a safe place until the lay person came back for it. That's the only time that a monk is allowed to handle money unless there's a monk is forfeiting his money which almost never happens. He's forfeiting his money. It's like I had this money. I surrender it. I relinquish this money and then the SA can appoint some other monk to take that money and go throw it out in the woods somewhere. So those are like the the only two cases

in which a monk is allowed to actually touch money.

But getting back to lay people, I mean, it's it's not included in the five precepts,

cryptocurrency, you know, so it's technically it's it's not

um immoral in that sense of being in violation of a precept. Even playing dice for money isn't isn't really against the five precepts even though it is discouraged in the texts.

So Buddhist perspective on gambling.

Yeah, it's it's not technically a violation of the five precepts unless you're like cheating at cards or something, cheating at dice, but it is

discouraged that you really should not do it. But then again, where do you draw the line? Because life itself is a gamble. You know, when you're saving something for a rainy day, you're gambling that you're not going to be struck by lightning or or like just dropped dead from some obscure cause before the rainy day happens. you know there's always some some kind of gambling involved but mainly Buddhism is discouraging of just what is generally called gambling which nowadays you know be slot machines and uh like lotteryies cards dice roulette wheels that kind of thing and so I'm just going

to move on to the next question this is from Nermi and Nermi says thoughts on Utadamo to me he seems like someone who has really progressed in his practice ice. And to tell you the truth, I'm not even sure who Uta Damiku is. Like like I've said before, I really don't I'm really not keen on keeping up with like the Western Buddhist scene. Udadamiku. I mean, is he the one that like in Canada like in

Montreal? I remember that when I first came back to America in 2011 trying to live in the west as a monk. Um there was a supporter who had supported Udidamiku. I think it was Udidamo. It was some monk trying to set up in Canada. You know, he

just came from Asia and he was staying in this supporter's mother's basement for a while. So it was they were he and I were in kind of a similar situation at first, although he succeeded by eventually getting a Sri Lankan group to support him. And once you get Asians supporting you, it's fairly easy. But I really wasn't trying to get support from Asian so much as I mean if I wanted to be supported by Asian might well I might as well just stay in Asia. So I was trying to get be supported by Americans which for various reasons just didn't work out very well. But aside from that I I don't know. I think maybe somebody

told me that Udadamiku was originally Jewish or something. I don't know. I could be completely confusing him with somebody else and it shouldn't matter anyway. But yeah, I just not 100% sure even who he is. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "How liinal do you think the dharma is?" And liinal, I mean, I use the term liinal. I mean, I think liinal literally means like um like a threshold, like a like a doorway, an opening that can be entered or exited. And it's key to a book that I have read some years ago now, the the trickster in the paranormal, which is a

theory of how the paranormal works,
written by George P. Hansen. And the
paranormal works through liminality.

It's like you've got a certain
structure, like a stable structure. In
order for anything to exist for more
than a trillionth of a second, there has
to be some stable pattern involved. But
it's not perfect. There's like cracks
and crevices in between the the laws and
the rules that keep our world like
regular and safe and predictable.

So I mean even just the natural law
isn't good enough for us. The laws of
physics aren't good enough for us to
like keep everything stable and and and

regular. So we also have to have human laws and taboos and so forth that like like give greater stability to our world and keep the scary paranormal at bay.

That's one of the main reasons why we have so many like cultural conventions and so forth is we are trying to standardize and stabilize samsara well enough that there aren't as many cracks and crevices between the rules and the regulations that will allow in from like the primordial chaos maybe paranormal phenomena and so anyways Ruy's question how liinal do you think the dharma is It depends on how you practice it. Like the average Burmese person, you know, they have an approach to Dharma similar to

the approach towards Roman Catholicism of a medieval European where in a way Dharma reduces liminality because it's giving structure and you know it's like explaining stuff and and just sort of keeping the unknown at bay.

you know, it's giving structure to their lives and so it is reducing liminality. But the the more advanced you get in the practice, when you start getting into like really subtle meditative states where a lot of the structure just evaporates, then it becomes way more liminal. Like anyone who has done a lot of intensive practice may tell you from

experience that weird coincidences, synchronicities, and so forth are much more likely to happen when you're doing intensive practice. And then when you get up into the level of being like some really advanced Janna master with psychic powers, then that's all paranormal. I mean, you've gone like full blast liinal at that point.

So it depends on what level and how you you interpret dharma, you know, how advanced you are in the dharma. So that I mean for a beginner it can actually reduce limonality, whereas if you're really advanced, it vastly increases limonality. So I'm just going to move on to Ruy's second question, which is did

the study of the dharma bring you to the threshold of the condition? And I'm not exactly sure what he means by the threshold of the conditions other than just leading me to like limonality. And the study of the dharma didn't really do it because when you're studying dharma to some degree you're studying patterns and regularities that reduce limonality that the real limonality comes not so much from study. I mean, sometimes it can like zen-like stuff or just paradoxical stuff or stuff that really challenges your point of view. Let's say you're locked into this world view and then you read some book

that challenges that world view even though it's very structured and regular also because it's sort of weakening your faith in your own structure and regularity. I mean, it can cause liminality to occur. But as a general rule um what what causes what takes you to the threshold of the conditioned so to speak in dharma is practice especially meditative practice. You know when when you stop thinking you know all these cultural rules and regulations and regularities and taboss and all that and they just fade out at least temporarily. And so you have faded out a lot of the structure that holds the paranormal at

bay. You have vastly increased
limonality of the
situation. And I assume that's what he's
talking about when he says, "Did the
study of dharma bring you to the
threshold of the
condition?" Um, yeah, I've been brought
to the threshold of the condition a few
times. Like before I became a
monk, I think the main vehicle towards
the threshold of the condition was
LSD. I would take LSD like on average
maybe two or three times a year just as
a way of just kind of blowing the carbon
out of my pipes and just sort of and it
was it was like a spiritual practice

really. I had a spiritual experiences
usually every time I would take LSD as a
young man. Sometimes I would take LSD
alone out in some wilderness area. I
remember one time I was in college and I
was taking a religions of India class
and we had just been studying you know
just early vadas and so I actually did
like a a little vadic sacrifice out in
the woods on LSD. Um I didn't sacrifice
an animal though. I was it was like
incense and and purified butter and that
kind of thing.

reading the reading some random hymns
from the rig

va so to some

degree but but I mean it wasn't just

that you know I was just kind of born with a certain limonality so in to some degree it's just sort of an innate talent it's just something you've acquired through parmmmy as the Burmese villagers would say so I'm just going to move on to the next question and we're getting towards the bottom here. This is Yeah, this is less than two and a half hour long video, me thinks. And this anyways, this one is from Tzasquez is who is going under the alias of Captain Bogumu Clam Clumpa.

Bogumiv, I don't know. The L with the line through it in Polish. Is that is that a W sound?

Bogumu. Why would anyone name their kid Bumu? Doesn't make sense.

Anyways, Jasquez is because that's who it is says, would Advite Vanta be close to original Buddhism? And that's kind of an interesting question. And in a way, Advite Vanta is fairly close to original Buddhism, although Advite Vanta is way more philosophical because the original Buddhism was sort of anti-philosophical.

It was anti-conceptual. You weren't supposed to think about reality because thoughts cannot contain reality.

So anyways, what happened was you had this archaic Buddhism that was like

anti-philosophical but then maybe as more beginners and less you and like when the Buddhist started Buddhism most of his followers were veterans relatively spiritually

advanced. But then as Buddhism struck traction in Indian culture and started becoming more popular then it may be that the Buddha had to start giving like elementary philosophical instructions to people who weren't ready yet for like fourth

Janna.

So it you you started getting some like basic philosophy with regard to karma and rebirth and you know dependent core

rising and so forth. And then after the Buddha passed away, it was like a a snowball effect. There just the Indian mind is is at least in in the Buddhist time, the northern Indian mind was just like analytical and philosophical and wanting to explain everything and just proliferate the philosophy. And so it just became this huge scholastic edifice.

And then you had some of the the the early Mahayana schools like Majamaka were actually a kind of reform movement getting back towards like the archaic message of you know you're never going to figure out reality by thinking about it. But the way Majamaka did it was

through like logic chopping I think it's called where I mean you're using logic to destroy itself. you know, you're just using this withering logical scrutiny to just kind of debunk everything and you save your own point of view for last and then turn it towards yourself for a kind of philosophical

selfdeion. And the thing is um when advaita vada was being developed like shri shankara shankara is considered to be like the main like founder of advaita vada that he was getting a lot of ideas from mahayana Buddhism. So advaita vada and mahayana Buddhism have a lot of similarities because there were ideas

borrowed back and forth probably between the two especially ideas borrowed from Majamaka into advite vanta. And so since majamaka was like a reform movement trying to get back to some degree to some semblance of what archaic Buddhism was teaching then yeah I would say advite vidanta

is close to that extent to the original Buddhism. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from thermal squid. And thermal squid got these questions in right under the wire just like an hour before I sat down to do this video. And so this is the last question here and he asked three questions. These are the last three

questions of this

Q&A. And so Thermal Squid says, "Have you ever gotten into a nasty verbal altercation or yelling match with someone in public and felt bad afterwards despite being in the right?" And he's got the right in like scare quotes.

And I can't remember getting into like a a yelling argument in public with anybody. The closest thing that comes to mind was when I was living under a big rock ledge at the on the outskirts of Alando Kazapa National Park in Burma. And I had read this book called Battle for the Mind, which is a life-changing

book for me by William Sergeant, where he's talking about how we are locked into like habit patterns. And these habit patterns, you know, it's like a ball and chain. You can't really make progress because you're just like identified with attached to these habits. And so what what is required in order to break free of this conditioning is you have to be thrown into a kind of crisis like an emotional crisis where your usual way of dealing with reality just doesn't work anymore. And this is how like Chinese thought reform worked. It's how like um political um interrogation in Stalinist Soviet Union worked where you would get the person

not only to admit to trying to overthrow the government but to actually believe that he was trying to overthrow the government. It's how like a lot of like religious conversions work like early Methodists work this way. It's how like like stone age manhood rituals work. It's how basic training in in some militaries work where they just put you under so much strain that you just kind of break down and then you become once you break down once you hit this crisis stage it's like you become very open to suggestion. It's just this instinct. You cling to your habits even if they're not

making you happy so long as they're good enough to get you through life. But once they stop working it's like it's this instinct that you just kind of become very susceptible to suggestion.

And so I had read this book and I was trying to experiment with that to some degree by just sort of triggering a crisis in myself. You know, it seemed like so long as you don't have this crisis, you're not going to make significant like progress. And it helps to have a wise guide there to help put the pieces back together when you have your breakdown. But I didn't have that luxury. So, I'm out there alone in this forest kind of triggering a breakdown in

myself and I came to the verge of it. I was doing fairly well at causing myself to break down just through the I mean just the the stress of living in this environment just in this forest just alone doing intensive practice and everything. And then the rainy season started, the first rains of the monsoon started. And so what happened after the first rains of the monsoon is that all these young villagers go off into the forest catching frogs. It's like you've got frog orgies going on. As soon as the ponds fill up with water, it's just this deafening roar of frogs giving out their mating calls. And then you've got the

the villagers come and they just catch these big baskets full of frogs. And then the next day you go for alms round and you're getting all these dismembered frog parts and frog eggs and stuff in your

bowl. So I mean ostensibly they're Buddhists but out in the remote hillbilly areas the Buddhism is uh just kind of a superstition that isn't taken extremely seriously in certain respects. I once asked one of the older villagers, I mean, do any of the young people actually keep five precepts or did I asked, "Does anybody in the village actually keep five precepts?" And he just kind of chuckled and said, "Only

when you get old, you know, when you're too old to get into trouble, then you stop you stop doing that kind of stuff."

So anyways, there are all these young people. I mean, it was kind of like a party, you know, they're just yelling and laughing all through the forest, um, killing frogs and I was just at this crisis stage, you know, at the verge of a crisis. Anyway, and at one point I'm standing on top of this hill seeing these this crowd of of like teenagers laughing and joking and heading out with their bags and baskets to catch frogs. And I just started yelling at them in Burmese. If you live like animals,

you'll die like

animals. And I mean, it was it was just kind of like this I don't know, like this kind of a episode I was going through. I was just I was just so disgusted with these people that I mean, they really didn't I mean they had like this superstitious respect and reverence for Dhamma. They certainly had this reverence for me, but really, I mean, they'd still I mean, they'd kill anything. They'd eat anything that was at least as big as a grasshopper, you know? They just I've seen guys walking out into the forest and a duck would walk by. They just frantically look around for anything. Just pick up a

stick or anything and just fling it at that that duck in the hopes of of like knocking it down and killing it.

So, I just it was just all the strain and stress just caused me to just kind of snap that night and just start yelling at the villagers about how if they lived like animals, they were going to die like animals. But, I mean, I kind of felt embarrassed about it or, you know, like, well, yeah, I shouldn't have done that.

But that's about as far as it goes with regard to nasty verbal altercations or yelling matches with someone in public because I I can't remember ever like

getting into like a like a yelling
argument with somebody in the middle of
a Walmart or something like that. I just
I've never done that. So anyways, I'm
just going to move on to thermal squid's
next question, which is, would you agree
that heavily extroverted people are
insecure or otherwise energy parasites?

And

uh I don't think that all extroverted
people are that way, but a lot of extra
a lot of extroverted people or just kind
of shallow people, it's like they need
the approval of others around them to
kind of keep their self-esteem high
enough that they don't just go into like
this clinical depression. You know, it's

like someone who is like extroverted to the point that they rely on the approval of others just in this deep emotional level. If all of a sudden they were just like called out and ridiculed and disgraced that I mean they'd just be crushed. Unlike like the introverted person who really doesn't care about public opinion all that much that would really soldier through the scandal much more

uh I don't know with much more fortitude than the extroverted person who is like like getting so much gratification from it. So I mean whether there it's that way to the point of being energy

vampires, I assume that it's sort of a mutual energy exchange between like entire peer groups where you know it's just sort of like mutual support is sort of you know maybe their mind is kind of too weak to live in isolation. So they sort of form together into like a colony, you know, sort of like a psychic colony that that is like mutual support through like mutual approval. And if anyone's ostracized from that group, they better find another group pronto or, you know, they're just going to be plunged into this utter despair because they just have not cultivated enough self-reliance and enough like moral backbone to just be independent of that.

But I don't think that all extroverted people are that way. I do think that there are certain types that are that way

though. And so after maybe I blow my nose one more

time, just like I mean it's it's not even really mucousy anymore. It's just that my it's still like a little bit congested and the air doesn't want to flow through, right? So that I try and make certain sounds when I'm talking and they're not coming out correctly.

Okay, then. So, last question from thermal

squid. How do you reconcile or how you

reconcile a more masculine ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself or assert itself and renunciation of a mindfulness or a mindfulness about the futility of worldly

contentions? So, that's the question.

how you reconcile a more masculine ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself or assert itself and renunciation or a mindfulness about the futility of worldly contentions. And then as a kind of commentary after this, he says, "All three questions are contextually related. Got into a fight with a woman who gave me a terrible attitude for not acknowledging her within 3 seconds of opening the door to my business and it

went nuclear. didn't feel good about it,
but I have a really hard time taking it
from
people. Well, this question, how do I
how do I reconcile a more masculine
ethos that isn't afraid to defend itself
or assert itself and renunciation or a
mindfulness about the futility of
worldly contentions? It reminds me of
something that William James wrote in
his classic book, The Varieties of
Religious Experience. how he points out
that most men
um assert their
masculinity through like aggression, you
know, like sports or driving like

maniacs or or joining the military as 18year-olds, that kind of thing. How traditionally masculinity has been largely a matter of aggression and just Yeah. I mean, aggression has been a factor of it. It wasn't like the whole thing, but there's always or usually a fair amount of aggression in just traditional masculinity. But William James points out that like a spiritual alternative for a men for a man to assert his masculinity is through asecicism, through austerity, where you've got to be tough to be like a Buddhist monk in ancient India. I mean, they they were tough as wood. These were tough

men. And ancient Buddhism, despite its nonviolence and so forth, I mean, is about as masculine of a spiritual tradition as there has ever been devised. Possibly more masculine than than Islam because it was it was formulated by just these tough masculine male aesthetics who avoided women like the plague. So, I mean, femininity really didn't have much opportunity to get into these texts at all. And even a lot of the the nuns that are described in the texts are just the inventions of male monks who wanted to write a story about a nun.

So, yeah, I think the masculine ethos in Dhamma would just be fearlessness. I mean there's definitely masculine virtues in traditional dharma just fearlessness like austerity just sort of a disdain for pleasure or even comfort that kind of thing that I mean it takes a considerable amount of bravery and toughness to be the kind of aesthetic that is described in the the oldest poly texts. So, I mean, let's see. Defend itself. Uh, I mean, just being able to fearlessly take a beating without flinching.

that I mean even that like my father was a he was very macho guy and he got in lots of fights when he was younger and

it wasn't very often that he would get beaten in a fight or that you know he'd be fighting someone that he knew was in all likelihood able to beat him. And in in such a case he made it a point to just look that guy right in the face when he was taking the beating. You know he wasn't going to flinch. He was just gonna take it from the guy, you know, and and just show him that he didn't give a [__] that the other guy could beat him up. And that's kind of a masculine thing. I mean, that I don't know if that would be considered toxic masculinity from some castrated feminized unic, but

still, I

mean, definitely took some some backbone
and some fearlessness.

So, I mean, just not turning turning the
other cheek isn't necessarily

feminine. Let's see here. How do you

reconcile the more masculine ethos that
isn't afraid to defend itself or assert

itself? Um, I mean, you can I mean,

asserting oneself. Yeah. I mean, that in
is basically delusional to assert

yourself. I mean, you're insisting upon,

you know, you are asserting some kind of
samsara based on delusion.

So I mean to the extent that a masculine
ethos is based on

like like egoentrism and delusion I mean

to that extent obviously you're better off without it. Even a a tough guy would be better off without it. But uh there are certain aspects of a masculine ethos like I've already been saying like fearlessness and just like unflinching just just determination that that is a masculine virtue. And I mean you can do that as a a monk aesthetic or as a soldier. You know the fearlessness you can do that as an aesthetic monk or a soldier or let's see just the disdain for comfort. You can do that as an aesthetic or a soldier. I mean, there's a lot of overlap. It's just that the

actual like the aggressive parts are,
you know, they don't really they don't
really wash in in Buddhism. And just
defending yourself to the extent that
you're defending yourself um just out of
a like like

egoism that I mean that wouldn't be
allowed. Although a monk is allowed to
strike out in
self-defense and just asserting
yourself,

um the masculine ethos isn't afraid to
assert itself. I mean, any kind of
assertion, I mean, you you're
essentially asserting some kind of
delusion. So, yeah, that may not work
out so well. I mean, a monk isn't

supposed to make any assertions, at least not in the the oldest texts. when the monks were the toughest. So, how do I reconcile a more masculine ethos with renunciation or mindfulness about the futility of worldly contentions? Um, most of a masculine ethos translates into worldly renunciation fairly well. It's just the the aggressive parts and the diluted parts that don't work very well. and you're better off without the delusion especially. It may be that you're in some kind of situation where you may have to assert some aggressiveness like let's say

you've got a family to protect then yeah
I mean it's your duty you if you haven't
renounced the world then yeah you're
going to have to adopt a somewhat
different ethos than a monk renunciant
who is striving to become a perfected
saint. A lay person who's got a family
to protect may not be able to afford to
be a perfected
saint. So I mean Buddhism it's like the
highest level of practice isn't for
everybody. It's not even for most
people. It's for a tiny minority, a kind
of spiritual elite. And of course a lot
of Western and Westernized Buddhists
just can't stand the idea of an elite.
even if it's a genuine spiritual elite.

It's just let's just have mandatory mediocrity for everybody.

So yeah, and the reconciliation is not total unless you're going to be a Buddhist lay person who still reserves the right to defend yourself and defend your family and defend your home, which really is kind of your duty as a lay person who has a family or a home. And that's it. I guess I answered that question. I hope so because I'm done. And like I should always say at the beginning, it's just a habit now. It's just not my habit to announce this at the beginning. So I guess it's the people who watch the whole show or

listen to the whole show get the the
reward at the end of me saying there you
got any questions about anything you
think I can answer, feel free to ask
them in the questions below the video.
And uh no more than three questions per
person, please. And like the video if
you liked it. And uh smash the the uh
the subscribe button this time. I guess
usually I say subs smash the like
button, but I already said something
about the like button. So I guess you're
just going to have to smash the
subscribe button if you haven't already
and be happy.

Okay then. Wait, maybe I should adjust this. All right. Now, okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number. I mean, the numbers are getting so high that they're numbers that are amused primarily by astronomers at this point.

So, I won't even I won't even bother telling you what number it is because it's such a high number. it would take up too much time. And uh before I start answering questions, oh I forgot to tell you I am your host

Piobasa as usual.

So before I start answering questions, there's kind of a core agenda that I

should I should uh discuss here before I start answering questions. That is with regard to previous questions that I answered that I it has occurred to me that I should have said something else or something in addition to what I already said. For example, a few Q&As's back, somebody asked me if I'd come up with any more great comforting thoughts or if there were more great comforting thoughts than were on my little list of three great comforting thoughts. And uh I couldn't think of any, but it turns out that there was that there's this one thought that used to arise in my mind again and again. Like when I'd be under stress or something, I'd be in a bad

situation, it would just spontaneously arise, which would have like a minor soothing effect. Sort of like taking an aspirin or something has this minor like beneficial effect. And that was everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. you know, if shit's going sideways, you know, stuff's not turning out the way it's supposed to turn out or it's turning out and it just I guess it would have to turn out the way it's supposed to turn out because everything happens the way it's supposed to happen. So, it was just like this. It wasn't exactly a mantra. I wouldn't keep repeating it, but it would just arise

spontaneously again and again,
especially when things were happening
that I didn't like very much.

So, that was kind of a comforting
thought that everything happens the way
it's supposed to

happen. And also, I believe it was in
the previous Q&A, I made the stupid
mistake of saying that the scientific
name of the Pacific or Alaskan pollic
was *Merluccia Prada*. And that turns out
that's the Pacific

hake. that the Alaskan pollic the
largest fishery in the world at the time
that I was involved in it back in like
the the 1980s and probably the '9s also
it's uh I mean at the time it was the

calora and it turns out I was just making sure I looked it up on Wikipedia it turns out according to Wikipedia it says in 2014 the US food and drug administration announced that the official scientific name for the fish was changed from *thera calma* back to its original taxon of *Gatis calmis* highlighting its close genetic relationship to the other species of the cod genus *Gatis*. So *Gatis* is like Latin for codfish and the *pollic* is sort of a kind of semicod or I guess it's really a it's really a cod now. But I mean it's just weird to me

that the US Food and Drug Administration would announce that the scientific name of some fish has been changed. I mean that's not their job. Anyways, this is my beverage. which is the little paper umbrella in my beverage signifying my class and high social status and so forth. And so with that core agenda as a brief introduction instead of the usual haphazard rambling, I'm going to start answering questions. And the first question after I check to make sure we really are recording.

Yeah, I guess the first question is from

esoteric boy. An esoteric boy says, "Can you explain this karma situation?" A

gray korat

cat born on the streets wanders into the open garage of a man who just happens to be kind and takes the cat in. Things get even better when a roommate moves into the house who also loves cats and

provides more attention to him. In the cat's next life, is he just more likely to be born directly into a home with

kind owners, having defeated the street karma in this life? What is your opinion on cats, especially the korat, which is said to be a good luck cat in Southeast Asia? Oh, that's a that's a whole

different question there. And we do have quite a lot of questions. This could be a long one. And now it's going to be even longer because there's like this new extra question. Oh, now it's three questions. Three question marks. So, what is your opinion on cats, especially the Korat, which said be a good luck cat in Southeast Asia? And could a cat with good karma like this increase the karma of its owners? So, let's just get back to the first question mark. So, the situation of a gray korat cat. And tell you the truth, I'm not exactly sure what a cororat cat is. Spelled k o r r a t. I don't know. I think I've probably

heard of a cororat cat before, but I don't exactly know what a korat cat looks like. And I didn't bother to look it up. Like I looked up the scientific name of the Alaska Pollock. So let's see. Born on the streets, wanders into an open garage of a man who just happens to be kind. Takes the cat in. And then the roommate loves cats, too. In the cat, the next the cat's next life, is he just more likely to be born directly into a home with kind owners, having defeated the street karma in this life? Well, it's going to it's going to depend on the individual cat. I'm pretty

sure, I mean, it may be that he burned off this negative karma that was causing him to be a stray cat. and he had this latent underlying karma of people being nice to him. But then it could be the other way around. I mean, it could be that he did have this little bit of people being nice to him karma that then got burned off by the people being nice to him and now he's he goes back to being a stray cat in the next life. It could it could be either way, but in general, I think for most animals, interacting with humans is a kind of uplifting experience. There's like mental states are contagious. Human beings, regardless of, you know, how

much of an [—] they might be or how much of a saint they might be, still they have like more consciousness, more force of consciousness than the average quadruped. And so just interacting there's like this empathy kind of quasi telepathy or like a deep level of emotional telepathy going on between you know a human and and its pet. And so it does have like an uplifting experience. It was one reason why dogs and cats like attention so much. Sort of like the same way little kids like attention so much. They just thrive on it to some degree. They need attention. So in this case, I would guess in more

than half of cases, it may be that the cat is sort of transitioning into a better kind of life. And who knows, maybe in its next life, it'll be born as like a human baby that dies, you know, six months or something. Because I I do have this theory that it it just kind of occurred to me because of one of our dogs that that dog may have been, you know, like a a human baby at some point and then, you know, before it got to like the verbal level, you know, it died of the diseases that most babies died from before modern times. So, yeah, it's it's hard to say with regard to karma. can't really generalize exactly how something works.

I mean there are some sutas and the poly texts the poly the polyutas that say you know if you're angry in this life then you're going to be ugly in the next life or you feed an animal in this life and it's going to cause benefit to you for 100 lifetimes afterwards. this kind of thing. But I don't think that such cookbook

explanations really can do justice to the just unthinkable complexity of how the universe works and how karma works. And karma is a mental state. It is volition or will.

So is he just more likely to be born

directly into a home with kind owners in many cases? But it's not necessarily going to turn out that way. I mean, it might the the cat might have just burned off what good karma was coming to it. But then again, it would depend on the like the mental states of the cat more than anything else. If it's just sort of like this sour puss of a cat that doesn't like people all that much, you know, it could just be burning off what little people being kind to it karma it had and then it goes back to being half wild or whatever. Or if the cat is like this really nice cat that's like rubbing up against people's legs purring all the time, then there's a good chance that

it's going to be moving
upwards. It's going to have an improved
situation in it like in its next life
going with the theory of
karma. But you can't really generalize
you. I mean it it is on a cat by cat
basis. And so I'm just going to move on
to esoteric boy's second question here.
What is your opinion on cats, especially
the korat, which is said to be a good
luck cat in Southeast Asia? Well, again,
I'm really not exactly sure what a korat
cat is. Most of the cats that I saw in
Burma were pretty much like like the
like Siamese like a Siamese cat except
they're not necessarily the coloring of

a cat that's called a Siamese cat. Some of them were just black. There were some tiger stripey cats, but I did I was I have read or I was told that a genuine Siamese cat has a kink in its tail. And cats in

Burma, lots and lots of them have a kink in their tail. It's some sort of genetic quirk that causes like the the abnormal fusion of two vertebrae in its tail which causes this

kink. And uh a lot of them have that triangle-shaped head that I just do not like. I like a round headed cat better than a triangular headed cat. I'm not exactly sure why. I think they're just more intelligent or something. Um I just

had bad experiences with triangular headed cats. I think they they're just like really loud. Like the standard Siamese cat is just like meowing really loud in this piercing voice all the time.

But as a general rule, I like cats. We had this one cat at a monastery I lived at. It was named cat number two. And that cat, we could not feed that cat. It was such a huntress. I mean, we found it as a kitten. There was a flood and apparently the the mother and the kittens got separated on opposite sides of the flood water and they were they were half starved kittens.

So the the other monk who lived at the monastery and I liked cats and so we started raising them. We were feeding them. At first they'd eat, you know, they'd eat like fried fish from our bowl, you know, fried whole minnows and that kind of thing. They liked it. They grew up. And cat number two, just without even having a mother teaching her how to hunt, she was such an adept huntress that she would turn up her nose at fried fish out of our alms bowls, anything like that. She just wanted to hunt her own food. And she was taking out like three squirrels a week in addition to birds, lizards, grasshoppers, just snakes, frogs, just

anything. One time she just jumped up in the air and just caught a swooping bird between her paws. And at one point she was wiping out the squirrels so mercilessly that I even hung a little jingle bell around her neck. And still she was taking out like two squirrels a week at

least. And then she went into heat and got the lust wander and wandered away and never came back and might have been eaten by an eagle or falcon or something or by the villagers cuz in Burma villagers do eat cats especially poor villagers. Dogs not so much but cats are considered to be good eating and so you

don't see a lot of stray cats in
Burma. You don't see a whole lot of cats
in general in Burma.

So yeah, I like I like dogs better. I'm
more of a dog person than a cat person.
Dogs are more human than cats are. That
there's more of a like a deeper bond
between a man and his dog than between a
man and his

cat. But cats are fine as a general
rule. I mean, there are exceptions.

There are some cats I haven't liked,
some dogs I haven't liked.

So, and I don't know what a cororat cat
is. So, I'm just going to move on to the
to the third question of esoteric boy,
which is could a cat with good karma

like this increase the karma of his owners? That yeah, I mean, if you are like expressing love and kindness and generosity towards your cat, I mean, you're feeding it every day. That's good karma. You are feeding another being which is bound to come around you know the other way where you know there's going to be like higher beings will smile upon you when you are smiling upon beings that are sort of below you on the on the the grand scale of things. So yeah, I used to tell that to Burmese people sometimes. It's like if you want the gods to be kind to you, you should be kind to beings that are below

you because you are below the gods, you know, sort of so to speak.

So yeah, I mean anything that's motivated by kindness, anything that's motivated by love. And I mean sometimes it's it's like like cats will will like demonstrate their sincere love for you by just, you know, they kill some lizard or mouse or something and they just bring it to you. I mean, sometimes it's just like a shrew that doesn't taste good, so they're just kind of dumping it off on you or something. But sometimes, I mean, there's like mutual love and benevolence and so forth. Maybe not so much as with dogs, but still cats can have

it. So, yeah. I mean, if if
you're treating a cat nicely, you know,
with kindness and love and feeding it
and, you know, just taking care of it,
then yeah, of course, there's going to
be some karmic uh, you know, what goes
around comes around kind of stuff going
on. And so I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Tzasiz,
who's going under the the alias recently
of Captain

Bogumic

Clamka. And his first question
is, they never invited you to Buddhist
conventions and some Australian monk
tried to erase you from his website. Why

people or other monks didn't like you when you were a monk? I just wonder why some monks are popular and others are not. I assume there are very wise monks who live in some remote forest in Sri Lanka or Thailand and the last thing they want is to be popular. Yeah, being popular um in Asia especially can be inconvenient. You've got visitors coming. You know, you got people like showing up and wanting to like a tour of your cave. You know, it's like if you're a lay person, you got people it's it's like people knocking on your door just asking, "Can I come in and look around in your bedroom?" because that's that's that was happening

to me pretty often when I was becoming more and more famous in Burma. You know, people would be coming from the the nearby towns to to visit the exotic foreign monk living in the cave in the forest and you know, they're wanting to to look inside the cave and of course it's like going around looking in my bedroom and all that.

But uh one reason why I was never invited to Buddhist conventions is simply I didn't have the connections. like the monk who was ordained at the same ceremony as me. He got invited to some big I can't remember now if it was a Buddhist convention specifically or

whether it was just sort of like a a religious convention with representatives of different religions all coming and giving speeches about how all the religions should you know like cooperate and join together and be a force for good in the world or or some such. And the thing is he was a disciple of Usilanandanda who is relatively high-profile monk in Burma and in the United States. Usilananda was the founder of the the big Buddhist monastery in uh Half Moon Bay in uh in California. It was in Daily City before that. And so Usy Landanda had connections and so his disciples also have connections and I really didn't

have connections. I was like a hermit living alone in a forest. So with regard to invitations to conventions and that sort of thing, I mean it wasn't that they were biased against me. It wasn't like they despised me. It was just like no they they hadn't heard of me really. Um there have been a few like senior monks like seiados in Burma who just took an instant dislike to me. One of them was my own preceptor. One of them was Upandida Mahasi Upida that when I mean when when I was ordained he was at my ceremony and he was like grandpa. He was just very nice when I first became a monk. But then

like seven, eight years later, I show up at his monastery, his meditation center in Rangon, Pandidorama. And I mean, he just like took this instant disliked me. I don't think he even remembered me from from the ordination ceremony. And um it's it's probably just an older guy who was uh didn't doesn't like sort of cocky young monks or foreign monks. I was told he didn't like foreigners, so that was probably part of it.

Um, let's see. Then there's some monks. It's mainly like leftist western monks don't like me because I promulgate hate, which is it's going to come come up lower down on the scroll of questions here. You know, it's like I'm a fascist,

a Nazi,
misogynist, you know, whatever,
anti-semite.

So the more left-leaning western
monks may dislike me simply because they
don't like my politics. And I was
controversial even like living in Burma.
I was controversial simply because I had
a critical mind and wasn't just
accepting everything in the text. Like I
was pretty outspoken in
my contempt. I guess for the Abhidhamma
philosophy and just Abhidhamma philosophy in
general because at least half of what is
considered to be Abhidhamma philosophy
isn't even found in the Abhidhamma texts

themselves but is found in commentarial literature like Abidama commentaries and so forth. Some of the most important um features of Abidama philosophy aren't even found in the Abidama pita. It's found in the commentarial tradition which does indicate that Abidama was like growing and evolving and developing over time and even after the tapitica got closed and you couldn't add to the typica anymore which generally was when they started having published commentaries like line by line commentary. You can't really change much after that.

So, I was kind of controversial, but the the Burmese as a general rule, aside

from a few seats who just took an
instant dislike to me,
um partly I mean just because they don't
like foreigners like my own preceptor.
He just thought I was wild. I was like a
loose cannon because again if I I would
just follow Vineia as strictly as I
could and if some monk like my my
preceptor this happened more than once
he would do penance for a song offense.
You don't know what songa offenses are
that's fine but you got to do a penance
for it and they would just like fudge
the penance. They wouldn't do the
penance correctly. And so I would just
refuse to go to their reinstatement

ceremony which was seen as just
unthinkable. I mean it was just
barbarism to to the to the Burmese mind
where you are just you defer to the
abbot, you defer to the senior monks and
I just wouldn't do that if I thought
they were obviously wrong. I just
wouldn't I wouldn't go with it.

So there were various
reasons why let's see what's what's the
actual question here. Let's see why
people don't like you when you were a
monk. Yeah. I mean it was just a few I
mean relatively few. Most Burmese seats,
most Burmese monks liked me fine. And
some of them like really admired and
respected me just because I was like

this Buddhist Rambo living out in a cave in the forest or just even when I was living in a school monastery, I'd go for alms round every day instead of just going to the refectory and eating food that was given out there.

Um, but I was controversial for not being just strictly dogmatic and, you know, sort of using critical thought and just sort of pointing out what I consider to be like discrepancies in the philosophy and so forth. You know, like I had monks at the school monastery talking for quite a while about the the idea is that the Buddha is was wiser than any of his disciples. that the

Buddha was just wiser because he was a sama sam Buddha. And then his chief disciple Sar Puta was wiser than any of the other disciples. And I just point out according to the Abidama philosophy itself that wisdom pa is synonymous with amoa or absence of delusion. So if you have zero delusion, you've got maximum puna just by definition. And all enlightened beings, all arants have zero delusion. So how could the Buddha be wiser than any other arant or how could Sar puta be wiser than any other arant? And the Burmese they just it's like they cannot bring themselves psychologically to question their own religion which is the way most religious people are. I

suppose if they're devoutly religious,
you know, they just follow. They're not
trying to

like, you know, they're not trying to
notice discrepancies or contradictions
or anything like

that. But I mean, that wasn't really why
anyone would dislike me. I think aside
from those few Seattle, the only people
that have really disliked me have been
like westerners that just didn't I mean
I mean western

monks. The only western monks who have
disliked me were

just mainly monks who were who leaned
leftwards and just didn't like my

politics. But that's not why I didn't get invited to conventions. And I've spent a lot of time answering this question. So I'm just going to move on to Chas is or Captain

Bogumic Clumpka's second question, which is what kind of umbrella with mosquito net that you had as a monk? Was that the same what Thai monks use when they go on to Tonga? Yeah, it was in fact I I would call it a dutin tea in Burmese, which is like the dutonga umbrella.

So yeah, I mean it was just it was a jumbosized umbrella so that you could kind of sleep underneath it, you know, it would kind of keep you dry if you

slept underneath it. So it was relatively wide, you know, maybe four feet across. Detachable handle, little hook on the top that you could hang it from a tree branch or something. And it had like this very fine mesh mosquito net that you could hang from the umbrella and then that would keep the mosquitoes off when you're like meditating or or sleeping underneath this umbrella. And it was imported from Thailand. I got it from Thailand. So yeah, that's the same kind of monk or monk umbrellas that the Thai monks use when they go for duta. The

pratudong it's called in Thailand. And so I'm just going to move on to Tzas is his third question. Captain Klama, what is your opinion on neurobiology view that we do actually have two senses of self? One in left brain hemisphere and one in right. One is where your language and continuous experiences are located and the other one is silent artistic where subconsciousness is cuz it doesn't deal with words. when during certain medical procedures they disconnected the bridge between a two hemispheres they found out it is true but we don't feel that way because one sense of self is silent good stuff to explore so what is my opinion

on the neuro neurobiological view that we have two senses of self I would assume we have more than two senses of self I mean what he's talking about is just we've got sort of like a functional asymmetry in the brain and so long as let's just assume for the sake argument. Physical matter exists. We really have like this physical brain. And back in like the 1970s, it was like the golden age of experimental brain surgery back then, like the 60s and 70s. And it was an effective treatment for severe epilepsy where you you cut through the like the fibers that connect the two hemispheres and it it

reduces epileptic seizures because epileptic seizures like an electrical storm in your brain. So it's like a mutual feedback thing that just gets out of control. Whereas if you divide the brain into two hemispheres, you know, without the the interconnection, it very much reduces the likelihood that you they'll have grand mall seizures.

So yeah, I mean it's it's not really controversial, you know, going with neurohysiology that you've got asymmetrical function in the brain that the right hemisphere is more like analytical and verbal. No, the left hemisphere is more analytical and and

verbal. The right the right hemisphere is more intuitive and not really more emotional because you've got the like the emotional parts of the brain are down in the center below the the cortex, you know, like the lizard brain. That's where the emotional stuff happens. you know, the abdala, you've got two of those, one on each side, and that's largely responsible for like anger and aggression and that kind of thing.

So, let's

see. What is my opinion on the neurobiological view that we do actually have two senses of self? I don't know if

it'd be two senses of self, and I think you could have you could multiply that into several senses of self depending on how you want to look at it. But I would agree that the way science has, you know, examined the the data, excuse me, that the two the two halves of the the cortex have asymmetrical function. And I do think that that was one of the the innovations of modern humans that helped us to out compete other like premodern humans. Like maybe Neandertal still had like symmetry and you can like fit in more stuff if you got asymmetrical brain function like you know music appreciation is like the right temporal lobe that kind of thing but not not the

right no the right temporal lobe not the
left temporal

lobe. So I mean it just increases the
amount of specialization that your
cortex can

do. And so I do think that was like an
evolutionary innovation that just helped
modern humans to to out compete uh all
their like premodern prequas human uh
competitors. Whether Neanderls had
asymmetrical like uh cortex cortical
function or not I don't

know. So I'm just gonna move on this
question. This is from PT and says,
"Would you say that karma is uniquely
Indian? Seems to me that karma is the

spiritual backbone of Indian
spiritualism. In other words, if anyone
wanted to add a new spiritual
perspective, it better have karma in its
recipe to even be considered viable or
rather

digestible." So, I wouldn't say that
karma is uniquely Indian. There are some
kind of vague karmic ideas outside of
India like just even in the Bible you've
got he who lives by the sword shall die
by the sword or as ye sow so shall ye
reap and that's that's fairly karmic you
know it's like you do this it's going to
come back to you and I mean that kind of
idea at the really basic level is if you
do bad will happen to you mainly from

God smiting you like going from like um
Old Testament or like the Quran or
something, you know, it's sort of rather
than karma

being uh either a mental state like in
Buddhism or just some sort of I mean
it's like a substance in Janism like
this sticky substance that clings to
your your ja or your soul and weighs it
down or I mean a lot of people's
interpretations of karma is different
from that where it's it's just some sort
of as yet undiscovered law of physics of
sort of like Newton's idea that every
action has an equal and opposite
reaction. So that's that's kind of the

way I understood karma before I studied Buddhist philosophy. It's just sort of every action has an equal and opposite reaction. It's just sort of like the universe remaining in balance. You know, you push this way, there's going to be pushing back the other way.

And it wasn't until I started studying Buddhist philosophy that I realized that karma is much closer to Schopenhauer's concept of will that it's chidna or volition in Buddhist philosophy. So it's like the the momentum the kinetic aspect of your delusional mind that's just pushing you through some sorrow.

But considering that karma has various interpretations, various ways of looking

at it, then I don't think it's uniquely Indian. It might be primarily Indian, but I don't think it's uniquely Indian because I mean, how are you going to exactly define karma when various philosophical schools in India define it differently? You know, the Buddhists define it differently from the Jains who define it differently from the Hindus. And even within Buddhism, there was some disagreement on exactly how karma worked or exactly what it was. And literally karma just means action or deed. And um I mean there there are some theories. I mean my what I consider to be the most

probably likely theory is that an idea of karma came all the way from the Indus Valley civilization. It probably wasn't as sophisticated as the Buddhist understanding of karma, but still they had some idea of there is this your actions leave this like longlasting effect that will come back on you and that you need to kind of purify that in order to escape from samsara that kind of thing which is kind of what the James believe. Um but there's another theory that karma which means action could have evolved just within the vadic tradition itself and that's just it was the act of karma was like the ceremonial act of the

the fire sacrifice that you had to do
the act within the sacrifice correctly
in order for it to be
efficacious. And so that kind of evolved
into this idea of karma. Although I'm
more inclined to think that the the
whole belief in something akin to karma
goes all the way back into prehistoric
times like the Indis Valley civilization
or other civilizations that are less
well known in northern
India. So let's see
here. Um I do think that karma does make
more sense. some interpretation of karma
does make more sense than just having
some god capital G god up in heaven

somewhere who's just scrutinizing everybody and just sort of you know remembering you know kind of like Santa Claus whether they're naughty or nice and then punishing the bad ones and rewarding the good ones and all that.

Um, I think it's more of a natural phenomenon than than a supernatural one of some deity who is rewarding the good and punishing the bad. That we reward ourselves and punish ourselves. If we go to heaven, we send ourselves there. If we go to hell, we send ourselves there. And there's always a certain element of that even in monotheistic religions or Abrahamic religions, but they haven't completely gotten away from the whole,

you know, God punishes the bad and rewards the good instead of um just kind of leaving it all on our own shoulders. So, I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Thermal Squid. And thermal Squid says, "Would employment as a drill instructor be considered wrong livelihood?"

And then uh he's got this little commentarial paragraph here saying, "When the Buddha and Dharmama condemn militarism and war and any industry related, I wonder if there is a wholesome element in participating in the cultivation or perfection of others through aggressive and unconventional

means, discipline, loyalty, and other kinds of masculine virtues are developed by people like this. And even edgy types of sport coaches have similar characteristics. I also feel that it is a constructive way for people with aggressive tendencies to sublimate what could otherwise result in crime or domestic tragedy. So getting back to the question, would employment as a drill instructor be considered wrong livelihood? Um I mean if he's not actually killing anybody and but I guess he'd still be teaching others how to kill. I mean, you do have to learn like my father said

when he in World War II, you you receive instructions on how to stab people in such a way. You stab them in the kidney so and it hurts so bad that they can't make any sound, that kind of thing. Then yeah, I mean, that's that's not going to be right livelihood teaching people how to kill. Even if you're not killing yourself, so to speak, still I mean, so it's going to have some unh wholesome elements. But in Buddhism, I mean, there's almost nothing that you could consider pure black or pure white. There's it's all shades of gray. And so a drill instructor who is teaching discipline and endurance and

austerity and and like

fearlessness that I mean that's going to
be good. That's going to have some some
positive karma for that drill

instructor. You know he's making a man
out of these

flabby video game players or

whatever. you know, I mean, he's sort of
like a father figure and it it maybe

there's a lot of harshness and a lot of
punishments, you know, that there's I

read about this one guy. He was walking
around with his hands in his pockets.

So, the drill instructor made him fill
up his pockets with sand and sew them

shut. And he was walking around with

like 10 pounds of extra weight just of

sand in his pockets just for the the the crime, the the perceived misbehavior of having his hands in his pockets.

And I mean, some of that is like a really fierce drill instructor. They're just going to break you down until you're having like a crisis and then they're just going to rebuild you into this fighting machine that does not hesitate to follow an order. And I mean, it's there's good and bad involved in that. It's not all good and it's not all bad. But I mean there's a lot of that kind of fierceness in spiritual teachers too like like the stereotypical Zen master who's like

beating people with sticks. I think it might have been the previous Q&A I'm talking about how there's this saying in Zen Buddhism how the the meditation hall can be resounding with the shouts of the master and blows from his stick may be falling like rain but the master abides in silence and stillness.

So, I mean, if you're learning um like Bushido as a medieval samurai warrior, then certainly there's going to be a mixture of virtue and just flat out, you know, from the Buddhist point of view, badness, skillful and unskillful.

So all in all, I do think that um a soldier from a Buddhist ancient Indian

Buddhist point of view would have wrong livelihood simply because I mean even if you're not killing you're I mean you have to be willing to kill you know you have to be trained how to kill that sort of thing.

So, but still I mean ethically it would be it'd be be a shade of gray. So, I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's second question. What do you feel about the role of someone like Heracles in the Dharma? And then his commentarial paragraph is in reading about Greco Buddhist culture and artifacts, we see Heracles or Vajraani as a protector of the Buddha. It made me

think about how the Dharma could make use of these with barbaric or worldly tendencies as a proxy for militarism. In doing so, avoiding sullyng the SA or contradicting something like a himsa. I wonder what kind of merit or results come from that kind of occupational position and what thoughts you might have on it. Well, Heracles I mean he was sort of recruited into the Buddhist pantheon as the bodhicattva vajraani. Probably vajraani existed before and it was just I mean this happened all the time in classical times. You have Greeks or Romans move into a new area and in that new area the indigenous people are worshiping a certain deity. So the

Greeks or Romans would just equate that deity with some deity that they already knew. So you had, you know, like like Diana of Ephesus, you know, who's mentioned in the New Testament, greatest Diana of Ephesus. And in all likelihood, it wasn't really Diana to begin with. It's just that it just reminded somebody, some classical pagan of Diana, and so they just equated her with with Diana. and Heracles. I mean, he was all over the place, you know? There was like Phoenician versions of Heracles and probably like like Gish versions of Heracles. It was just Heracles or Hercules was he just

made the rounds. It was like he reminded a lot of people of some minor or not so minor deity is being worshiped out on the frontiers of the of the the empire. So yeah, that happened when the Greeks colonized

um like northwestern India and what is now Afghanistan which is called Bactria back then. Um yeah they just found they just saw this Vajraani who was sort of a bodyguard of the Buddha at least in iconography and so they started carving Vajraani as Hercules with his club. I don't I don't know if he had like the lion the lion pelt cape like he he does in some iconography but um let's see what's the actual question though what

do you feel about the role of someone
like heracles in the dhamma well I
mean it's it's sort of like the drill
instructor where I mean dhamma is not
going to endorse killing or or like
violence you know he might have to admit
that sometimes violence like in the
especially in the case of
self-defense is something that is it's
like a right like it's like a right that
you can choose to exercise to defend
yourself but still I mean Buddhism is
just
uncompromisingly pacifistic and
nonviolent and then of course it moves
into cultures that are more violent more

militaristic Samurai Japan being a classic example of that and also not just the Zen there they were like warrior monks in Japan that eventually got outlawed because they were so such troublemakers can't remember what they were called but they were they were sort of like sort of like the Japanese Buddhist equivalent of like Knights Templar or something and Knights Templar and the hospitalers and and those um monastic warrior groups in the west were similar also it's um it's is kind of a bastardization of two what you would consider to be incompatible ideas and then they're just like welded together into something that worked for

centuries.

So Heracles I mean he would
be I mean in he wasn't really a terra I
mean I don't think the
terraodens had her in their pantheon
even as vajraani I think vajra pani
might be mentioned in I mean it wouldn't
be vajra it'd be vajiraa
vajiraani in
pi which means like wielding the
thunderbolt or wielding a diamond
probably a thunderbolt in this face like
in the hand. Thunderbolts in the
hand. And I mean, he'd be like a
symbolic protector, you know? He'd be
using more psychic means to protect

Dharma

from heretics or or barbarians or
whatever, rather than out there bashing
them with a club.

So yeah, I think probably the more
dharmic

approach would be uh representing
protectors of the

dharma as using their protection in more
psychic ways, you know, just forming
like a a force field, like a protective
shield to keep keep heresy out of the
country, that kind of thing.

rather than busting

heads. So, I'm just going to move on to

Thermal Squid's third

question, which is, "What do the

Buddhist texts say about heroism and self-sacrifice?"

And then he's got the uh the commentarial paragraph following it saying, "In reading Hindu scriptures, I see often a theme that those who take the ultimate burden of sacrificing themselves for the protection of their family, culture, or even the well-being and safety of others immediately receive *mosha* and or a heavenly existence. In some senses, I find things like this to be highly beautiful and appreciable aesthetically speaking and that they epitomize altruism. I don't think that there is a higher form of

selflessness. Jumping in front of
bullets onto grenades or running ahead
on into danger with no concern for
oneself seems to be a ticket into higher
births or even something like
apotheosis. Um well, I mean all of a
sudden I'm reminded of like the ancient
grecians who would just go into a frenzy
before battle. you know, they'd be
they'd go into battle essentially naked
and painted blue and then they just
charge like the the Romans or whoever
and they the the front line would just
fling themselves onto the spears of the
Romans which would like weigh down the
spear so that the next wave would just
go right over the top and overwhelm the

enemy. At least in theory that's that's how it was supposed to work. And it's I don't know if a berserker or someone like one of these picss is really uh is buying himself a ticket into higher births just through like frenzied willingness to die. I mean, even like warlike cultures, ancient like Germanic cultures and the Norse and so forth, like they had this idea that you can't get into Valhalla unless you die in battle, which made them quite willing to just be like these fearless badasses in battle cuz they thought, you know, they're going to Valhalla if they die in battle. And it was kind of a disgrace

not only for the Vikings, but for Klingons, too. or so I have so I've seen on an episode is a disgrace to die of old age. You got to die gloriously in battle. And I mean there is some virtue to that. It I mean it promotes fearlessness. You know it's certainly not conducive to timidity but again it's it's not all black and white. You know it's not all black or all white. It's going to be shades of gray and there's going to be good and bad mixed together. So let's see here. What do the Buddhist text say about heroism and self-sacrifice? Well, they talk a lot about heroism and self-sacrifice, but it's in spiritual terms and not like

military terms. There's a lot of like
militaristic

um symbolism in a lot of Buddhist texts.

Like in the suta nipata, there's at
least a few sutas where like a monk or
the Buddha is referred to as like this
allconquering hero. Like there's one
suta and I'm pretty sure it's in the
sutin pata where it says it is better to
die in battle than to live in defeat.

And it's a spiritual battle. I mean
you're you're trying to defeat your own
defilements, your own delusion. I mean
that's that's the real heroism from a
Buddhist point of view. There's a verse
in the Dhamapatam. It's I I don't

remember the exact numbers, but it's better to conquer yourself than to conquer 10,000 enemies on the field of battle and self-sacrifice. I mean, I think there's quite a lot of that also, especially when you start getting into the devotionalistic stuff like Jotica stories. I'm pretty sure there's a Jotica story or it could just be a Mahayana Buddhist story about it's well known about how the Buddha sees this tiger with babies and it's starving and so he just offers his own I think he even like cuts his own flesh somehow just to kind of liven up the tiger with the smell of blood so that you know he just offers his own

body for the sake of helping this tiger
or there's the the sasad jadaka where
the Buddha in a previous life is this
wise rabbit who has determined he's
going to feed any aesthetic
wanderers that that come by and that
this heats up the throne of Saka, king
of gods, that when anybody does
something outrageously austere like
this, his throne gets too hot for him to
to sit on it. So he has to go down and
and see what the problem is. And so he
disguises himself as an aesthetic
brahman. And this this this rabbit, this
hair, I mean, aesthetic brahinss don't
eat rabbit food. So, he's just going to

fling himself into a fire. How a rabbit built the fire in the first place, I don't know. And he's just going to cook himself to feed this brahman or who he thinks is a

brahman. But Saka spared his life and the fire didn't burn him. And then as a reward for his willingness to sacrifice his own life just to feed this Brahman, he squeezes the juice out of a mountain and makes a uh an image of a rabbit on the moon. And that's that's how the Buddha became the man in the moon, so to speak.

So there's a lot of talk about heroism and self-sacrifice, but it's in spiritual terms sometimes using

militaristic symbolism, militaristic language like the pura suta which it uses a lot of militaristic like imagery in the suta even though it's kind of discouraging um what pura wanted. Hour was it mean literally it means like hero but it's it's about debate how you know this person wants to just conquer his opponents in debate and that's considered to be an unskillful attitude and Buddhist monks are advised to avoid these kind of public debates because they happen a lot in India and it's easy to get sucked into it just like it's easy to get sucked into some debate on

Twitter

now. So yeah, definitely there's praise of heroism and self-sacrifice, but it is nonviolent and it is along spiritual terms or along spiritual lines. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Captain Caniples who used to be called Scoladin or Scooladine, I'm pretty sure, because he's got the same kind of bullet points. And he says, "Would you kindly explain peak form for receiving meta?" And then he's got the characteristic Scooladine bullet point like the most conducive condition for bypassing the second law of the dynamics or better yet acting as a force multiplier. I'm

willing to douse myself with an old glass bottle of Hawaiian suntan oil, liquid magnifying glass, if that matters. So, what is the peak form for receiving meta? I mean, it just be having like a a mind that isn't so opaque that the meta can't really shine in.

So I

assume you would either be in a state of relative clarity or it could be that you could be in a state of crisis despair and then meta can get into you fairly easily just because it's like your shields are down.

But I don't think there I've never

really come across any strategy for maximizing meta intake when others are like radiating it supposedly. I mean, you'd think there have been so many saints in this world and in other worlds, too, just beaming meta in all directions that there ought to be quite a lot of meta in the air, just like there's quite a lot of phone conversations and like internet porn and all this that are just going through our bodies all the time. So, I guess just uh being like having like mental clarity would probably be your best bet. Try not to be opaque. Try to be at least translucent. And so I'm just going to

move on to Captain Canipples's second question here. Concerning book hype, how relatable was your time in Burma to Allen Parish from Juman G? And then the bullet point says, "In the jungle, you just wait until the dice rolls five or eight and that's 26 years." And I I think Juman G is like a Was that a movie with like Robin Williams in it? If if it was, I never saw the movie. I have no idea what Captain Canipples here is really referring to. So, I mean, I've seen quite a few movies. Um, but Jumanji isn't one of them. And I'm assuming that Jumanji is a movie. I seem to recall um Robin Williams being in a movie like

that. But I don't know who Alan Parish is. Maybe it was the role played by Robin Williams, but I really can't say much more than that. So, I'm just going to move on to Captain Caniples's third question, which is, what would you advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life, even if it's mixed with insanity? Well, I mean, reading Jay Krishna Murdy would be a good start, I suppose.

um just I mean you can enjoy the world and be grateful for what there is in life without clinging to it and insisting that it be this way instead of that way. So I mean gratitude will get

you farther than indifference or at least some spiritual teachers say that gratitude will get you farther in life and in a spiritual life than just indifference.

But uh let's see here. What would you advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life? Well, for one thing, you have to be willing to accept the bad stuff when it happens. Like uh Ramen Maharshi once admonished one of his disciples that he says when you pray you thank God for all the good things, all the blessings, but you don't thank God for the bad stuff that happens. So,

I mean, you should thank God for all of it because all of it, I mean, it's it's helping you to to work out your karma and get you closer to God or the the absolute or whatever you want to call it. So, what would I advise to people who want to enjoy the world for what it is and be grateful for what there is in life? I mean, still you got to take dhamma into consideration that the second noble truth is going to be true regardless. You know, clinging and attachment is the cause of all suffering. So, just accept what happens. Be be a stoic. Just accept the bad stuff and the good stuff. But if you're like trying to

maximize the positive and eliminate the negative, it's just not going to work because positive and negative are opposite sides of the same coin. If you if you don't want any negative, you have to eliminate the positive, too. And if you want positive, you have to be willing to accept an equal amount of negative. And that's the thing is if you want to wallow in sensuality or you want to enjoy pleasures of the senses, then you have to be willing to accept when the opposite inevitably happens. You know, it's you might consider to be an equitable trade. You want something so

bad that you're willing to accept its opposite when it when it happens. you know, you want this pleasure so much. You think this pleasure would be an equitable trade for an equal amount of its opposite, then I mean, that's your choice to make. So, just bear in mind that the four noble truths are going to remain true regardless of how you decide to live your life. And clinging and attachment is going to I mean, desire, craving is going to cause suffering. So just do what you do with with as little like craving and attachment as you can manage. And if you still have craving and attachment then you should bear in

mind that that is going to bear fruit
and there's going to be some pain
involved some
unpleasantness

involved and just take that just accept
it with equanimity. When the bad stuff
happens be a

stoic. So I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Quistor
and Quistor says in the scenario of a
formless being reaching Ara ship, how
does this being develop insight into the
nature of sensuality to the point of
transcending it if the reality lacks all
experience of sensuality? Well, I don't
think there is a

scenario of a formless being reaching or ship. Um it's just the the formless realms in terra Buddhism are seen as a kind of dead end. Like when the Buddha became enlightened, he was using his his divine eye, his debauch he's considering his his two meditation teachers before he was enlightened. And then he realized, I mean, they got into formless realms as a result of these high meditative attainments, these formless genres that they had mastered. And so he couldn't teach them. They were just stuck up there for who knows how many million eons.

So it's just considered in terra
Buddhist philosophy that a formless
being in a formless realm is in a a dead
end, a spiritual dead end. And he's
going to have to wait or she or
whatever. They probably don't have
gender up there. They're just going to
have to wait until they've exhausted
their karma there and get down back into
a realm where there are bodies and then
they can they'll have sense organs where
they can hear the dharma and then they
can learn from that and practice it and
so forth. But formless beings in just
according to standard orthodox terabato
Buddhism do not become enlightened. They

are just stuck there.

I mean it's it's extremely blissful you know it's the highest possible states or the of the 31 plains of existence the highest plains are the formless realms you know it's the arupala loca the the realm of

formlessness but um you you there's there's no way to make spiritual progress there because you have no sense organs and you can't practice or anything at least that's what they say I'm not I'm not saying this based on my own personal experience. So I'm just going to move on to Quisa to our second question which is do you think that

every being in existence has had the opportunity to become a sodapana and whether or not they chose that path was due to their karma which was ultimately random. I mean, the Arahant could not have chosen the right turns of the maze in each lifetime leading up to them becoming an Arya unless they had an inner guidance or it was just random.

Well, going with orthodox terra Buddhist philosophy, every being in existence at some point has probably had the opportunity to hear dharma and practice dharma. And most of them probably didn't or even some who did you know they didn't do it enough and you know they

got merit for that and then they went up into a higher realm or got better births and then you know burned up the merit that they had they used it up and then you know it's like according to Buddhist philosophy pretty much every being in existence has been all over the place all through the 31 planes of existence you know we we've done it all although personally I think There may be like new beings spawning in this universe, you know, um various ways of doing it. I've discussed it in previous Q&A. So, there could be beings that haven't been in existence for very long, assuming that time exists that just haven't really had that

opportunity

yet. So, let's see

here. Okay, I guess I answered that

question. That was relatively quick

answer which makes me feel a certain

insecurity like being the first person

to hand in a test in school. But still

I'm just going to move on to Quistor's

second or third question which is do you

think that psychic powers that seem to

defy physics are possible? Well, duh.

Yeah, obviously I do. That I mean

physics I mean the laws of physics can

be broken. I mean they're not really

laws. They're just you've got scientists

who observe phenomena and see like

repeating patterns which they then I mean in physics has often not as not they'll turn it into a mathematical formula apply the mathematical formula to it and call that like a law of physics when I mean really it's a stable pattern that keeps things stabilized keeps things regular but still um I do think that the mind is or the universe is just a projection of consciousness and mind over matter does exist. So yeah, I mean I mean I mean science can't even explain consciousness really. How is it that electrochemical reactions in this blob of gray meat is causing conscious experience? Science can't even explain that.

So, do I think that psychic powers that seem to defy physics are possible? Yeah, definitely. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Every now and then I think about talented actors or musicians whose work inspired me that died at relatively young ages. I often wonder what great music or films the world missed out on due to their untimely demise." A musician like John Lennon or an actor like River Phoenix comes to mind. What do you think happens to dormant untapped creative potential if the person dies before they realize it? Does it just evaporate? Does karma

or rebirth factor in at all in terms of
dormant untapped
creativity? See what do you think
happens to dormant untapped creative
potential if the person dies before they
release it? Does it just evaporate or
does karma rebirth factor in at all in
terms of dormant untapped creativity?
Well, I'm John Lennon wouldn't really
come to mind for me. I mean, he was
middle-aged by the time he was murdered
or assassinated. And usually creative
geniuses reach their peak like in their
20s. Not always, but I mean some of the
greatest philosophical works ever
written were written by young young men
in their

20s. But the person that I this reminds me of is John Keats. And probably a lot of you Philistines out there don't know who John Keats was, but he was a romantic poet. And I took English lit in college and you had like the romantic era and it was just sort of like a almost like a tradition that the romantic poets would die young. Lord Byron was in his 30s. I think maybe Shelly was like maybe in his around 30 when he died. Keats died of tuberculosis when he was in his mid20s. I'm pretty sure. And I remember my the professor who was teaching the class said that if Keats hadn't died so young he could have

been one of the giants of English literature. And this same professor said there were four giants of English literature. You had let's see Spencer, Shakespeare, Milton and Wdsworth. So Keats could have been could have been number five, but he died when he was like in his mid20s, but he had such talent and I mean he he just had nowhere to go but up at that point and then he just dies of tuberculosis because they didn't have a cure for it then. So what happens to to that talent? Well, I mean it's it's sort of like the cororat cat. I don't think it's it's going to be the same for everybody. I don't think there's just some cookbook

formula that applies to everybody that it may be that he just sort of used up. I mean, some of these people just kind of they just kind of flamed out with their creativity karma and used it up. Whereas others just had this momentum going. I would assume most of them have a kind of momentum going. So that um some bad karma causes you know just kind of cuts it short in this life then you know they'll take another birth where you know they just have this momentum going like like uh Mozart he apparently had this momentum going from birth. I mean he was allegedly composing like symphonies when he was like

seven. Probably they weren't all that great of symphonies. I mean, you don't you don't hear them on YouTube or anything, but still, I do think that there there are some people that they just have multilife momentum going. I remember reading um in like an old like 1950s edition of Readers Digest magazine about this guy who from the time he was a kid, he just had this this drive to tame animals. is he was just like a naturalb born lion tamer. You know, when he was a kid, he'd be catching raccoons and taming them or or whatever it was. And he wound up sort of stifling this desire and became like a some art teacher at a

little liberal arts college somewhere.

But still, I mean, he he had this he was still catching animals and taming them until some friend of his p sort of as like a a practical joke sent him a live cougar to for him to tame that. And he wound up taming it and then he sold it to some circus cuz tamed cougars, tamed cougars were relatively rare at the time. and he just just kept gravitating towards becoming a lion tamer until he became one of the main lion tamers for the Barnaman Bailey Circus. Ringling Brothers and Barnaman Bailey Circus. And so, you know, it could be some kind of music or art or math or whatever it is.

Some people they just build this momentum life after life until they're just born with this this amazing talent. So, it could be like that too. But it's, you know, it's sort sort of like the cororat cat. You know, it's it's not like it's going to be the same for everybody. So, let's see here. What do I think happens to dormant untapped creative potential? I mean, it stays in the karmic stream. I mean, some karma fades out over time and some doesn't. At least going with orthodox Buddhist philosophy. So I don't think it would just evaporate because you know you've got the the law

of conservation of energy and all that.
So it's momentum. It's still part of the
momentum. Um unless it's just after many
lives the opportunity doesn't arise. You
know, maybe you had some talented
musician who nevertheless lived a
totally debauched and depraved lifestyle
as some musicians do and then he winds
up, you know, getting life after life
of, you know, just bad lives as a result
of that. And then maybe some of his
musical talent karma will just fade out
by the time he finally gets an
opportunity to be a musician again. But
who
knows? And I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Fred. And Fred says, "Wh do you use the inshalah expression?" And I'm not exactly sure how I came how I started doing that. Um I think I was saying it even before I I went to Bali where there was a um an Indonesian monk there that I used to hang out with who would who would say it sometimes too. He he would say it better. He he'd say it with a more Arabic kind of intonation to to it. Um just I mean it literally means God willing and it just I just kind of like the sound of it inshalah. It's uh I don't know kind of a poetic sounding expression I think. And uh you know it's sort of like covering

up the god willing to some degree while still meaning the same thing because technically I'm not really a theist. I don't believe in a capital G god unless you interpret it in a very nebulous amorphous you know kind of upanishotic sort of

way. So but it just means you know maybe it's like there's one teaching of the the New Testament that I really appreciate. I mean there's more than one but one that I really took to heart is this idea you don't say you know I'm going to go to such and such town and make such and such amount of money and then I'm going to come back. It's like

God willing if I don't die first because you don't know for sure. Ajan Chai used to I mean he almost interpreted anata as just uncertainty. Not sure. So in a way it's just sort of a way of expressing my characteristic like skepticism and uncertainty about the future. I mean you don't know you can't be sure what's going to happen tomorrow. And so I just include that kind of statement as a way of just bearing that in mind. So I I'll help you fix your car next week, inshallah, which just means God willing.

And then if you wind up not helping him,
well, God didn't want you to help
him. So that's the main reason, I guess.
And so I'm just going to move on to
Fred's second question, which is does
the first sermon contain the four noble
truths? And yes, it does. Like the two
main things that the Buddha teaches in
the first sermon, the Dhamachaka Poetas
Suta, which is considered by tradition
to be his first formal suta or discourse
after his enlightenment to the five
aesthetics that used to to practice with
him is the the middle path and the four
noble
truths. So that's just like basic

Buddhism, you know, it's like intro to Buddhism right there.

Intro to

Dhamma. So, I mean, Fred, I mean, you can just read the suta and find out what it says if you want

to. So, I'm just gonna move on. Next question. This is from PSA. PSA says,

"How often do you shape how often do you shapeshift?"

And how often do I shape shift? Well, I mean, it's this body is my shape. Then, whenever I move that it's shifting, right? The shape is shifting. See, look at look at how I'm shapeshifting.

See? So, that happens pretty much all

the time. Even when I'm asleep, I'll still roll over. That kind of thing. So, my shape is is changing in subtle ways u pretty much all the time. You know, it's like when I'm breathing, you know, the abdomen is expanding and contracting and so forth. But with regard to like assuming the shape of a wolf or something. Yeah, that must happen when I'm like like sound asleep and and don't notice it cuz the only shape-shifting I'm aware of is just like moving the shape the position of my limbs and so forth. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question, which is, can you

double check if we are in fact recording? And I already checked like 4 minutes into this, but I might as well.

[__] No. [__] We're not really recording. So, just a minute. Okay, we're back. And I think we're recording now. Yeah, we're still recording.

Okay, so I'm just going to move on to PSA's third question, which is what's your favorite sutta of the Anguda Nikaya and why? Well, the very first sutta of the Angura Nikkaya is sort of a key sutta. It's like in the Nikayas, the first sutta of the Nikayas is generally edited to be first just because it was considered to be so important. And so

the first sutta the young guru nikaya is
a cardinal important kind of sutta where
the Buddha is saying you know monks I
know of no other form which takes over a
man's mind and abides there like the
form of a

woman and it's pretty much true. I mean,
even modern science has kind of
reinforced that or or what's the word
corroborated that like back in the I
think it was the 1970s they did a
psychological

study where they would sit somebody down
in front of a screen and then flash
pictures on the
screen, various pictures, all kinds of

pictures. And they would measure whether the person liked what they saw through pupil dilation because they might lie. You know, they might see a picture of the American flag and say that they like it when really they're just indifferent. That kind of thing. Or they might see a picture of a a naked woman and say they don't like it when really they do like it a lot. So just to get rid of the the any kind of dishonesty or you know sort of fudging fudging the answers, they just measured pupil dilation because when you see something you really like, your pupils dilate. So it turns out that there was only one kind of picture that

consistently caused men's pupils to dilate and that was pictures of naked women. But with regard to the women, there was actually two kinds of pictures that would cause women's pupils to dilate. That was pictures of naked men and pictures of babies. Cute, cuddly, adorable little babies. So that's I guess that's one of my favorite sutras. The only other sutra of the Angura and Nikkaya that really stands out in my mind is I don't even remember what what number in the Angura is is like arranged by numbers you know it starts out with ones then twos then threes up to 11 and I don't remember

what what the number was what group and
what numerical group this suta is in but
it's various ways that a monk has impure
celibacy that he's living the holy life
like

brahmacharia in an impure way. And some
of the examples are are kind of sad.

I've mentioned this before, but it's I
mean some are pretty obvious like a monk
who lets women massage his legs, that
kind of thing. Or another one is a man
who he he looks deeply into a woman's
eyes when he's talking to her. or um one
of them is just kind of sad. A man or a
monk who would like hide behind a wall
and listen to women who are talking or
laughing or singing or crying. You know,

a monk who will like hang out and watch people watch women bathing in a public like ford or river, something like that.

Um, it was in a way it kind of hit hit close to home with me because I could never really stop being

heterosexual. You know, I've always had a a fascination for beautiful women.

Even when I was a little kid, when I was four years old, I proposed marriage to my babysitter, Debbie Sando.

So, I guess those would be the two. I don't even remember the name of the one where it's it's got this list of various ways that amongst celibacy is is like

impure or contaminated or

something. So I'm just going to move on

this question which

is I

I don't know about this one. This is

from extremely rare bird who has who has

been doing some sort of leftist ranting

in the comments. um a few times over the

past several Q&A videos. And there's

actually a question mark in this. So,

it's not just going to be like a an

anthropological case history that I'm

going to comment upon because there

actually is a question mark in this. So,

Extremely Rare Bird says, "In your last

video, you said that Russia has been

arbitrarily chosen as the bad guy." I

think that might have been a video I did with my friend Brian talking about the Trump phenomenon. I don't recall it coming up in a Q&A, but it's possible. I don't I don't really recall. So, anyways, Extremely Red Bird, I'll start at the beginning. Says, "In your last video, you said that Russia has been arbitrarily chosen as the bad guy. Do you claim that Russia is merely acting out of self-defense?" question mark. And then he continues though, I think it's true that Russia had its reasons for attacking out of feeling threatened, being cornered by NATO, etc. But is it then justified to target

Ukraine's civilians, torture them, and steal their children? Apparently, over 700,000 Ukrainian children have been taken by

mid2023. This is not simply a nation acting out of self-defense. It is it is a nation trying to conquer another.

Further, the spin you make on the conflict is that the castrated glo castrated globalist environmentalists pretty much deserve it and that Russia is in the right here and that EU is just a bunch of feminized

idiots. That's a [__] up statement to make, which technically I didn't really make, but we can get to that. You apparently have this black and white

worldview where one side is completely in the right and the other is completely in the wrong. Oftentimes the one in the right has balls and brute force. You would think that a Buddhist at least would condemn the violence, but no, you instead offer praise for a brutal dictator and murderer.

I'm not saying that you owe any explanation to any of this to either side of the war, more that you should be more careful of what you speak. And then that he got some push back from some other people in the in the comments and he and his push back to the push back. He did make the the statement if one is

honest, one would say the same to Po Basa as he is spreading hate and propaganda. And with regard to spreading hate, I mentioned it in the comments that hate speech has come to mean nothing more than any speech that leftists hate. There doesn't have to be any hate at all motivating the speech. I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, you could say hate speech would be speech that is motivated by hatred. Or you could say maybe hate speech is speech that is calculated to inspire hatred. But neither one of those applies to what I've been saying as far as I can, as far as I know that I'm not trying to inspire hatred. And I'm not motivated by hatred

other than maybe like the really subtle kind of hatred that that can get into just anything in Buddhist ethics because it's so subtle that you know just the slightest attraction or aversion. The slightest attraction is greed. The slightest attraction is or aversion is hate. Some of that can get in. But that's like if you say, you know, I don't like vanilla, then again that it's it's like the same kind of aversion, you know, that's hate speech. If you say you don't like vanilla because your dislike of vanilla technically from the the subtle ethics of Buddhist philosophy is hate. But

that's really not what hate speech is or promulgating hate. It's just anything that leftists or globalists hate. Any speech that globalists or leftists hate is hate speech. That's promulgating hate. I hate what you said, therefore you are promulgating hate. That's essentially the attitude. A person could just make a completely objective statement of what appears to be empirical fact and still they'll be accused of hate speech. Like you say that there's difference differences in ethnicities with regard to certain measurable values or differences between the two biological sexes. And people will just say that's

hate speech because it it is in violation of their ideology where everyone is supposed to be the same when you're just making an like an objective observation and you don't even necessarily want it to be true. I mean, it would be nice if all the ethnicities had equal talents and skills that are just innate, equal abilities, equal cognitive abilities. It would be nice, but that's not what the empirical evidence indicates. And so if you go with the empirical evidence, you're accused of being a hatermonger. Even though I mean it's not like you want it to be that way. I can say everyone's

going to die. That doesn't mean that I want everyone to die. It's just a fact of

life. So let's

consider the case of California. Let's

say California secedes from the union

and then China starts making deals and

like treaties with California and starts

planning to like put missile bases in

California aimed at American cities.

Well, there's no way in hell America

would put up with that. There's no way

in hell. And that's essentially what

Russia is doing with regard to Ukraine

because I mean Ukraine was part of

Russia much longer than California has

been part of the United States. Ukraine

was part of like a Russian empire long before the Soviet Union came along. I mean Kievan Rus is considered to be like one of the the like the founding nuclei of Russian culture and that's that's in Ukraine. So it's I mean Just because you point this out doesn't mean that I think Putin is 100% good and Zelinski is 100% bad. I mean, that's just infantile. There's no way I'd say that. I mean, obviously Putin is a kind of gangster. But still in this conflict, if I had to choose which side I would want to win,

I'd go with
Russia, even if it means that they
conquer Ukraine, which they're probably
not going to
do. So, let's see. Is there anything I I
missed out here? I mean, this it's sort
of like the Cuban missile crisis. the
Russians were going to put missiles in
Cuba and it's like there's just no way
America was going to put up with that.
And ever since Gorbachev, Russian
leaders have been warning, you know, you
start like trying to get Ukraine into
NATO, you know, putting military bases
in Ukraine, that's going to be an act of
war. We are going to fight against that.
Just it just makes sense. America would

do exactly the same thing.

And when I says uh let's see in my last video I said that Russia has been arbitrarily chosen the bad guy.

Well in a way they pretty much have. I mean they could have they could have been our friends right now if there were not certain like mainly globalist agents in the establishment that's extends beyond the United States that wanted to keep the cold war going to some degree. And China obviously is a greater threat to American interests than Russia is. Russia may be a greater threat to globalist interests. And with regard to the EU

castrating itself, I mean, that's just pretty much of an like an objective fact at this

point. So might does make right from from a political point of view.

That's one reason why for many years I had no interest in politics when I was most of the time that I was a monk until I came back to America and just saw how fascinatingly interesting it was. Um yeah, it was I lost interest in politics as soon as I realized that what is right and good from a political point of view is not necessarily right and good from an ethical point of view. That just kicking ass sometimes is the right thing to do from a political point of view.

Let's see. There's some something else in here. Is it then justified to target Ukraine civilians? Well, I mean, if Russia the Russians really were targeting Ukraine civilians, then you wouldn't have these glaring headlines. You know, it's like Russians like destroy apartment complex, two people killed. That if Russia really was trying to kill civilians, there'd be a hell of a lot more dead civilians in Ukraine. And also there's no mention at all of like the Ukrainians like bombing these separatist enclaves like what Donbass and and the other one that that was going on before

the Russians invaded. I mean it goes both ways. There's atrocities going both ways. It's always the way it is to have people try and claim that you've got a war where one side is 100% good. They're they're wearing the white hats and the other side is 100% bad. They're wearing the black hats. It's just childish.

So, let's see. Is there anything that I I should mention

here? Something about stealing their children. I really don't know much about Russians stealing Ukrainian children. Uh could be that. I mean, there's a lot of refugees leaving Ukraine that are going into Russia. You don't hear about that

much

either. But with regard to evil

Russians, like torture, let's see, see, targeting Ukrainian civilians very incompetently apparently torturing them.

I'm sure there's torture going both ways. You know, there's always going to be atrocities. I mean, when you have a war, when you've got soldiers willing to kill people, then they have to have like this shell, you know, against their own conscience. I It's like they're going to I mean, they harden their heart so that they can do this stuff and then it goes any where there's certain people with maybe criminal elements, you know, the

reason why they're not in prison is because they joined the military instead. And, you know, cruel instincts come out. dehumanizing instincts come out and that goes both ways.

So yeah, I mean you can say war crimes, but I mean war itself is I mean you you've already gone beyond any kind of like ethical limits really from a Buddhist point of view. So let's see uh further when you spin the spin you make on the conflict is the castrated globalist environmentalists pretty much deserve it. Well we always get what we deserve. I mean just going with the

whole Buddhist point of view of karma. I mean it's the whole system is worked out so that we get what we deserve. The Russians are getting what they deserve. The Ukrainians are getting what they deserve. The castrated unics running the EU are getting what they deserve. And America is getting what it deserves. So, let's see. And the EU is just a bunch of feminized. Oh, they're not idiots. I never said they were idiots. They are definitely feminized, but they're not idiots. Let's see. You apparently have this black and

white worldview. No, I think that extremely rare bird has more of the black and white worldview than I do. I mean, it's all shades of gray. One side is completely in the right. No, that's just I mean what what is happening here is that extremely rare bird is triggered by me saying stuff that he doesn't like and so he has to twist it into something worse than I said in order to justify bitching about it

essentially. Let's see. You would think that as a Buddhist at least you would condemn the violence. What would be the point of that? I disapprove of people killing

each

other. It's still going to

happen. And from the from the political

point of view, sometimes killing people

is the right thing to

do. So, let's

see. And then at the end, the Pyobasa is

spreading hate and propaganda. Yeah.

Well, you viewers can decide for

yourself. And I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Dama River.

And Dama River says, "You mentioned in a

recent video that having a one night

stand was sexual misconduct. How

so?" Dama River, what is the woman? What

if the woman is single and the man is

single and they're both of legal age and they both consent? Would you please explain in more detail where is the sexual misconduct in this situation? I mean, what religion?

I mean, Buddhism, according to Buddhism, listening to music is immoral. According to Buddhism, putting salt and pepper on your food to make it taste better is immoral. According to Buddhism, being unhappy is

immoral. So, I mean, it's like Buddhism has the most finely tuned ethics of just about any spiritual system out there.

And then Donna River is thinking that you can just pick up some drunken hoe at a bar and screw her and forget about

her. And that's you're not like
wallowing in
sensuality. If listening to music is
immoral, how would [__] somebody not
be immoral?

So

gosh, questions like this is it's like

I'm somewhat taken

aback. See,

look. Taking a

back. Let's see. So, I mean, it's just

wallowing in

sensuality. It's something that a good

Buddhist isn't supposed to do. I mean,

if you're married, then, you know, it's

just it's the way of the village. You

know it's gadama and you know you have babies you know it's just is how human race propagates itself but uh just having sex for fun I mean it's going to be immoral even between a married a married couple but you got to draw the line somewhere. So married couples or just you know a couple that has formed a pair bond you know they're they're faithful to each other that's it's still immoral from from the point of view of extremely finely tuned ancient Indian ethics but it's still I mean it's got to be acceptable otherwise the human race is just going to die out and nobody will support the monks

anymore.

So you get married, you have kids or you just form a stable faithful pair bond and you have kids but uh like wallowing in sensuality just for the sake of wallowing in sensuality. I mean I don't know how anybody could interpret Buddhism in such a way that that would be that would be fine and dandy.

[Music]

Okay, I'm just going to move on to Dama River's second question here, which is, "What are your thoughts on Alex Jones?" And then in parenthesis, he's got Infowars. And I don't really

watch Alex Jones much. I mean, he puts out so many hours of content every day that I mean, you could just sit there watching Alex Jones all day and still just barely put a dent into it. seems to me. Um, I do think that Alex Jones would be fun to just hang out with in a backyard in a backyard. Just have a beer and like do a barbecue. You're barbecuing burgers on a grill. I I think he'd be a really an enjoyable person to hang out with. Just spend an afternoon having a beer, eating some burgers in the backyard, sitting in lawn chairs. But, uh, I think he's sincere. He's he's got some kind of extreme views on certain things, but I mean he's he's

somewhat of a prophet. I think a lot of these stuff that he's been predicting and and so on, it really does happen.

But I mean, I don't I'm not so enamored of Alex Jones that I

uh I just sit around watching Alex Jones videos, just very rarely. You know, I might watch five minutes of Alex Jones per week on Twitter. He's not on YouTube anymore, I don't think. Except for maybe like like an interview with Joe Rogan or something. So, yeah, I'm I'm glad that Alex Jones is hasn't been just like sued into

oblivion. So, I mean, he has he has the right to freedom of speech. I think Info

Wars is an appropriate name for for his channel. So yeah, my blessings are upon Alex

Jones. And I'm just going to move on to uh the next question which is from Gaz.

And Gaz says, "Suppose there are two worlds like our own. One is Maya and illusion. The other is real. How can we know which one we are in? How would a real material world differ from an illusory material world? Before renouncing the world, this is the issue to address absent facts. I can understand assuming it an illusion for the sake of overcoming suffering and for spiritual pursuit. But I also understand assuming it real for the sake of life,

love, and happiness. Perhaps both can be true. I regard many Buddhist teachings to be undeniable and beneficial, but recently the more pessimistic or nihilistic aspects have been bothering me. I wish that the lay life were encouraged

more. Oh man, there's there's more more question marks. I I got to divide this up. Okay. Well, I'll just continue because I didn't separate it until just now. Are there any lifeaffirming sutas that may help me with this? The seagallo wada and the kalama suta come to mind. I understand why there might not be many. I can accept this. If Buddhism is true,

it is good to abandon the world to blow out. Not quite so for Mahayana. But should Buddhism be an error? It is a very grim position indeed. Well, let's get to the top here. Suppose there are two worlds. One is Maya and illusion and the other is real. How can we know which one we're in? I mean, does it even matter? I mean, it's the same either way. Whether you realize you're in the matrix or not. I mean, like, if you realize you're in the matrix, that will definitely affect your attitude. But, I mean, the experiences that you're having would be the same pretty much. The kind of experiences you would have. And

furthermore, I don't think it's even possible, not even in theory, to have a real material world that like a multiplistic pluralistic world that any kind of pluralism is an artifact of perception. It requires perception, which is symbolism to create a pluralistic world. You you have it it requires for example relations same as different from better than worse than bigger than smaller than these are all relations that you use to differentiate different things in your field of perception and every single one of those is a mental state like I've said before like you can take have a

chemist who's going to separate a sample of of some physical substance into its component elements

And he's not going to get find any pure same as or pure different from in that sample of matter that's entirely psychological. It's entirely in the mind. But without that same as and different from it's it's as though there is nothing. You've got like this unthinkable void.

So I mean whether there is some kind of underlying physical reality is is almost irrelevant because we're not experiencing it. What we're experiencing is our own mental states, our own perceptions and that is some

sorrow. I don't really see how there's
any way to get around

that. So how can we know which one we
are in? I

mean, theoretically, I mean, if if the
illusion is like a shabby

illusion so that you can just drive to

the end of the world where it's just

like a blank screen or something, you

know, that you can somehow like glitch

out the the matrix, you know, find some

kind of way of glitching it out, find

some gap or something, then maybe then.

But if it's like a uh a really good

illusion, a competently designed matrix,

there's no way you could tell the

difference other than philosophically
when you realize that I mean it's all
mind-ade

anyway. So how would a real material
world differ from an illusory material
world? It wouldn't necessarily at all
because you don't experience material.

All you can experience is mind. mind
like experience is itself

mental. There's no way to prove the
existence of any material world. Like
the the philosopher Emanuel Kant

considered that to be the scandal of
philosophy that after thousands of years
philosophers still hadn't proved that
there is or is not

matter. I mean it's easier to

demonstrate that there couldn't be matter or at least you can get farther in that direction than proving that there is.

I mean, you can say, well, I mean, one person goes into a room, sees something there, he leaves. Another person goes into that same room and sees the same thing. But that's not proof that there's physical matter. It proves that there's a kind of order to what the two people are experiencing, but still, I mean, that's no proof at all. You can consider it kind of circumstantial evidence, I suppose.

So let's see here before renouncing the world is no it's how is that even an issue whether this material world is real or not how is that even an issue from the Buddhist point of view it's all a matter of the four noble truths I mean desire desire and attachment are the cause of all suffering so you renounce the world as a way of like minimizing like craving and attachment whether the world is real or not is irrelevant. Some schools of Buddhism say it is, but it's still sort of like in science different than we perceive it to be. Whereas other schools of Buddhism say it's all an illusion. But what difference does it

make? I mean, that's not the point.

Whether this world is real or not, it's still conducive to suffering. And anyone who doesn't want to suffer, anyone who wants to overcome

delusion will renounce this or at least not cling to

it. At least not be like insisting that things be this way instead of that way because I mean that's you're just setting yourself up against city hall at that point. You're never going to win.

So let's see. There's other question here. Are there any lifeaff affirming sutas that may help me with this? I

don't think so. I mean you can see suta
or a few other sutas that you know are
like talking about the duties of a lay
person for living a well-
regulated you know relatively virtuous
within the the scope of lay life kind of
existence. That's about as good as
you're going to get because I mean
ancient Indian
ethics were pretty much based on the
idea that this world this
samsara is conducive to suffering and
the best thing you can do is to find a
way out. At the very least you should
attenuate it make it more
subtle. And that's that's true whether
there is a physical universe or not.

Whether the physical universe really exists or not is almost totally irrelevant. It's just desire is the cause of all suffering regardless of whether there's a physical universe or not. And so you act accordingly.

So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Ruie.

So Ruie says, "I do tend to understand study as a kind of practice." This is this is sort of a followup from I think uh a question he asked in previous Q&A with regard to studying dharma. And so he says, "I do tend to

understand study as a kind of practice and vice versa. Speaking of which, what would be according to you the best poly term for the Greek notion of practice?"

And in terra Buddhism, there's sort of a trinity. You've got um let's see, parati, which is study. So it's like a Buddhist uh university in Burma is a parati jang. It's like a parati school. That's that's theory. Practice is pipati. So parati and pipati. So parat and patipat in Burmese. So I guess uh pipati would be the word for practice and then there's it's piedi or pari I forget the exact prefix which is the result of the first two which is like like breakthrough into gnosis para like

penetration of samsara and uh

illumination you know insight liberating

insight

So, let's

see. Best poly term for the Greek notion

of practice. I guess it would be potty

potty. And I don't even remember how to

spell it. Whether the T's have dots

under them and that kind of thing. So,

I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from

Yugao. And Yugoo says, "How would you

explain people spacing out?" And when I

saw this question, it reminded me of

something my father used to say. My

father was an amateur

hypnotist. And he would say that even when you're daydreaming, you know, you're spacing out. That's a mild trans state. It's like a mild hypnotic trance. So it's just built into the human species that we go into trans states. In fact, some people like Charlie Tart of UC Davis, who's probably retired by now, would say that uh I mean what most people are doing, what most people are living in is consensus trance. That's what he calls it, consensus trance. That we're not fully awake. We're in a kind of sleepwalking state. And then we're largely puppets to our karma, which is just force of habit. Most of what people do, the average

normie person, most of what they do in their life is just sort of like through force of habit and then they're not even fully there. They're not even fully conscious of what they're doing.

So, I guess that would how that's how I would explain. And I mean, I don't know all the fine details of how to explain how or why people are prone to different levels of trans states, but it seems to be like a universal phenomenon in our species.

Um, not just like decadent westerners who space out. I mean, people have just gone into daydreams, reveries, you know,

since prehistoric times. I'm sure that even just like our prehistoric ancestors staring into a campfire at night that I mean that was sort of a mild trend state too. I mean, that's one kind of nice thing about camping is just sitting there staring into a campfire. Like, when you go to places where campfires are prohibited, it really kind of detracts from the experience of just sitting in front of the campfire, just staring into the flames, spacing out essentially. In that case, it could be like a survival instinct. It would keep little kids from wandering away from the relatively safe fire and and getting eaten by hyenas or something.

So, I suppose I should just move on to
Yugoo's next

question. Yeah, I'm just still checking
to make sure that we're recording after
that fiasco a little while ago. Do you
think that a

man and man's and freedom for gamble and
small drug use are making people too
relaxed? I don't know what a manman's
are. A m a n d m- a d a man's.

See, do you think that a man mans and
freedom for gamble and small drug use
are making people too relaxed? Like we
do need some striction and rules, too
much bad karma being made. Um, I don't I
don't know. I think we're living in a

just an age of spiritual mediocrity and flabbiness that there are fewer there are probably fewer like serial killers, mass murderers now than there were in ancient times. But also there's fewer saints than in ancient or medieval times.

So yeah, I think we're just in a in an age of spiritual mediocrity, but it is it is sort of declining lately. I think just through just the collapse of so much of ethics of like morality. I mean morality itself is I mean especially for for the the left and the globalists morality has largely been replaced by unrefined feminine sentiment that what just a woman would naturally feel is has

become pretty much the same as what ethics has become. Whereas like sexuality or like sensual excess, which is a big thing in most religions, including Buddhism, as that's just no longer part of the equation anymore. You know, that's just beyond the scope of ethics at this point. Whereas promulgating hate, saying something that offends somebody else is supposedly immoral. Whereas from the Buddhist point of view, being offended is itself immoral.

So yeah, I do think we're in a decadent age and it's it's noticeably getting more decadent over the past few decades

largely because of internet where people can just vegetate in front of a computer screen. I mean, people were vegetating in front of a a TV screen, you know, since before I was born, but it's just becoming too immersive and you got too many options where you can you got the chances are increased of you finding an option that really just sucks you in and just turns you into a vegetable sitting in front of a TV screen or a a computer screen, I should say.

And then of course, you know, you've got just the decline of morals in general, which is largely as a result of like women's liberation, where one of the the main goals of secondwave feminism. I

mean, first wave feminism is just giving women the right to vote. Second wave liberation was giving women the right to be just as [—] as men. I mean, that's that's mainly it. I mean, they weren't really trying to get men to be more moral. They just wanted to be as immoral as men with regard to sexuality, especially and to some degree like drunkenness, that kind of stuff too. sensual excess, which as I say has pretty much just collapsed and any any like consideration of sensual excess, you know, too much drug use, too much sex, too much food, too much anything that is like a sensual pleasure. It has

just disappeared from the ethical
landscape, especially for the left, the
globalist

left, which is kind of an attempt to
some degree on the part of some of the
people responsible for this of ushering
in a brave new world like in the
Huxleyian

sense. So, I don't know if it's too much
bad karma made, it's just too much
mediocre karma being made.

Because there's a lot of bad karma. I
mean, more bad karma in the Buddhist
time. Public gruesome executions and
bandit murderous bandits in the in the
forests and all kinds of bad stuff. Just
sociopathic kings waging war against

other sociopathic kings and just laying waste to the to the villages and farms of the enemy and this kind of stuff.

That that's been going on for a long time. It's it's relatively less now. I mean, we're we're living in sort of a waning almost like a golden age where it's just a time of general peace. It's not just wars everywhere and just, you know, sociopathic dictators just doing as they please and just bands of bandits and like sort of mercenary soldiers just praying upon the populace. I mean, it's still happening in certain parts of the world, including Ukraine, I guess, but still it's way less than it

used to

be. So, I don't know what a man's a mans are, but uh freedom to gamble and small drug use. I mean, that's been going on forever since prehistoric times.

Gambling. I mean ancient times they were gambling mainly with dice back then and plus you know maybe just betting on this or that and uh small drug use. I mean alcohol has been around for a hell of a long

time. So yeah people are getting too relaxed. They're getting too lazy and flabby and which is causing less moral fiber. you know, they've got less determination,

less fewer principles, maybe at least

principles that are guiding their their
the way they live their
lives.

So, yeah, I think it's not so much a
man's and freedom to gamble and small
drug use that are making people too
relaxed. It's just techn technology is
making life so easy that people just I
mean it's doing what is difficult makes
you stronger and it's getting to the
point where people are just avoiding
anything

difficult and that's that's the way it
is kind of at work where I work too it's
like some people they just don't want to
get off the forklift to like secure

something to you know to to make sure that everything is going to be remain in place you know, they just drop it off and leave. It's like for them, the main point is just not [_] up so bad that they get

fired. And aside from that, they don't give a damn. And there's always been people like that, too. I mean, it's it might be that it's increasing. Just a a work ethic seems to be in decline to some degree.

uh just taking pride in or like having enough self-respect that you do a good job just because it reflects on your character that kind of thing but uh mainly I think

it's technology is helping to make us
weak and flabby because difficulty is
becoming less just difficulty in life in
general is becoming less just other than
just remembering all your [_]
passwords and then just what is
happening to morals
where feminization of western
civilization is just replacing genuine
morals with unrefined female sentiment.
I would say that those are more
important than uh gambling, small drug
use, and whatever a man mans
are. So I'm just going to move on to
Yugao's third
question which he says also isn't the

only like free will we have to follow or not to follow precepts precepts I assume making ours and loves of others less or lives of others less painful no it's not free will I mean free will as I keep saying I mean just from the logical point of view it is impossible It's a logical impossibility to have free will. That your decisions are going to have a cause or they're not going to have a cause. If they have a cause, they are determined by that cause and then are and are not free. If they happen without a cause, it happens at random. And neither one of those options or and also a combination of the two is not the same as free will.

Albert Einstein, who was no idiot by the way, used to say that he had no idea what people were talking about when they talked about free will. He was a Spinosan. He followed the philosophy of Baroo Spinosa. And Spinosza also his concept of God, even God didn't have free will because free will is just logically impossible. Of course, then there's also the empirical evidence that it's like your brain is already, let's see, how does it work? your brain has already started firing like a fraction of a second before you're even aware that you've made the decision. That kind of

thing.

So, see, isn't the only like free will we have to follow or not follow precepts? It's your reasons. It's your perceptions that decide whether you're going to follow some precept or not. And if you're going to change your attitude, you have to change your perceptions.

That's kind of like um in the philosophy of Schopenhauer he is saying that under the same circumstances a certain character will always respond in the same way. So that the only way to change how you respond to a certain circumstance is to change your perception to change your character to some

degree. When you see things differently
then things then your behavior with
regard to those things can change
significantly. But until that happens,
they probably
won't. So then again, Rahman Maharshi
used to say the only free will we have
is with regard to whether we are mindful
or not. And I will admit that after
reading the trickster in the paranormal
by George P. Hansen it he does kind of
open this weird door to some kind of
free will where he says that when
something becomes
self-referential then paradoxes happen
like the statement this statement is

false I mean it can't be true or false
it's paradoxical because it refers to
itself and so what happens when you have
a self-conscious
mind then the mind starts referring to
itself. And then paradoxes can happen.
And it might be that free will, even
though it's logically
impossible, might somehow come into
existence in some
way through this
self-reflection, which produces
paradoxical situations.
So, Orthodox Buddhism does reject free
will and it also rejects
um what how do you
determinism. So, free will is out,

determinism is out. And so, you've got this middle way that is never fully explained in the texts possibly because it's just like this paradox that cannot be fully explained.

So even so, I mean, if you're going to make a decision, you're going to make it for a reason or you're not going to make it for a reason. And if you make it for a reason, that reason is going to it's going to determine your decision. So I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from bodhicatta 969. And bodhicatta 969 says, "Ashin Ottoma was ordained in the mahasi seat tradition and tan jayadama in the pa

tradition, both from the mutodia forest monastery. What's the difference?" So I assume bodhicatta 969 is asking what's the difference between being ordained in the mahasi tradition or being ordained in the pa tradition? And there are differences between various traditions. There's lots of various meditation traditions in Burma, lots of various meditation traditions in Thailand also. Presumably lots in Sri Lanka too, but I don't know much about Sri Lanka. So, Mahasi tradition is essentially very similar to what the weasana tradition in the west is is doing. I mean the the weipasa tradition in the west the weasna movement was

inspired largely by
mahasi that some of the first big
weipasa teachers in the west were at
least temporarily disciples of either
mahasi or a disciple of mahasi who is
still in the same tradition and that's
wea it's mindfulness satipana whereas
the pa out tradition u on it it
emphasizes more samata more janna the
cultivation of janna that
piato used to say that you couldn't
possibly become enlightened by following
the mahasi tradition that you have to
get some kind of janna or at least you
have to get upachara samadei or access
concentration which is like one step

before janna before you can become
enlightened mahasi tradition says no
even just momentary concentration is
good enough so that would One difference
also the pa tradition has more emphasis
on vignia that pa or the mahasi some of
the mahasi teachers like upida would
talk uh a good game about vignia and the
necessary you know how how important it
is to follow the rules of monastic
discipline but as a general rule mahasi
centers you know like me monasteries and
meditation centers in the mahasi
tradition tend to be pretty lax with
regard to their monastic discipline
whereas pa out tends to be much
stricter. So the monks there tend to be

more serious as a general rule. Um, but all in all, if I had to choose between one or the other, I have to go with mahasi just because I don't accept a lot of stuff like like the pa tradition puts a lot of emphasis on abidama and the commentaries and the pisamida ma and and all this like doctrinal dogmatic stuff that I really can't take very seriously. Mahasi tradition depends less on that than pa does.

And Paul, some of the people there, possibly not all, some of the people there think that they're like cultivating Janna when really they're just hypnotizing themselves and seeing

what they think they ought to see. That can happen in just about any kind of tradition if you're not careful. But it seems to be easier to to have that happen in the pile method than in the mahasi tradition because the mahasi tradition is mindfulness. You know, you're still like observing various things and noting them. Whereas in the paho tradition um to some degree at least in some medit some kinds of meditation they teach more than one kind at both places really. Um, I mean, you can just kind of go into a more of a trans state and then you can hypnotize yourself without even realizing that you're hypnotizing yourself. Like I I

mentioned in a previous Q&A, I was at visiting PAL and talking to some young American um, monk there and he was talking about how he was meditating on the the various parts of the body and he was meditating on the bones of the person sitting in front of him in the meditation hall. He was seeing with the samati eye the skeletal structure of the person who was sitting in front of him and he was seeing it fairly clearly and then finally he opened eyes and he opened his eyes and realized that the person wasn't even there anymore. They just got up and walked away and he's still seeing with the samadei eye their

skeletal structure there. And when he pointed this out to his teacher, the teacher said, "Ah, it doesn't matter."

And really, I mean, it's just imagination. There was this other monk who had finished the course in pa both traditions have this course, you know, where you get to get to a certain point and you have completed the course.

And he was seeing his own his own body parts, visualizing them with the samadei eye, not just imagining them, mind you, but using a kind of clairvoyance to see his own body parts. And for some I for some reason he he saw that his own brain was about the size of an orange.

So it's it's a lot of it is kind of selfdeception. Although to some degree the the paw out method is more difficult to follow and so it requires more commitment and you really can get into very deep mental states using the pout method. There are some teachers of the pout method who have a reputation for having psychic powers which is much less likely in the mahasi tradition.

But I guess the main difference between mahasi and pa is mahasi is more weasna oriented and pa is more janna oriented. They say that you should get a firm grounding in samata before you start um like cultivating weasa insight

knowledge. And I'm just going to move on to bodhicatta 969's second question which is how did you manage to live as a monk without sex or masturbation for so long? How many monks do you think do it secretly without confessing? Because it's unimaginable for me to endure it. Well, it wasn't easy, especially when I was younger to live as a monk without like spanking the puppy at least. I mean, it's like your body um like a red-blooded young man is going to have like this I mean, it's almost it's beyond just instinct. It's like your body just needs to have an orgasm after a while. So that up until I was in my

early 40s, I just spontaneously have a wet dream about every two weeks, sometimes more often than that. It was just a pressure release thing. And there were times when I was just so horny I just wanted to just cry. But I did take my vows or I mean they're not really vows. I did take my obligation to follow the rules relatively seriously. And once a monk starts committing sades offenses and not confessing them, not doing the required penance, I mean that's it. It's just like it's just downhill from there that he's no longer a pure monk. His morality is no longer pure and never will be so

long as he doesn't do the penance. And the longer you go without confessing, having committed something like deliberately having an orgasm, then you've got to do penance not only for the the mandatory minimum of six days and six nights, but for every single day that you went without confessing it. So if you go a year or two then I mean it becomes almost impossible because it's really a pain in the neck to do this these penences especially making confession to all the monks at the monastery.

So there's actually two questions here.

So Bodhisata 969 is has transgressed the rule and uh his name is going on a

list under the

bees. So yeah, I mean it was just my

firm

determination not

to to just break a serious rule like

that

just without compunction. And there were

I did do the penance like three or four

times and because sometimes it's like

you're horny as hell and it may be that

your your ingazat your your lingam is

common. And so I mean it's it's all

throbbian and stuff and we don't need to

go into fine details. And it's like you

start kind of not spanking the puppy,

maybe petting it a little bit and it

just goes off. So sometimes after that would happen, it's like you're you're psychoanalyzing yourself. It's like, did I do that on purpose? I mean, did for like a split second was I like, okay, let's do it. You know, this kind of thing. And like you're you're having to like psychoanalyze yourself. And sometimes if you have doubts, then you just go ahead and do the penance anyway just to clear your doubts. And one of my teachers did that every year. Not so much for masturbation or deliberately having an orgasm. I think it was just from coming into physical contact with women and just he apparently enjoyed it. You know, he was kind of a macho kind of

a monk. So I don't think he was gay. And so I mean some monks, you know, they just brush up against a woman on a on a crowded bus or something and it's like h I got to do the penance. So just to make sure I mean some monks just do it like once a year just just to make sure. So with regard to how many monks do I think do it secretly without confessing? Probably. I mean the percentage would probably be in double digits. I hope it's not really a lot and I have no way of really knowing but still um I I've been told that most noviceses most seras in Burma actually do spank the puppy and probably just

going cold turkey after full ordination into being a biku. Um you know once you got the habit going that it's it's hard to break the habit. So it could be that there's lots of of monks. Most Burmese monks really don't try to follow the rules very

strictly. So yeah, but I really can't say how many, but I'm sure that it's it's above

10%. And I would dearly hope that it's less than 90%.

So I'm just going to move on to Bodhic Sata 969's third question or technically his fourth question but we need not need not dwell on that which is how do you handle right speech at work with regard

to chatter gossip etc without making
yourself to a complete outsider as we
all know gossip brings people
together I really don't talk much at
work I've kind of got a reputation for
just kind of keeping to myself just
doing my job and minding my own
business. There are a few talkative guys
who will, you know, come up and talk to
me and, you know, we're kind of friends
and I might joke around a little bit,
but as a general rule, uh, I really
don't talk much to other people other
than work related stuff, which is, uh,
probably best. There are some guys that
are just like talking all the time and,

um, they don't get nearly as much work done. And I do have somewhat of a commendable work ethic. At least I have a reputation for that. So I'm 61 years old and I'm like climbing around on freight inside of a van uh like a monkey like securing it with straps to the wall so it doesn't fall over and a lot of a lot of people just don't bother with it and the stuff just all goes sideways.

I've seen some of these freight vans after they've gone a couple hundred miles and then you open it up and try to unload it and it's just it's a some of sometimes it's just a mess. So, let's see here. How do I

handle right speech at work? Chatter and gossip. I mean, I do do make jokes and stuff sometimes.

So, I mean it telling a joke isn't just like some kind of unmitigated evil. Just passing just, you know, somebody

somebody asked me, "What are you going to do this weekend?" You know, that kind of stuff. It's

like, "Might as well answer." But I mean, you're just answering a question and and not really um like gossiping

very much. I mean, there there is a little bit of gossip. Sometimes it's interesting. You know, why is it that so and so stopped coming to work? It's oh,

he broke probation. He actually had an ankle monitor. That kind of thing.

That's kind of interesting. But, uh, I mean, I don't think we're going to be reborn as cockroaches or go to hell for, you know, making the the the occasional widicism or just, you know, just briefly passing the the time of day with somebody. So, I but I do keep it down to a relative minimum. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Xenithoid and we've been going for a little over two hours. I'm I'm not exactly sure how I think I think we're going to be less than three hours though. Maybe way less than three hours.

So anyway, Zenithoid says, "If given the opportunity, would you go on the Joe Rogan podcast?"

And I I highly doubt that I would ever be invited to go on the Joe Rogan podcast, but if I got invited and uh I could take the time off from work to go to Texas or wherever it is that the Joe Rogan pod podcast is is recorded. Yeah. I mean, it'd be interesting. Sure. I think Joe Rogan would be kind of interesting person to hang out with. Although I wouldn't get I wouldn't be smoking dope before or during the podcast cuz then I'd get like halfway through a sentence and like what was I

just talking about? What was what was
what were you just saying? That kind of
stuff. Cannabis just like obliterates my
short-term memory for some reason.

So, I'm just going to move on to
Xenithoid's second question, which is,
were you at all affected by the 2004
earthquake and tsunami of the Indian
Ocean? And I wasn't. I heard about it
after it happened, but my brother was.
My brother just happened to be in
Thailand on the beach at Phuket, which
is like I mean it got hit by the by the
tsunami, but it just turned out that
there was an island right off the coast
that that like took most absorbed most
of the impact of the tsunami. And so my

brother was fine. My mother didn't know if he was alive or dead for several days after the tsunami hit. She knew he was in Thailand in like southern Thailand on the beach.

But he was fine and I he might be in Thailand right now. He spends he works in Alaska mostly and then takes most of his time off in Thailand.

So I guess I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's third question which is who was the smartest or most interesting Burmese person you met as a monk other than Schway in Seattle? Well, the person

that I first comes to mind is a person I used to affectionately refer to as crusty old uimala, who was the abbott of a monastery in uh central like upper Burma. And he had the most western attitude of any Burmese person I ever met probably, including Burmese people who had lived in America for decades. And he was half Chinese. He was like on both sides of his both sides of his family. Both of his parents were half Chinese, half Burmese. And I mean, he he could fix anything. He said he could fix anything except for a helicopter. He didn't know how to fix helicopters, but just about anything else. I mean, he just knew how

to do everything. And he was the monk I was referring to possibly in the previous Q&A or a recent Q&A. He he I mean, he had no use for the human race. He did not like people. And most monks couldn't live in his monastery for very long because he'd just start disliking them and driving them out. But he liked me for some reason and he liked animals. And so he had this one dog I he called Uncle Wiggly who started getting like colon cancer or something. And uima who loved animals just every day he's got his finger up that dog's butt helping it to poop just because it couldn't it was it was like constipated

if ua didn't help

him. And I mean he's he had some kind of weird ideas cuz he'd read Burmese books about like you know World War II Nazi Germany and stuff and get these strange ideas. He had this idea that Hitler was possessed by some sort of demonic entity and uh that kind of thing. I mean, maybe he was for all I know, but um but he was very intelligent and just very skillful at a lot of different things, but he was just sort of a crusty, disagreeable Schopenhau type.

And he had lots of dosa. And there was a French monk who stayed there for a while and Uima just couldn't stand him. But he couldn't really kick him out because the

French monk was senior to him. So I mean sometimes when you talk to him I mean you could just see the the the cheek muscles all clenched. He'd be talking through his clenched teeth. And I realized that dosa in pi which usually is translated as anger. I mean, it's very different from hate because I never saw him yelling, you know, he he wasn't that kind of dosa, but I mean, he definitely had some hate in him, mainly towards other humans. And like I say, for some reason, he liked me, but there was one other thing I was going to mention about him, and now I

just it just kind of flashed into my mind, and I was thinking, "Oh, yeah, I should mention that, too." And then and then I didn't. So it it just faded back out

again. He was really good at chess. He was like a a chess master. He bragged a lot about how good he was at fixing stuff and

and like the the chess competitions he won as a young man before he became a monk and all

that. Oh, what

else? There's there's a lot of stuff I could say about I mean he he had a he was very possessive with regard to stuff in general and with regard to this

monastery that he was the abbot of and he would notice like there was a beehive would appear in a tree just I mean it was like 40 acres of land this monastery was and I mean he would know where all the beehives were you know he would just he didn't trust humans but like with with regard to nature he was just like in tune moon. Kind of a Schopenhau type, but uh I might as well just move on to the next

question. I think he's still a monk now. He he was always he was continually talking about wanting to drop out, but uh I think he's still still in robes in Burma. So, I'm just going to move on to

the next question. This is from Philies who says, "You often refer to yourself as a heretic Buddhist, but in what ways are you a totally conventional Buddhist or in what matters do you adhere to terra orthodoxy?" Well, when I was a monk, I was very orthodox and strict with regard to vignia, just following the rules of monastic discipline. And it didn't really matter to me whether the Buddha really taught him or not. It's like when I signed up, you know, part of the deal was I follow these rules. So regardless of whether these rules were laid down by God Buddha himself or not, I'm going to follow these rules. Um, with regard to philosophy,

the atakawaga I I'm taken to heart. Like a lot of the teachings, most of the teachings of the ataka waga um stuff like the four noble truths especially the first three are fairly self-evident. So I can accept that no self I definitely uh accept that more than a great many Buddhists do especially western Buddhists. um you know the three marks of existence, karma as a mental state, that kind of stuff and like a lot of the basics. So there's there's some things that I don't really accept like like a lot of the devotionalistic stuff where the Buddha is just bragging about

how wonderful he is and how people should worship him. The 12 links of dependent core rising I don't have much use for the entire Abidama pitica. I mean, I think we'd be better off if it just didn't exist. So, that definitely makes me a heretic. I mean, when you are rejecting an entire pitica of the typica, then I mean, you're you're a heretic, which makes most Western monks heretics because most Western monks really don't have much use for Abidama. like 70% maybe threearters of western monks just do not consider Abid Dhama to be legitimate genuine teachings of the Buddha.

So with regard to a lot of it, yeah, I can accept a lot of just the basics of Buddhist philosophy and as a monk, I followed the rules strictly for up until the very end up until my last trip to America and which resulted in me becoming a lay person living here in South Carolina.

So I guess I mean I could go into greater detail but I got lots of questions to answer and I've already answered lots of questions. So, let's just move on to Phil Lee's second question, which is, is there any cool story starring yourself you've never told us before? And I'm I'm sure there

are cool stories starring myself. Like,
I was thinking, you know, what have I
not what stories have I not told
already? And there's maybe one story
that I didn't I haven't told, at least
not in

years, that was before I was a monk. It
used to be before I was among part of my
spiritual practice is hiking alone into
a wilderness area and as often as not
taking LSD just alone out in this
completely wild area. So there was this
one time as a as a lay person I went out
into the Patan wilderness area which was
considered the the wildest part of
Washington state. the state of
Washington. It was the only place in the

state of Washington that had grizzly bears, wolves, caribou, moose, that kind of thing. You know, I would carry fireworks with me, like a a whistling Pete, the ones that scream and shoot sparks, just in case I came across a grizzly bear. I figured that'd be about my best chance is just start shooting screaming sparks at it.

So

anyways, I was camping and I would just wouldn't use a tent. I would just sleep under the open sky in a sleeping bag.

And one

night or it was on this trip, I forgot to bring a stocking cap. Like I guess

they're called a beanie now, like an elastic woven kind of cloth cap like Tim Pool wears all the time because he's bald and is embarrassed about it apparently. So, I forgot to bring my my stocking cap. And so, the mice were getting in my hair. And I mean, I keep waking up, you know, I keep getting the mice out of my hair. And finally, I'm thinking, I'm just going to have to let mice crawl in my hair tonight if I'm going to get any sleep. So, I just make this determination. I'm just going to let them crawl in my hair. [__] it. I'm I got to get some sleep tonight. And then sure enough, within just a few

minutes, I hear like little rustling noises near my head. And then all of a sudden, my entire sleeping bag just starts getting jerked sideways like this. And so I turn and look and I'm looking right into the face of a porcupine about the size of a cocker spaniel dog. And I mean, apparently the I mean the the porcupine had like bitten into my sleeping bag and was yanking on it. And so I start yelling at it to go away. And the porcupine, I mean, it's like the honey badger. It don't give a [__] cuz I mean, it's it's pretty much safe from anything. There's a few animals that have learned how to

kill porcupines. But apparently, it didn't consider me to be one of them. And so me yelling at it to go away and leave me alone had no effect whatsoever. So then I started reaching around and found some like pine cones on the on the ground and just started throwing pine cones at it and having something actually hit it was something it wasn't used to at all. It just took off running and then finally I was able to get some sleep with mice in my hair. Speaking of mice, there was a different time I went um on a backpacking trip to Anderson Glacier in Olympic National Park with my buddy Steve

and we were warned about this camping site. We were going to camp in this campsite and this hiker told us, "You got to be careful about the mice are going to rape your pack if you stay there." And I had one candy bar left. It was It was our We were hiking out. We had one last day. I had one candy bar left. It was a Snickers bar. And so just to make sure to protect it from the mice. I put it in my shirt pocket. And I was inside the sleeping bag with this Snickers bar inside my shirt pocket, you know, in the sleeping bag. The next morning, I get up, I pull out my Snickers bar, and a mouse had been

chewing on this Snickers bar and it
chewed from underneath. It got inside my
shirt and chewed up through the shirt
into the pocket to get to that Snickers
bar. So, I was sleep I was completely
oblivious to the fact that there was
this mouse inside my shirt ganking my
[__] Snickers

bar. But I suppose I could think of more
stories, cool stories starring myself.

But uh I think I'm just going to move on
to Phil Lee's third question which was
which is as

follows. How would you rate Islam among
the world religions from an esoteric
point of view? And do you think Islam
gets an overly bad rep or is it not bad

enough? So that's kind of two questions too, isn't it? I think somebody else is going on a list under the P's.

So how would I rate Islam among the world religions from an esoteric point of view? I mean the only esoteric Islam I'm aware of is

Sufism and I have read that Muhammad probably would have denounced

Sufism. Um Islam itself is not particularly esoteric religion. You know it's pretty

secular. So how would I rate Islam among the world religions? I mean it's I would consider like just going with the the

the scriptures the Quran I might put it slightly above the Old Testament. If I had to rank all the world's scriptures I have read

um in in in order of wisdom then the Quran and the Old Testament would both be in the bottom half. you know, they'd be less than 50% towards the top and maybe the Quran would be just like one notch above the Old Testament. There is there is some wisdom in the Quran. So, it's it's not just total BS or any any such

thing. But, uh I mean

it's I don't cons I mean something like the Bavad Gita would just blow the Quran and the Old Testament out of the water

with regard to just wisdom.

So and then Sufism I I mean I really am not well acquainted with Sufism but it's my understanding that Sufism gets most of its esoteric wisdom from Buddhism and Hinduism like uh you know it arose in like south souththeastern Persia or some such where there was contact with Buddhist and Hindu philosophy. But with regard to the second part of this question, do you think Islam gets an overly bad rep or is it not bad enough? I'd say probably it's not bad enough because I mean literally the founder of Islam and this is from the the Muslim sources themselves. This

isn't just made up from outside of Islam. The Muslims themselves have to admit to this that Muhammad was a warlord, a bandit who was like robbing and killing people. Had people sold into slavery, women and children sold into slavery after their husbands were beheaded. He was a rapist. He notoriously was raping this one woman who was freshly a widow with her husband lying dead on the ground just matter of feet away outside the tent. I mean he was a warlord pretty much like Moses was. I mean he was definitely came closer to Moses also a warlord who was like demanding the genocide essentially genocide of the

Canaanites. So he came closer to Moses than he did to Jesus or the Buddha.

So let's see here. So I think do think that

Islam I mean is does not get a bad enough reputation considering the moral character of the founder of the religion and he's considered to be like the the ideal man. You know he's the role model of

Muslims. Muslim men want to be like Muhammad.

So, I mean, getting married to a 9-year-old girl, killing

people. So, yeah, I mean, Islam and

Judaism, I mean, they had a the culture they arose in had different ideas about what spirituality was about. I mean, it wasn't really spiritual. It was just like religious in a kind of emotional like cultural kind of a sense. But I mean, I'm sure that there have been very wise Muslims, very wise Jews that to some degree they were very wise in spite of the religion that they were born into.

Anyways, enough of this. I'm just going to move on to the next question and we are getting fairly close to the bottom here. The next question is from Enigma. It's enigma then a capital L and

then a small lowercase pli all one word.

Enigma

plea. An enigma please says, "Is the material body the only body a normal human has with the mind being without form or does one have

multiple on different planes?" Well, all form is

perceptual. As I was already discussing, you can't have form without relations like same as and different from. I mean, if you don't have any different from, there's not going to be any outline.

There's not going to be any figuring ground.

So all form is ultimately

perceptual. So I mean you might as well forget the material body. I mean whether the material body exists or not as I was saying earlier is is pretty much irrelevant.

So is the material body the only body a normal human has? Well I mean when you're dreaming at night you've got a body sort of. It's a mind-made body. But then again to at some level this body, this meat puppet is also a mind-made body.

And then you got the Hindus who say that there is a kind of astral body that I'm not sure if that would be the same as the dream body. But then you got sort of like this astral body that you're kind

of in in between lives, you know, like when you're up in, you know, you're going up towards the light and you're having the the near-death experience except it's really just a death experience because you're really dead this time. And you know, you're you're like up in heaven with still kind of a body, you know, like in the Matrix, you've got residual self-image, kind of that kind of a body. Um, yeah. I mean, it depends on what you really mean by a body. I mean, once you get to the idea that I mean, it's not there is no material body anyway. It's all mind-made. Then I guess you become more

open to the idea of different kinds of
bodies like the dream body or the astral
body and that kind of thing. And uh I
mean it all depends on on how you look
at it I

suppose

golly is the material body the only body
a normal human

has well I mean there could be I mean
what do you even mean by body though?

That's that's sort of like the the
sticking point here because I mean there
could be like a greater form that
encompasses different

lifetimes that I mean it's still kind of
some Saric entity and not ultimately
real but still I mean if you consider

this person to be relatively real then there could be like a higher level of like a four-dimensional level that encompasses various lifetimes all into one sort of super entity that might count as a body even though at the 3D level it's more than one body because it's more than one lifetime. So it all depends on how you're going to interpret body. And then you got the dream body. I mean some people would say in your dreams that's still a kind of material world. It's just a more ethereal subtle or cruddier kind of world than this kind of waking reality that we're living in. So it's it would depend a lot on how you

define terms like how you define the word

body and then it becomes even trickier if you don't accept the ultimate reality of a material universe. So that even the meat puppet is just a kind of mental image and you've got other kinds of mental images of a body like when you're dreaming and so forth. So, uh, I think it all depends on how you look at it, which is possibly the best answer to all questions is it all depends on how you look at it. But if I answered that to every single question, then people would stop watching these videos, I guess. So, I'll just move on to Enigma, please. Second question here. How to

differentiate between a demonic possession and one's own self and how to get rid of it according to different schools. Well, that's kind of an interesting question in that like if you read the New Testament of the Bible, it's like everyone in their sister was possessed by some kind of spirit that that's apparently how they explained a lot of things like epilepsy or certain mental illnesses was through demonic possession. And it is possible that that you can look at the same case of like some kind of insanity as like just sort of a brain malfunction or as some sort of spirit possession. And it

could be that the brain malfunction kind of leaves this gap so spirit could get in so that they're both true. Or it could just be that there's just two different ways of interpreting the same phenomenon.

So how to differentiate between demonic possession and one one's own self how to get rid of I'm not sure that there is just this ironclad way of telling the difference because it could be that you can interpret the same thing according to two two different paradigms and one will be that it's some sort of organic malfunction and the other is that it's some sort of spirit possession like I'm reminded of Jane Roberts who was

channeling the Seth material back in the 70s. And she herself wasn't quite sure if there really was this being being channeled through her or if it was just sort of a figment of her subconscious imagination. And it could be both. It could be that both were true. And I mean, ultimately, it didn't really matter all that much, I guess, especially if you had no use for the Seth material. But uh yeah, it would take some kind of expert, some sort of psychic expert, maybe like a professional like exorcist or something who would then like look over the person

and be able to decide. But in Buddhism, I mean, spirit possession is a thing like there is this weird rule uh in the rules of monastic discipline that a monk is not allowed to eat raw meat or drink raw blood unless he is possessed by a spirit.

But how do you know for sure? That's that's

tricky. I think it would take some sort of expert to like diagnose the the the individual and possibly that two different experts might disagree. They might have different diagnosis. And it's it's largely just a matter of what kind of paradigm you're going with, how you're going to

interpret the case in a lot of cases. But how to get rid of demonic possession? Well, I mean some like in ancient India where when they made that rule about uh the eating raw meat and drinking raw blood that some spirits do crave raw meat and blood and and this is believed in Burma to this day.

Necromancers will set out raw meat and raw blood to get spirits to come to feed on it. And then they start becoming reliant on the necromancer and then he can start commanding them. You want the raw meat next time you're going to have to do what I say. But uh with regard to yeah I mean

that's that's one way of getting rid of the spirit is just uh eating the raw meat drinking the raw blood till it's satisfied and then it lets go of you and goes away. Although I mean the meta suta is considered to be the standard uh approach to like appeasing troublemaking spirits.

There was one guy um he might have been autistic when I was living in a cave in Burma. Uh he came to visit me with his parents and he was sort of definitely had some sort of mental abnormality going and he was asking me you know what should I do that the spirits keep bothering me and uh I told him I mean reciting the meta suta is probably about

the best thing you could you could do.

So he he was doing that.

Um but uh I mean if you can find like a
real exorcist and they have them in

Burma too like a a

polia they they do a lot of this kind a

polansia literally means like a master

of the upper path which is sort of a

dharmic magician a dharmic wizard who

uses the power of dharma to do good

magic unlike you know like a an

outlandia which is the lower path you

know like black magic

So, you find some sort of somebody who's

trained at uh exercising spirits and,

you know, they may have uh much better

luck than you know, just watching a do-it-yourself video on YouTube on how to exercise a spirit out of yourself. So I mean if if you have like a person with enough spiritual clout, you know, enough spiritual force, you know, they could, you know, sort of like Jesus, you know, they just command the spirit to be gone and the spirit will leave him alone. which kind of reminds me of the the Indonesian monk that I think I've already mentioned once um in this video who he had he had this uh attendant in Indonesia who could see spirits and one reason why he supported this monk is because he could see that the spirits just leave this monk alone that you know

that most people have spirits kind of hovering around them trying to influence them because you know they can't really do anything at this level of reality unless they can influence some being at this level of reality, you know, to do it for them because they don't have a body at this level of reality. And he just respected the fact that the the the the spirits just left this monk alone. And so, um, from a a Buddhist point of view, one of the best ways to avoid spirit possession and so forth is cultivate a healthy mind. You know, meditate and live a moral life. keep your mind clear, well balanced, have a

healthy mind, and there won't be any like gaps and cracks in your mind that the spirits can, you know, they can infiltrate. So, I guess I answered that one well enough, about as well as I'm able. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Raphael. And Raphael says, "Bit of a broad question, but what are your best arguments against the philosophy of Nichzche?" And for starters, I should say that I'm no authority on the philosophy of Nze. I read his uh antichrist, the antichrist, but um the intro written by Mein was much more interesting to me. I got more out of the intro than than out of the the

Nichzsche's uh book or essay itself. I tried to read thus speak Zarathustra and I got about as far as the tightrope walker who falls off the tight rope and breaks his leg and I mean Nietzsche's style of writing really does not resonate well with me. his whole way of thinking was kind of this surreal kind of thinking apparently that I mean it just doesn't work with me very well. So most of what I know about the philosophy of Nietzsche has been like written about the philosophy of Nietzsche. Like I've read um Bertrand Russell's history of western philosophy and he's got the chapter on NZ. So uh I know that much. Um, but the

whole will to power, you know, the
Superman who rises above good and evil,
sort of like Rascal Nikov was trying to
do in Crime and Punishment, sort of like
Marlon Brando or Colonel Curts was
trying to do in Apocalypse Now, you
know, where you just just leave behind
this whole worldly distinction of good
and evil and just do what is expedient.
And in Crime and Punishment and in
Apocalypse Now, it didn't work. that you
cannot just leave behind
morality. Um and with regard to nichza,
yeah, I think just being a master of
samsara rather than like um transcending
samsara is not really a good choice.
it's not really conducive to happiness

that I don't think he really understood
like how suffering is caused you know
it's

desire that I don't think he could
really appreciate that I think uh
Schopenhau who Nze claimed that he was
sort of like the the successor of
Schopenhau you know he's kind of started
with Schopenhau and then just you know
took it in a completely different
direction than Schopenhauer was
intending but neither Nisho nor
Schopenhau struck me as particularly
happy

people. So yeah, I think that Nisha was
either ignorant of or just rejected the

whole Buddhist idea

of just dharma in general. I mean he kind of despised it. He was he who would consider it to be like slave morality, you know, meekness and humbleness and passivity. That's just that's slave morality. Whereas, you know, his idea of the Superman was, you know, sort of like the the ancient man of action, you know, Hercules or somebody.

So my best arguments against Nietzsche, I think he just did not understand what results in happiness and wisdom and what is sort of does the opposite. But as I say, I'm no authority

on Niche. I really I think he was mistaken with regard to eternal recurrence too, which I mentioned in the previous Q&A, I'm pretty sure. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we're down to the the last questioner. And the last questioner has the unique honor of being stellar supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb and also known as various various by various other names that we need not get into. So, Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. says, "What are your thoughts on the myth of Zarathustra and Persian mythology more broadly?" And I'm relatively ignorant with regard to

Persian uh

culture, Persian culture, Persian mythology. I know almost nothing about it. Zara, I have read like when I was a college student, I read some of the Zenvesta, which is like the main scripture of the uh what do we call them? Uh the Zoroastrians.

And it really didn't strike me as all that profound. I mean, could be that I was just a college student reading some early pioneering translation from Max Mueller's Sacred Books of the East series. Um, let's see. The myth Zarathustra, I mean, I think he was like Brian. He I think he arose in like the city of Baktra in what is now

northwestern Afghanistan.

Um, and it's some people say that his religion is the oldest existing religion. It's relatively old. Um, and the Persians were Zoroastrians up until they were forcibly converted to Islam. But, um, the whole idea of like the good God and the evil God in this eternal war, I really don't have much use for that. I'm I'm certainly not a dualist, but uh it is it is kind of um I don't know if sad is the right word, but I mean Persia was like a world power. It was really a dominant culture, you know, it was like the archenemy of

of of Rome for a long time, archeneemy
of the Greeks and then the archeneemy of
of the Roman Empire for a long time.

they were a great great

civilization and it's like people just

don't know very much about their

civilization partly because you know

like when the Muslims come in they just

sort of like homogenize everything has

to be in accordance with Islam and uh so

all the pre-Islamic stuff is like

suppressed to some

degree but yeah Zor like Zoroastrianism

zorustra I really do not know that much

about him. It's similar to

uh to Sanskrit. I mean the the the

language that the Zenvesta is composed

in is very similar to to
Sanskrit. And uh it's my understanding
that for some reason the Persians had
like you the the Indo-Uropeans have this
myth of the gods and the titans who had
this war and the gods won and they like
imprisoned the titans at the foot of
this mountain and they had that in in G.
The ancient Greeks believed that also
the ancient Indians believe that. But
for some reason, the Persians, I mean,
it could be that I'm just not
understanding this, but the Assuras,
like in in like in Indian, the Titans
so-called were called the Assuras. Um,
the the good god of Zoroastriam is

Ahura Mazda, which is Ahura is the like the Persian way of pronouncing Assura.

That the S in Sanskrit is at least sometimes replaced by H. like soma. The soma sacrifice in India was it was pronounced homa by the Persians.

So I I I don't understand fully why it is that the Persians kind of went against pretty much everybody else and had the Dava be the bad guys and the Assuras were the ones who wound up winning the primordial war between the gods and the titans. It could be I'm just not understanding it at all.

So, I think I should uh finish off my

designated

beverage, my designated primary beverage or DPB, and open up the emergency backup beverage, even though I've only got two last questions to answer.

So, see, Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., says, "Would you ever consider appearing on the New Thinking Allowed interview series to discuss the esoteric and supernatural features of archaic Buddhism?" Well, I'd be willing to appear on the Joe Rogan program, too, like I already specified, like I already indicated. Um, I don't know if I've ever seen the new Thinking Aloud interview series, but as a general rule, if

somebody asked me to be on some show,
I'm I'm usually willing to go for it
that I have been asked before,
especially when I was still a monk to
appear, you know, in an interview on
this or that YouTube channel, and I I
have gone for it. But, uh, yeah, I don't
see why not.

uh esoteric and supernatural features of
archaic Buddhism. Um I'm not so sure
that there are very many esoteric or
supernatural features of archaic
Buddhism, but

uh I could I could talk about how there
aren't any or not very many.

Anyhow, so I'm just going to move on to
Stellar Supreme's third and last

question and the last question of this show and we might just squeak under three hours or maybe a squeak over three hours. And he says, "Do you feel that your nervous system was sharpened by your intensive training while ordained as a monk?"

And it's hard to say exactly. Uh, I had relatively sharp mind before I became a monk. So, I mean, a lot of the sharpness I assume I already had at the time that I became a monk. I mean, I'm not ex exactly sure what a sharpened nervous system really means, unless it's just

more like

uh more

definition like more not just more

clarity but like more incisive or

powerful thought or some such. And it is

possible just like the the meditation

and also just avoiding so many

distractions and also like intoxicants

and so forth that kind of dull the mind

in in lay people that I mean it didn't

happen with me. I was just like camping

for for 20some years in Burma, just you

know, living out in the woods and, you

know, breathing fresh air and drinking

creek water or well water and just

eating essentially or fresh organic

food, maybe some salted fish thrown

in. And uh so I mean it could be just like clean living kind of helped my mind remain kind of clear and sharp and you know it was relatively clear and sharp beforehand which helped me to become a monk in the first place. But also I do think that just mindfulness and meditation did cause like a greater sensitivity a greater awareness of stuff going on in dark corners in my mind or you know subliminal kind of stuff. I would be more aware of that than the average guy, I suppose, possibly as a result of mindfulness practice and like the cultivation of relatively deep meditative states, but it's really hard

to say in kind of a logical fallacy to say, you know, if if I had done things differently, it would be different. So, I mean, you can't really know for sure to what extent the sharpness of my nervous system was caused by my being a monk or whether it would have been pretty much that way regardless. Although, I do think that just the clean living, you know, the simplicity of life and just practicing mindfulness and and like meditation did help. But to what extent it helped, I'm I'm not exactly sure. But it certainly didn't have a bad effect on it. And so I guess that's it. I guess I guess I'm done at 2 hours and 59

minutes. So by golly and like I almost never say at the beginning and all you should say at the beginning if you got any questions about something you think that I could answer like early Buddhism terravada Buddhism Buddhism in general this Indian

spirituality philosophy western philosophy

um western culture I've got a fairly good understanding western culture meditation

monasticism Burma that kind of stuff. If you think I can answer it, then um think maybe I can answer it anyway, then go ahead and ask. And please, no more than

three questions. No more than three
question

marks, please, per

episode. And hit the like button if you

like this. I assume if you made it this

far, you at least kind of liked it. I

mean, if you just like hate watching it,

you can do that, too. you can hit the

like button just cuz you liked hate

watching it regardless of any hate I

might accidentally be

promulgating. And uh also subscribe if

you haven't done so already and uh be

happy.

okay

then hello and welcome to question and
answer number

138 I am your host poo basa and those
fishes and snails back there are your
co-hosts and we've got uh kind of a
moderately large number of questions so
we might be going about three hours on
this one I don't know why I bother to
say this cuz you guys can just look down
at the time bar underneath and see how
long it's going to last I do not have
that luxury that's one advantage you
have over

me and so I'm just going to grasp my
beverage remove the little paper

umbrella signifying my sophistication
and

style throw it onto the table take a
sip and commence to answer a question
questions and the first question is from
Raphael and Raphael says would you say
that walking barefoot has a positive
effect since you have experienced it for
a long time and it is true that when I
was a monk uh there were times when I
was in Burma especially when I would
wear shoes maybe twice a year if it
became necessary to wear shoes because
of like thorns on the ground or
something I might have to wear shoes but
usually I went Barefoot and there's
definitely a positive effect of going

Barefoot the main positive effect especially for a practicing Buddhist or someone who's practicing in any kind of spiritual tradition is that it requires you to be mindful you've got to be careful about how you walk and where you walk you always have to be aware of where you're going to be stepping because especially like in tropical Asia you can step not only on thorns and just sharp pointy rocks and so forth you can step on snakes or scorpions or centipedes or even ant highways so going Barefoot definitely makes you more aware of the walking process and just more mindful of your

surroundings in general especially your
lower

surroundings so it's definitely good and
one thing I noticed when I been going
Barefoot for a while is we possibly all
of us except for a few M mutants have
these latent Barefoot instincts because
our ancestors went

Barefoot and so we've got like these
latent instincts with regard to how to
walk Barefoot my father when I was a kid
told me that like the natives in Africa
have the soles of their feet as tough as
shoe leather because they go barefoot
all the time so I assumed when I started
going Barefoot my feet would really get
tough and although they got a bit

calloused they never really got that tough and so mainly when you go barefoot you just learn how to walk Barefoot and a lot of it is like relearning just from these latent Barefoot instincts coming up to the conscious level or coming up to enough of the conscious level that you're aware that they really are like conditioning how you walk so I guess I answered that question that's the main benefit is it just improves your mindfulness when you're walking makes you more alert with regard to where you're going so I'm just going to move on to the second question which is from Newman

and it's like uh adding to the previous question he says did you did you never get foot infections from walking bare feet everywhere and I never got foot infections although I did step on Thorns sometimes I remember one famous occasion I was walking for alms in let's see pinday Village in central Burma and I stepped on it was either a cactus Thorn or a really wicked Acasia Thorn some of those Acacia Thorns get like 2 in long and it went all the way up into my heel and broke off in there and I had to walk like two miles like finish my Ms round and then walk all the way back and I could not get the the tip of that thorn out of my heel

and um a lce

supporter like sent a doctor to me and

because they were trying to force me

against my will to get like a tetanus

shot and this kind of stuff I just

refused to let the doctor treat me which

caused him to be somewhat disgusted with

the whole situation and I was

just like trying to like squeeze it out

and so forth until finally it just

festered out it was like I was squeezing

it just mainly to get like icky fluids

out and I wasn't even for sure that

there was something broken off in there

other than just the fact that it wasn't

healing up and then just it just popped

out it was like a quarter inch long tip
of a thorn that was had been in my heel
for like a at least a week at that
time um but I never really got any kind
of foot infections never got athletes
foot mainly because when you're going
Barefoot you got better air circulation
your feet can dry out better that kind
of thing I got cracked feet a lot like
especially during the hot season the dry
season when you're walking in like sand
and dust then your heels will start to
crack and that was a problem
like in ancient times in the thei Maga
it talks about how the Sri Lankan monks
of Buddha goa's time would carry around
a little tube of oil mainly just for

rubbing it into their feet probably
because their heels are cracking from
just drying out like the the skin of
your feet the soles of your feet just
dries out from walking in sand and dust
you know just parched
hot so it's it was just a thing that
that was continually being contended
with by monks who walked around
Barefoot and let's see I mean I could
have you'd think that I'd get some kind
of foot infections considering some of
the places where I walked Barefoot some
of the like the the scariest places I
walked Barefoot were like public
restrooms at bus stations in Burma which

are pretty I mean you're like walking
through like puddles of who who the hell
knows what that kind of
stuff so often I mean if I was riding a
bus and the bus stopped at some place
that had like some trees over to one
side in rather than go into the public
restroom I just go off behind a tree or
something
somewhere but I never really got any
kind of like septic foot infections
other than maybe a little bit of
infection like you know like a thorn or
something in my foot
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question this is from
philes and philes says if you could only

have one species of fish for the rest of your life which would you choose and he's referring to aquarium fish and not like for eating and this is really kind of a more difficult question than one would expect because my approach to keeping an aquarium is that it's like a balanced ecosystem and so you've got various niches niches that different kinds of fish would have to fit into like you need a scavenger fish that's eating stuff off the bottom you need algae eaters um I mean that would be I mean the most basic for maintaining a healthy aquarium is I mean I could have snails

or shrimp or something eating the algae but still you need I mean one of the most basic kinds of fish you need for an aquarium is a scavenger something that eats off the stuff off the bottom like decaying plant matter and that kind of stuff so with that in mind it might be that if I could only keep one species of aquarium fish it might be like a Siamese algae eater like Rama the first and that tank back there which is just a plain kind of brown looking fish I mean it's not a pretty fish particularly I mean it's got a nice streamlined shape and everything but I mean it'll eat anything it eats algae it eats debris off the bottom decaying plant material it'll eat

minced clams it'll eat
anything so maybe a Siamese algae eater
although it'd be kind of strange to have
an aquarium that only has like Siamese
algae eaters in it um the other option
that I was thinking of would be to get a
kind of fish that pretty much has to be
by itself anyway it's kind of fish that
I've never kept before like a Sagal
bitcher which is I mean they get like 2
feet long and I mean they look like a
dragon they're a very archaic primitive
kind of fish sort of like a sturgeon is
a primitive kind of fish and they're
just really cool looking so I might just
wind up getting like one of those but

still there'd be problems with algae I mean I maybe I could get snails that the bitchier wouldn't eat but aside from that I'd just be screwed and so it might really be that if I only kept one species of fish it would have to be like a Siamese algae eater maybe I could get like a little school of them CU they are a schooling

[Music]

fish so I think I'm just going to move on to Phil's second question which is as follows could a Buddhist believe in Soul this is different from self or ego actually according to Ken wheeler the Buddha taught about a soul outside of the Aggregates to be freed from Karma

well I mean Ken wheeler declares himself to be the world's leading the world's foremost authority on early Buddhism but if you anyone who knows paully who reads his translation sees that he really doesn't know what he's doing that he just makes these wildly inaccurate translations and so really I mean I've read the text Fair carefully and I know the Buddha did not teach that there is a soul outside the Aggregates so I mean there are Buddhists who believe in a soul especially Western Buddhists Buddhists of European ancestry seem to be the most vehement in the existence of some kind

of Eternal

Soul and if you're going to take like an upanishadic approach where you're saying that just reality is our soul you know like Brahman or capital G God is our soul it's like the absolute pervades the entire universe and that aspect of the absolute that is pervading us could be called our soul and you reify it which early Buddhists didn't do but then you can sort of put forth uh a heretical but nevertheless sort of plausible argument that we do have a soul but it's like all the beings on the entire universe are sharing the same single soul because that soul is just the the dharmakaya going with like um Mahayana Buddhist

terminology or it's God going with
Christian

terminology

so let's see so Buddhist some Buddhists
definitely believe even soul they might
be heretical Buddhists or like pure land
Buddhists or something but I mean
obviously there are Buddhists who are
very sincere in their Buddhism who do
believe in a soul but the whole idea
that the Buddha did teach that there's a
soul outside the

Aggregates I mean there's really is no
evidence for that that what they do is
like the Buddha says None of the five
Aggregates is the self and they say well

I mean there's there could be something outside the accur the Buddha didn't say it not in the text anyway but you know they say well I mean there's still like this loophole there's like this open doorway where you can say well something outside of the five Aggregates is the soul but I mean there are sutas where the Buddha says the all is the five Aggregates this this entire Cosmos is five Aggregates there's nothing be beyond the five Aggregates in samsara so then they say well that means there could be a soul that isn't samsaric it's outside of samsara but the thing is in early Buddhism especially you just try you do your best to avoid

reifying the absolute you try to avoid
reifying the highest reality Ultimate
Reality that anything you say about it
it's going to be invalid so the best
thing to do is just shut up about it
that you practice in order to like
realize

it so that you're not just theorizing
about

it but I mean until you do that all
you're doing is theorizing about it and
all the theories are going to be invalid
because it's just completely off the
scale and no words can really touch it I
mean like some people like the Zen
saying is words are just a finger

pointing at the moon but the ultimate
the absolute isn't in any direction you
can't even point in that
direction so I mean there's always going
to be Buddhists especially some Western
Buddhists who just vehemently sometimes
angrily insist that the Buddha taught
that there is an eternal Soul even
though there's no mention of it in the
text unless you're like Ken wheeler and
just mistranslate
stuff so I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question
also from
philes which is as follows if tomorrow
all your books were to burn down and you
could only keep one book which would it

be in ha well probably let's see here
can you see it's like the the blue one
the pale blue big one on the top shelf
in the middle there is that right yeah
it's like dead center in that top shelf
that big blue one that's my poly English
dictionary and the reason why I would
keep that one is because it's really
Irreplaceable because as a monk I spent
probably hundreds of hours supplementing
that dictionary just adding more
definitions and additional um like more
words more pow that just aren't in the
book and just like um alternative
definitions that aren't in the book that
sort of

thing so that that book would be
Irreplaceable most of the other books
are either replaceable or not that
important so that even if I couldn't
replace it it wouldn't be a major loss
but my poly English dictionary is uh is
one of a kind I
think

so I think I've successfully answered
all three of Phil's questions so I'm
just going to move on to Thermal
squid and thermal squid says feelings
about medicinal cannabis when used
authentically and not as an excuse to
get
wasted question mark so this is a
question but then thermal squid has like

this little paragraph of
commentary which goes I recently got a
medical card in Florida for ceaseless
gastrointestinal problems that have in
the past inspired me to do some not so
wholesome things to cope with the pain I
notice it allows me to Foster and
sustain more wholesome mental States and
prevents negative rumination would you
think that there is demerit involved in
something like this well like I'm I
usually say with regard to Buddhist
ethics there's Merit and demerit to
almost any action we do that there's I
mean it's not like an abrahamic religion
or religious system and a religious

system of Ethics where something is
either right or wrong you know black or
white I mean in Buddhism almost
everything is a shade of
gray

so I mean there is that but getting back
to the question here feelings about
medicinal cannabis when used
authentically and not as an excuse to
get wasted well even Buddhist monks were
allowed to use cannabis
medically in fact there's even a rule
allowing monks to carry a little pipe
for inhaling the fumes of burning
medicines

so um I mean if it was okay for ancient
Indian monks that's that's a pretty good

indication that it would be okay for postmodern Western lay people and sometimes as a monk I did smoke some cannabis every once in a while it was always um people like Western people who would give it to me and it's I mean for Western people even spirit oriented Western people to smoke some weed every now and then is is fairly common actually and I have had some like really profound

experiences under the influence of cannabis like there's one time I was on the the banks of the iraa river and somebody offered me some some cannabis so I smoke this cannabis and

I'm kind of looking around see if
anyone's watching me sort of like if
you're in high school like smoking weed
during like lunch break you know you're
looking around and see if anyone's
seeing you that kind of thing and I was
I mean I was having some really deep
insights that were triggered just from
being high as I was like doing walking
meditation on the bank of the irow river
in near Pagan you know the ancient
capital of

Burma

so I mean

cannabis I mean it can cause a kind of
euphoria which isn't necessarily bad
from a Buddhist point of view like if

you're stressed out just being stressed
out is is technically immoral I mean
just to be
unhappy
is it's it's
like I don't I don't know how else to
say I mean it is immoral you're
inflicting unhappiness upon yourself
because suffering is always
self-inflicted ultimately from a
Buddhist philosophical point of view
which is something leftist Buddhists in
the West don't like to deal with because
they want to blame evil Whitey and white
patriarchy and all this but really all
suffering is ultimately self-inflicted

it is a choice even though most of us
are too subconscious to realize that
there is a
choice but it is
volitional and so I mean a little bit of
euphoria when you're all stressed out it
just helps to calm you down I mean that
in itself is beneficial
and then also I mean you can get more
spiritual for
me cannabis doesn't really like expand
Consciousness so much sort of like
something like psilocybon mushrooms can
like expand Consciousness cannabis
doesn't do that so much it just kind of
shifts Consciousness into like a
different mode and I mean just to

experience

that I mean if you're not doing it just
to party to escape from from a reality
that you don't like very much that kind
of thing but just it helps you to
triangulate you know you can look at
reality from different aspects from
different

perspectives and in a way that can help
you it it can lead to

Insight sort of like living in a a very
non-western culture for some period of
time also gives you a certain amount of
perspective like if you're just living
in the same culture you're in entire
life then you can be very culturally

conditioned everyone around you is is just as culturally conditioned in the same way as you and so you don't notice it you know you're just right in the middle of it you got nothing to compare it with but then you go to like Burma and live there for 20 something years and you can see that I mean it was like I I've mentioned this before when I went to Burma it really struck me how culturally conditioned the Burmese were without realizing it they had no idea that they were culturally conditioned you could tell them and it just they wouldn't know what you're talking about but then after I came back to America it was just as striking how culturally

conditioned Americans are without them
realizing

it so getting high on on cannabis you
know stay away from narcotics you know
anything that's really addictive I mean
your best avoiding that a certain amount
of cannabis I don't think I mean it's
it's not as bad as alcohol in my opinion
overall with regard to its
effects

so yeah I

think I really don't think it's
necessarily A Bad Thing to smoke a
certain amount of cannabis unless you're
like some Jamaican who's smoking like
three ounces of it per a day something

like that is rather excessive and it's not good for your lungs and all that but a small amount maybe even like in in some something edible so that you're not even inhaling smoke and that kind of thing um yeah every once in a while to just like knock you out of a rut give you like an alternative perspective also it does have kind of this weird darc side effect of just sort of like really almost disabling my short-term memory so that you're in the present moment more efficiently than if you're not high on on cannabis or at least it works that way for me it makes me more in the present moment partly because short-term memory is just

copy so I think I'm just going to move on to Thermal Squid's second question which is recommendations on right livelihood for someone who is likely going to remain as a Layman question mark and then he's got the little paragraph uh the commentarial paragraph I think that wrong livelihood extends just Beyond poisons intoxicants meat weapons and slavery and that things like insurance sales modern medicine sex work of any kind gambling and most enforcement agencies also apply that is actually extremely rare to have a blameless occupation yeah just just to get right livelihood from the Buddhist

point of view like just a cashier at a grocery store technically would not be a right livelihood because she's going to be selling cans of bug spray she's going to be selling beer you know she's going to be selling the stuff that you're not supposed to sell if you're if you're practicing right livelihood also just like a waitress at a restaurant if she is supplying alcoholic beverages to people who are ordering them again you're not supposed to do that I mean she's like a drug dealer in that sense but I mean yeah I mean so long as your livelihood isn't really causing harm to people especially in sort of the outward

sense I mean just causing someone to get upset because they get upset really easy and you haven't necessarily done anything with ill intent you can set that those kind of scenarios aside um you know there's always going to be someone who disapproves of you no matter what you do or don't do but to have like a harmless vocation would be right livelihood from a Buddhist point of view that doesn't require dishonesty for example and I mean dishonesty in business um you know they've got it down to a science I think so um yeah I mean if you got a job

interview and they're thinking about hiring you for some relatively important position in in some kind of capitalistic business it' probably be good to be upfront and like caution the person that you are scrupulously honest and are not going to tell lies for the sake of making money that kind of thing so yeah I mean so long as the job is is like not causing harm to anybody and is an honest job it does not require any kind of Deceit anything like that I think you'll be doing okay but yeah sex work gambling that kind of thing would also be out like pandering to other people's addictions is probably best um not to do that um you know it's it's

sort of a fine line though I mean you're
never going to have pure
saintliness as a lay person it's hard to
even do it as a monk who renounces
society and goes off and lives alone in
a forest still he's going to be doing
UNH wholesome things even just believing
himself to exist for a few minutes well
he's wallowing in
delusion you know he getting up getting
angry at the fly that just bit you
even though you don't slap it still you
little
bastard there you go you've you've
wallowed in in
aversion

so yeah I think just so long as you're
you're honest and not selling stuff that
hurts people or you know like even like
a chef who's catering to like obese
Foodies I mean that's sort of like a
drug dealer right

there so yeah I mean you got to use your
your better judgment you just got to
feel into it and see I mean is this like
harming people is it harming myself is
it harming others and if it isn't except
into these really subtle ways that you
just can't escape from then I think
you're doing

okay so I'm just going to move on to
Thermal Squid's thir third
question is homosexuality all always

sexual

misconduct and his commentary here is this is an icky question but I really wonder about it sometimes I feel like it is somewhat of a paraphilia or developmental disorder if not outright unnatural but I also don't know how one should treat it as a political or larger social level at a political or larger social level I seem to go back and forth between aversion and ambivalence toward it and do not understand how to manage its prevalence in terms of attitude and right

thinking and I mean just for starters any sexuality is to some degree

immoral from a Buddhist point of view
that you know like desire is the cause
of all suffering and sex It's associated
with some of the strongest desires that
we EXP

experience just wallowing in
sensuality like sex especially good sex
is about as wallowy in sensuality as you
can

get so I mean that's not the same as
breaking the third precept though the
third precept is sensual misconduct
kamu and it re homosexuality really was
not an issue if you read the text
there's really not much of an issue I
mean like men resorting to unic Bath
House Unix is like a sign of bad

character um there's hardly I I can't even recall any mention of two grown men having sex with each other that's described in the text or even in the commentar literature it was like in Ancient India the the Ganges Valley men with that kind of disposition would resort to as I just said Bath House Unix that sort of thing

so it's kind of a gray Zone um you know it's not really spelled out very clearly in the texts at least I do not recall it I've studied the text fairly comprehensively and I do not recall ever coming across this issue in the text

there's a lot of issues that Buddhism especially like poly Buddhism just does not address and this isn't the only one that's going to be mentioned in this Q&A inshah so I mean if you consider that like right like sensual right conduct for a lay person is a monogamous like faithful

relationship um mainly for the sake of of just maintaining Society through a man and a woman coming together raising children propagating the human race keeping societ

going then homosexuality would be on The Fringe of that I mean you could have like the loving monogamous thing going some homosexual men are capable of

that although I did read in a um it was like a doctor's diagnostic manual he there the Merc manual I think the Merc guide of the Merc manual one of them is like a pharmacological thing and the other one is like helping you to diagnose symptoms and so forth and homosexuality was in the the book as a kind of disorder so it was a relatively old Edition I think and it was saying and it's true to this day it's not unusual at all for a homosexual man to have had more than 1,000 sexual partners

so I mean there's kind of a a tendency in that direction that is recognized in

the

texts but it doesn't really spell it out

so I mean you could argue especially in

the west that like two gay men who are

faithful to each other they love each

other they just that that I mean it's

kind of a borderline case and I think it

could be argued either

way and whoever would be the the better

debater would win the

debate

so yeah so I think I should just move on

to the next one because as I say I mean

What It ultimately the Buddhist texts

really do not discuss this issue in any

explicit way that that I can

recall so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from mraa Buddha and
MIT tra Buddha says according to
Buddhist cosmology or the 31 PLS of
existence humans are in the manusa Loca
or human realm and animals are in the
Kad dugi boomi or apaya boomi me the PLS
of misery yeah the four the four lower
Realms one of the four lower Realms is
the animal realm so why is that humans
are able to perceive animals in the
human realm with ayatana or the five
senses despite humans and animals
belonging to different Realms or
PLS why is that we are only able to
perceive animals but not any other
beings from within the kamugi bu boomi

and other plants from the Rupa Loka or
arupa

Loka um well I mean we wouldn't be able
to perceive any any being in the arupa
Loka because that's the formless Realms I
mean they're just so completely Beyond
us and furthermore there's no physical
bodies to

see so it might be that an extremely
Advanced meditative

Adept could be aware of formless beings
but I mean the average guy is not going
to be aware of such beings with regard
to the Brahma realm the Rupa Loka which
is essentially brahmas who have physical
bodies um their their physical bodies
are so attenuated so subtle it's a

different vibrational rate or whatever
of matter we can't see them either
unless they want us to see them then
they can sort of solidify themselves
slow down their vibrational rate or some
such so that we can see them but with
regard to um there are terrestrial
deities according to to
Buddhist like mythology philosophy
whatever you want to call it they're
mentioned in the texts um it's the the
the realm of the the the four Great
Kings which is one realm above human
level on the 31 Plains of
existence and we can see them at least
sometimes so I mean there's a lot of

mention

of people you know

seeing like I mean ogres you know the

yaka is is belongs to this realm and I

mean they eat people supposedly at least

that's what the yaka kind of evolved

into like with regard to the evolution

of certain ideas with regard to

non-human beings um but I mean with

regard to why we can see animals and

animals can see us I mean you know we're

living in the same kind of

World um with regard to like the ghost

realm some people have seen ghosts I

apparently like at least when I was a

little kid was able to see spirits some

people can see

spirits some Spirits can see us

even so I mean it's not just a matter of

humans and animals can see each other

but any other planes any other Realms we

can't see because times we can at least

I mean some animals we can't see like

the the aptly named no which is like a

little insect that that bites you you

know it's like a midge or something

related to mosquitoes or gnats I guess

they're just so small that we can't see

them but they're still

there so what is the actual question

here why is that humans are able to

perceive animals in the human Realm

despite humans and animals belonging to

different

Realms

well the whole Realms thing was super
imposed on this empirical reality and so
I mean you can't really argue against
people and animals being able to see
each

other I mean that's just a given that
had to be dealt with and I mean some
other Realms you know they're just kind
of mythological I suppose I mean some of
the Realms on the 31 planes of existence
I'm rather skeptical of to tell you the
truth um and then I mean some Realms are
just so different from this
realm that we just we just can't see
each other just it's just too different

of of like psychology and too different
of like the our our environments and so
forth so let's see

here yeah it is true that the animals
are cons animals are considered to be in
the the lower Realms but I mean
technically this is ancient Indian
biology so to speak taxonomy whereas
really I mean humans are animals we are
also technically a member of the animal
realm and I do not think that just
putting all animals into the animal
realm and humans in the human realm is I
mean it's not good taxonomy because a
chimpanzee or even a dolphin comes
closer to a human than it does to a

mosquito

but like dolphins and mosquitoes are
animal realm we are human realm and I
just don't see it that way a dog comes
closer to a human than it does to a
mosquito so I mean some of this is just
ancient

Indian attempts at explaining things
that modern westerners really don't go
along with very well

so I kind of I kind of answered that
question so I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from Ken and
Ken said what is your view on Casina
meditation saw an interesting interview
where the practitioner talks about early
Buddhist manuals mentioning the practice

frequently and then he he left this
under the the recent YouTube video and
then somebody told him that I had
already answered this question in Q&A
number 135 was even kind enough to leave
a Tim

stamp but casin meditation it was really
a big deal like when the wisi Maga was
being written like the wisi Maga the the
main meditation that it describes it
describes you know all the 40 you know
the the 40 standard meditation
techniques but that are like traditional
in terava Buddhism but the main one that
gives the most detailed instructions on
the at most that length is casin

meditation so casin meditation was
probably a big
deal like early medieval SRI lanca at
the very least and there's still monks
in Burma that practice Casina meditation
but it's it's rare it's relatively rare
in terada Buddhism nowadays certain
meditations have just become predominant
especially meditation on breathing you
know

anapan um like meta meditation
meditation on the 32 parts of the body
meditation on the four elements some
Thai Traditions use
Mantra that kind of thing and Cina is is
uh kind of obsolete sort of at least
it's no longer nearly as much in fashion

as it used to be and there is a kind of hypnotic element to it um like like I mentioned probably in Q&A 135 like the Stanford hypnosis lab who they're trying to study hypnosis and hypnotic States scientifically so they have to have like a standardized hypnotic technique you know they got to hypnotize everyone the same way to reduce the variation you know to to strengthen their experimental designs and so forth and the meditation technique at the Stanford hypnosis Lab at least at the time that I read the book written by the guy who worked there is you look at a small disc on the wall

was much smaller than the casin disc you know it could be just the head of a thumbtack stuck into the wall but still you're just focusing on this disc in front of you and you just kind of get absorbed into it I mean you just kind of I mean you become so focused on it become oblivious to other things and then it has like this hypnotic effect so I'm kind of ambivalent in my understanding of whether Casina is really something the the Buddha originally um taught and endorsed or if it's something that kind of came into Vogue because it was had like spectacular results because hypnosis can have spectacular results I mean h a

hypnotized person especially if they're
a good subject in a deep hypnotic trance
I mean they can do superhuman
stuff or just weird stuff that you would
not expect like someone who's in a deep
hypnotic trance you can tell them that
you're going to touch them with a red
hot piece of iron you just touch them
with a regular pencil eraser and still
they will feel the pain and a blister
will rise they will literally get a
second degree burn from just the belief
that they got touched by something
really hot and then a lot of people know
how you can just someone who's in a
hypnotic trance can just become stiff as

a board so that you can rest their head
on the back of one chair rest their feet
on the back of another chair and they're
just like a plank going across and you
can put waights on them even and and
they're fine that kind of thing which a
person who's not in a trance I mean you
generally don't do

that so I mean this one Cina meditation
whether the Buddha originally taught it
or whether it was just something that
became fashionable because it had like
dramatic effects and was more hypnotic
than something more along the lines of
expanded awareness like expanded
mindfulness that kind of thing I'm I'm
not 100% sure on

that um I mean it's it's been in in
terata Buddhism for a very long time so
if it is something that was added later
it was added later fairly early
on but the wui Maga is
is I mean it's it's like the central
text in in Buddhist the Buddhist
commentarial tradition and it's got got
a heck of a lot to say about Casino
meditation

so yeah I guess you could refer to the
Q&A in 135 if you haven't already and
I'm just going to move on to Ken's
second question are Japanese prisons
modeled after Zen monasteries and I've
never heard anything with regard to this

um it could be because they're both
Japanese that they share a certain
Japanese

like strictness stoicism that kind of
thing um but whether Zen or like
Japanese prisons were deliberately
modeled on Zen monasteries I kind of
doubt it there's a lot of stuff that
goes on in Zen monasteries that you
don't see in Japanese prisons I'm sure
and vice versa so I'm rather doubtful of
that it could just be that they are both
products of the same Japanese culture
and so they're going to have certain
aspects that that seem
similar but who knows it may be that
there was some reformer of the Japanese

prison system back in the 1800s or
something who deliberately modeled the
new the new reformed prison system on
Zen monasteries for all I
know so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from
quor and this is a follow-up question to
a previous question uh about
formless Realms and quor says can an
Arya be reborn into a formless realm if
they cannot make any progress towards
arahant ship there well an anagami
wouldn't be reborn into a formless realm
I don't think a sakagami would be reborn
into a formless Ramen arahant wouldn't
be reborn at all and so your only option

I think would be a soda and those of you who are familiar with my understanding of the four stages of sainthood or ARA Hood will know that I considered to be largely an academic

issue um I don't think that the Buddha himself taught these four stages for various reasons that I've covered

before and uh so could a soda paana be reborn into a formless realm I don't know if this is actually mentioned in the text I assume it's

possible um presumably it' be better if you could avoid being reborn into a formless realm

because as qu Ator indicates excuse me you don't make any progress there and I

mean they it's extremely longlasting
lifetimes this is like the most refined
levels of samsara that a lifespan is in
the is in the realm of billions of
years and so you're just going to be
stuck in this Bliss I mean it's Bliss at
least it's it's not
unpleasant you're just stuck in this
Bliss making no progress just blissing
out for billions of
years

so um I don't think there's any rules or
there I don't know if there's any reason
why a soda could not be reborn into a
formless realm but um I've never really
read anything one way or the other about

soapas I mean they they could be reborn
into a formless realm I suppose but
they'd be better off if they didn't just
because it's going to postpone their
Enlightenment by billions of
years so I'm I've been kind
of not fully capable of answering a
quite a few of these questions so far is
because I mean some of them I don't know
how anybody could really answer them and
some like whether Japanese prisons are
based on Zen monasteries it's just
something I've never really heard about
or read about or
considered so I'm just going to move on
to quator second question which is if
one were to meditate and develop

equinity and mindfulness to being
tortured in hell would they leave that
realm pretty quickly and I do think that
the
more like

equinity that you could muster in Hell
the the sooner you'd get out of there uh
I had this Theory

like um in Burma during the hot weather
in Central Burma and it was sort of like
this Insight it was it was sort of like
being in hell just just you cannot
escape from the heat no electricity no
electric

fans um and I mean you just cannot get
comfortable at all you don't even stop

sweating when you're taking a bath with well water cuz the well water is warm and so I had this idea it's like I mean you just get into these just exasperated moods I mean people can just crack up from the heat anyone who's read a lot of Kipling or Somerset mow who WR wrote about you know British colonialists in in like India and Southeast Asia they know you you know people can just crack up like kiplings at the end of the passage has two guys that just go insane and die as a result of just this hellish heat day after day after day you know the temperatur is like 100 15° Fahrenheit for one or two months Straight No

Escape so I mean it can just wear people down or the outstation by Somerset mom is another example of people just cracking up because of the heat so it I had this little insight though this I'm it's taking me a long time to to spit it out but I had this Insight that one of the reasons why hell lasts so long

I mean according to the Buddhist you go to hell you can be there for millions of years and it doesn't make much sense it's like how are the bad things that a person does over the span of a few decades going to be punished fairly for millions of years I mean I

mean the Christians go even go even
worse it's like the the bad Deeds you do
for a a matter of just several decades
at most I mean you're going to get
punished forever you're going to suffer
torment forever and that's I mean that
doesn't strike me as Fair that's not
just but I had this idea like once you
go to hell you know it's sort of like
it's even worse than being in central
Burma during the hot season and then the
subsequent rainy season which is a
drought and it doesn't rain so it's just
like a second hot
season that I mean it's you're you're in
that worse than that
for hundreds of years thousands of years

tens hundreds of thousands of years it's
like it's just going to wear you down
and you're just going to start just
raging against the world you know
cursing God in your heart cursing the
entire universe just hating everything
because I mean it has just worn you down
until you just in this state of misery
and just like like radiating misery and
just aversion in all directions and
that's what keeps you there that was
sort of the the this Insight that I had
and I'm going to check make sure we're
really recording yep we've been going
for almost an hour already my how could
we be going for almost an hour already

man feel like I've only answered like
five questions so far this could be like
an eight hour long

one so yeah I I do think that if you're
in Hell one thing that keeps you in hell
for so long

is just you're just broken down mentally
and you're just hating yourself you're
hating God you're hating everything just
just overflowing with aversion just due
to the the shitty situation that you
have landed into and so if you could
cultivate

equinity then that could be like the
shortcut out that if you could be
mindful you know just mindfully being
tortured by demons that kind of thing

mindfully just burning in the in the
Raging heat glowing hot iron all around
you then yeah I mean if you get used to
it or and just kind of make make peace
with it

somehow you know you can just accept it
to some degree then I think that you
would be out of there much more quickly
because otherwise I mean how are you
going to get punished for millions of
years for something you did over the the
course of a few

decades and I'm just going to move on
next question also from
quor quor

says is equinity during discomfort

considered paying back karmic debt in Buddhism or is it more of a refraining of the Mind resulting in a deeper insight into its the mind's mental formations well equinity during discomfort what it's doing I mean the main mechanism of how you're dealing with karma is that I mean the paying back of a karmic debt is the waya it's the feeling of what's happening to you now so let's say it's a really hot weather you know so this discomfort from the really hot weather is paying back the karmic debt but if you are at reacting in aversion you're making new Karma so you're just

you're just adding to the karmic debt
but if you have equinity and Detachment
then you're paying the karmic debt
without adding more karma so in a way
you're sort of defusing or neutralizing
or denaturing this karma that's
otherwise you just have like a vicious
circle you have the unpleasant thing
happen you react with aversion which
makes more karma which then comes comes
back at you you react with aversion
which makes more karma which comes back
at you and so equinity and Detachment
mindful Detachment breaks that vicious
circle and it may be that you've got
more and more karma that's that's sort

of already like accumulated that's going to come at you but you're not adding to it and so gradually it's just going to fade

away that's the theory

anyway so let's see I mean it can that

you can get deeper insight into into you know the nature

of

suffering that kind of

thing that can happen too but mainly

just through Equanimity when bad things

happen to you is you're not just like

perpetuating this vicious

cycle of you know karmic retribution

like aversion for that karmic

retribution which makes more karma which

then comes back and then you react
against that which makes more karma
coming back you know add infinitum if
you let it happen that
way so I'm just going to move on next
question this is from

Sal and Sal says you said pa alers are
just hypnotizing themselves and thinking
they are attaining some kind of Jas how
would you explain hypnotizing from the
terraa Buddhist point of view and I
didn't really say that that all PA alers
are just hypnotizing themselves and
thinking they're attaining some kind of
genre I I do specify that it's some
people meditating at PA or following the

PA method appear to be hypnotizing themselves and thinking that they're in Janna or having like Clairvoyant visions and so forth when really it's the product of hypnotic suggestion I don't say that all people at po are just hypnotizing themselves but I do think there's a lot of self- hypnosis going on at

P so the main question here though is how would you explain hypnotizing from a terraa Buddhist point of view and again this is one of those issues not the last one of the evening either or the morning or whatever it is whatever time of day you're watching this um it's something that Buddhism

doesn't really mention I mean there's

some a

which indicates that there could be m s

or like wrong

concentration which I mean it could just

be I mean some wrong concentration is

just like staring fixedly at the some

body part of a of a young woman who's

walking by I mean that would be wrong

like wrong concentration I

suppose but also I mean you could have

like sort of bogus meditation techniques

that could qualify as wrong

concentration and hypnotizing yourself

and thinking that you're not hypnotizing

yourself um it it happens a lot in Burma

I have to admit a lot of people in Burma like even meditation teachers they they're not sophisticated enough thinkers or they just are unfamiliar with hypnosis so they cannot tell the difference between Janna and a deep hypnotic trance there's uh a meditation center not far from the main cave that I lived in in Burma it's in the the Inu tradition where they promise just even a beginning meditator that you know in your first week meditation or two week meditation you know the first Retreat that you'll be able to like teleport into heaven Realms teleport into hell Realms sit for hours straight without moving that kind of stuff and I

mean it just sounds more like hypnosis
than some realistic expectation of some
beginner who's never meditated
before who is just guaranteed that
within 2 weeks they're going to have all
these psychic powers and sit like a
statue for four hours
straight that sounds like more of a
hypnotic thing to
me but again I mean hypnosis I don't
know if there was even really a concept
of
hypnosis in Ancient India I mean I think
hypnosis became a thing with some guy
named Mesmer like back in the 1700s
so it's like a modern

concept there is mention of like there's
the list of different kinds of animal
knowledge that monks shouldn't take any
interest in which includes like
interviewing a woman in trance who's
like channeling a deity or something so
that happened in Ancient India women who
would especially women I guess who would
go into a trance and channel supposedly
speak with the voice of a God that kind
of thing so I mean that would count as
hypnosis by modern standards I think
that channelers generally are in a
hypnotic trance when they're
channeling but there's no real
explanation of it not even in Abid dama
the commentarial tradition that I've

ever come across it could be some
obscure reference and some obscure
commentary that nobody
reads but I really don't think that
there really is a welldefined
like explained concept of hypnosis in
poly Tex or in the poly commentarial
tradition so I'm just going to move on
to s's second
question which is is it possible that
attaining Janna itself was just a
hypnotizing oneself after all maybe in
more like Wholesome Way or something
yeah I've considered that that that
Janna could be considered a kind of
hypnotic Trans State except it's like a

high quality hypnotic Trans State where you're not just oblivious to everything around you where you're in a heightened state of

awareness but I mean there's certain aspects of a hypnotic trance that seem to be lacking from like really good meditation like like when you're hypnotized it's like your mind is just focused on this one thing you go into like a a sleepy State a somnolent State and you might be completely oblivious to everything around you and some people who go into meditative states are like that too but I really do not think that fourth J would be like the human equivalent to being in the state of a

hibernating

squirrel so I mean you'd have to have like a good definition of what Janna is which is pretty much lacking you'd have to have a really good definition of hypnosis which is probably out there like a hypnotic Trans State I don't know exactly what it would be and then whether you know the VIN diagram has overlap or I guess Janna would have to be like a small circle inside the bigger circle of hypnosis in order for Janna itself to be a kind of hypnotic state but I kind of doubt it I would say that being in a hypnotic State could be

considered wrong concentration although
I mean it can have its benefits that
being in a hypnotic State isn't just a
bad state but the the problem is in if
you're going to if you're going to
hypnotize yourself you should be aware
that you're hypnotizing yourself if
you're going to be in a hypnotic trance
you should be aware that you're in a
hypnotic trance and not be clueless and
think that you're having some kind of
supramundane Transmissions or some
such so it could be that hypnosis can be
beneficial I mean if it's done correctly
but I mean at least you should know what
it is that it's a hypnotic trance and
not some you know attainment of ARA hood

or some

such so is it possible that attaining jna itself is just a hypnotizing oneself after all I kind of doubt it but I mean it would depend on the definitions of terms so I'm just going to move on to salon's third question which is how would you explain the attaining Janna when it comes to jna is necessary for enlightenment Theory from earlier Terra vaden's point of view so how do you explain the attaining jna when it comes to jna is necessary for enlightenment well I think originally jna just meant meditation and that's I mean it was DH Y in Sanskrit which became Chan in Chinese

which became Zen in in Japanese and
that's just Zen is the meditation school
so Jan just originally meant meditation
I mean literally means something like
blazing or
illumination which was kind of a
metaphor for the mental states that a
person would get in when they're
meditating so I mean from that point of
view you could say that meditation is
necessary for enlightenment um at least
from a systematic you know myth U I
almost said mythological
meth systematic let's just go with
systematic you know if you're going to
like deliberately work towards
Enlightenment then certainly meditation

is very useful I don't think it's absolutely necessary because there are some people maybe they had a lot of meditation in previous lives so that they're just ripe for it even in the in the poly texts there's cases of at least in the in the commentarial tradition of some 9-year-old boy who's who's getting his head shaved so that he can become a novice as soon as the razor touches his head he becomes an a fully enlightened arhon that he was so ripe he had such parmy from previous existences probably doing a lot of meditation in previous existences that he didn't need to have formal meditation in this life or then

you got people like ekart TOA or rahama
Mahari even or or

John uh John Ren Lewis who just have
like a near-death experience or some
kind of Crisis that just slams them out
of

samsara slams them out of their samsaric
habits and liberates

them so I mean how it's supposed to work
though is I mean I've just I've
explained this numerous times before
it's like mental states are waves

Consciousness is just water so your
mental states are just like ripples on
on your

Consciousness and Sam Sara is just being
stuck at the level of the Waves it's the

forms you know the forms that the
surface of the water
takes so if you want to like penetrate
that you want to transcend these forms
stop identifying with all the the
multiple waves and I like this wave and
I don't like that wave and this wave is
beautiful and that wave is ugly etc etc
you know so for as long as samsara lasts
instead you calm the surface so there
aren't any more waves to be distracted
by or at least they become so subtle
that they're no longer a distraction and
then you can get the Insight that allows
you to penetrate you know through the
forms and just get to the essence of

water or Consciousness and that is what essentially helps to liberate you and then after you've been like enlightened after you're no longer distracted by the waves you just penetrate through that then even after the waves come back you're no longer sitting there cross-legged in deep meditation anymore still you have the Insight that allows you to continue just seeing the the waves as water just seeing the essence instead of being distracted and led astray by the forms so that would be the mechanism of how jna helps you to become enlightened at least that's one of the mechanisms

so I mean there's there's I've mentioned
it numerous times before the the the
Lesser discourse on voidness of the
majaya the Chula
sunas where you've got a monk who goes
out into the forest and he's cultivating
emptiness or voidness first first step
is you just go out into the forest and
so you're left you've left behind the
commotion and distraction of all the
artificiality in the in the village and
so you've got relative emptiness and
then you start cultivating meditative
States until you get to the highest
possible meditative State and then when
you come out of that you realize that

that was that was the highest possible
attainable meditative State and still
that's not Enlightenment and so that
that can cause like a click of insight
that just kind of causes you to let let
go of the the whole samsaric system and
that's like a liberating Insight
also but I think I should just move on
to the next question now this is from
White Ash Piper and white ash Piper says
curious on Karma and rebirth and the
point you brought up on a child being
born and dying hardly out of the gate my
takeaway is this baby had just enough
Karma to be human but albeit briefly
question mark I think it was on the cat
dog Karma question yeah I I do have this

hypothesis unprovable that one of our dogs had been like a human baby that I mean it got old enough that you know it was aware of its surroundings and starting to have a personality but it was still like preverbal and then and then passed away um I do think that some pets like they have alternated between like a dog or just some some human baby that just died very young which most human babies did throughout much of our history and it's not necessarily that you've got a human baby who dies it's not necessarily they had just enough Karma to be human but only briefly it could be that they had Karma

to be human but also not to get very
Advanced with it you know they didn't
have the karma to be like a verbal
speaking functioning adult they just had
the karma to sort of get to a certain
stage and then it was like they didn't
have the karma to proceed from from past
that or it could be that they just had
some bad karma that just sort of
interrupted that you know maybe they
were uh you know they had caused babies
to stop metabolizing in a previous life
you know they were like who knows you
know I I could I can name say like an
abortionist or something I don't know
but I mean infanticide was fairly common
in ancient times back before they had

reliable abortion clinics you just take the the the baby and just abandon it out in the wood somewhere or it would die of exposure get eaten by animals or something and so people that did that would be making some kind of karma that might come back on them they get reborn and they get this bad baby stuff done to them or just they just die so I mean there's there's more than one explanation for how how the karma works of a baby who is born and then just does not grow into childhood you know they just have sudden infant death syndrome when they're just two weeks old or they get like scarlet fever or

hooping cough or something I mean that used to happen a lot and I think even like in the Middle Ages most babies did not reach adulthood you know it's that's one reason why the Middle Ages in Europe were kind of a sociopathic age is that parents could not get emotionally invested in their children because most of them were just going to die anyway and so they were treated like livestock and you know they just received the kind of neglect and and harshness that produces sociopaths hardened to criminals in in modern times and uh like the entire culture was like that other than maybe a few people

that were just soft-hearted and were
willing to take the risk of dearly
loving this baby that you know
statistically was was probably not going
to reach the age of
10 but I think I'm Meandering away from
the
question curious on Karma and rebirth
and the point you brought up on a child
being born and dying hardly out of the
gate my takeaway is this baby had just
Karma to be human but albeit briefly
question mark so that was the
question and yeah it doesn't necessarily
work that way there's karma is very
complicated it's it's unthinkably you

know incomprehensibly complicated and so there's you can't really figure it out and it's not going to be the same for everybody that different different individuals are going to have different Karma that may result in similar outward experiences but it might be just different reasons you know it's like the baby dies because they had just enough Karma to be human or or they had you know to be human but very briefly or they had the karma to get sort of into a baby mental state but they did hadn't didn't have the karma to go beyond that or it could be some bad karma from a previous life just cut their life short

because they were cutting lives short of others or some such there's all these different possibilities and it's it's just not one size fits all it's it's there's always going to be this just Unthinkable complexity going on and all these different factors that are combining and interacting and so forth that's going to result in the situation and so I'm just going to move on to next question this is from meditators library and meditators Library says ever since dis robing how did your inner peace spirituality or faith in Buddha change over time please share your thoughts well my inner peace

is not as good as it was when I was a monk just living in Simplicity and Solitude in a cave that now I'm I'm like for a living I'm driving a forklift for a trucking company and it's just hectic chaos a lot of the time like the other night two nights ago I was traumatized where there was this huge fireplace like an electric fireplace it weighed like 800 lb it was like 6 feet tall and like 6 feet wide maybe 2 and 1/2 feet thick and it was just too big to fit onto the truck right side up so they were going to tip it onto its side onto a pallet and load it that way and there was a miscommunication between one guy and the other guy one guy was supposed to hold

the pallet up with a forklift on this side and then the other guy was just going to push it over onto that pallet you know it's going to just lean over a little bit and then gradually you lower the pallet and then the thing winds up lying on it that was the idea but the guy who was supposed to be holding up the pallet didn't know what he was doing nobody fully explained the situation so he's just kind of sitting there with the pallet on the floor the one guy just tips over this huge this this huge fireplace and it just smashes I mean it's just destroyed and I was just standing there just I first I just kind

of Throw My Hands over my ears just
because I was expecting the crash and it
was

just that kind of stuff is not conducive
to peace of mind in my case or you're
just this hectic chaos going on I'm I'm
like cussing like to myself I'm not like
cussing out others was like what the

[__] are you doing you know just just
like just this little commentary of cuss
words going on while I'm while I'm

driving my forklift sometimes so my
inner peace is less although fortunately

I have acquired enough Insight that I
really don't take some soric quasi

reality as seriously as most people do

I'm not as stuck in it as most people

are even though there's like this
habitual cussing going on that kind of
thing so let's see my inner peace yeah
that's that has like
decreased um at least at the like The
Superficial level
spirituality
um I mean it's like I received my
education and now I'm putting it into
practice my faith in Buddha is is
unchanged
so yeah ever since dis
robing yeah there have been some changes
um but not really super major ones
they're they're like superficial outward
changes more than like the Deep inward

stuff so I'm just going to move on to
meditators library second question what
is your take on the terraa tradition or
belief that one has to get ordained as
beu upon anagami Enlightenment within
seven days or he dies it's not anagami
it's

arant that the terraa Buddhist tradition
is that you have to be or if you become
enlightened you can be enlightened if
you're not an ordained Monk but you have
to get ordained fast and it could be
less than seven days like the Bahia
Bahia sua the the non Buddhist
philosopher Bahia goes and speaks to the
Buddha the Buddha gives him this Coan
like little sermon in the middle of of

town and Baha becomes enlightened and then within like an hour he's he dies he he's trampled to death by a a young cow so I mean it's it's not just seven days necessarily I mean it's it's like you're on borrowed time if you're enlightened and you're not a monk going with Terra tradition but personally I am skeptical of that I think that there have been um enlightened people who were not ordained beus or beunis or even novices that lived for more than a week so I do think to some degree it's it's kind of a terraa chauvinism you know saying you know you have to be you know one of us if you're going to be

fully enlightened for very long or you know it's you better join us or you're gonna you're going to pay the price kind of a thing and I do think there's a certain amount of chauvinism or like religious propaganda that kind of thing involved so meditators Library third question is anagami Enlightenment possible for lone ruse or beu s in parenthesis who lives alone in Forest without connection any SAA but lives on his pension money or some kind of savings well I mean he wouldn't shouldn't be a beu if he's got got money you know you'd be better off not being a beu if you're going to be living on pension money or some kind of savings

because Monk's not allowed to have money
period and I again I think he's
confusing anagami with arahant
that being fully enlightened yeah I
don't see why not I don't see why it
would be impossible for some lone
recluse who isn't even
ordained to be just going alone like the
Horn of the rhinoceros I mean that's
what the Buddha taught you're supposed
to live in dependence upon a teacher
even if you're a beu you live on in
dependence upon a teacher or your
preceptor for at least five years but
once you know how to meditate you know
how to do all the stuff a monk's

supposed to do you know how to follow
the rules and bake a bowl and so your
robes and all that then you can just go
off alone and the text the poly text are
full of monks that just go out into
Solitude and become

enlightened without I mean you might
have a brief connection with the S you
might go and meet with the monks every
two weeks to do the upos ceremony or
some

such but I don't think even that much is
necessary I don't think it's necessary
to be a beu that if you're I mean I
assume there have been assuming that Med
that Enlightenment even means anything
in a samsaric

context that there have been people who'
have just gone off and done it alone and
become

enlightened some of them have probably
even handled
money

so yeah um lives alone in a forest
without any connection to any

SAA that lives on pension money or some
kind of savings I I don't see why it

would be impossible like becoming

enlightened on your own without guidance
or feedback can be tricky because you're

going to have blind spots that you

you're going to have like foibles or

defilements that you don't see that

nobody's going to tell you about because
you're

alone so there are there are certain
disadvantages to radical

solitude but for the the most part it is
encouraged in Terra Buddhism that you go
alone like the Horn of the rhinoceros

you just go off once you know how to
once you know what to do you know how to
practice correctly you just go off into
the forest and do

it and uh there's nothing necessarily
immoral about living on a

pension but it is against the rules for
an ordained monk to handle money even a
10 precept novice isn't supposed to
handle money even though almost all 10

precept novices in Burma handle

it so I'm just going to move on next

question this is from PSA and PSA says

which sport is your favorite from the

following list hockey soccer water polo

or Javelin

throwing well hockey it's I mean the

fight's are interesting but every once in

a while they stop fighting and start

hitting this little puck around which is

kind of not so interesting soccer I

never really understood why you have so

many fanatical soccer fans in this world

why what is so exciting these guy I mean

you can you can have an hourong soccer

match and the score is still zero to

zero water polo could be interesting but most of the actions going on under the water where they're like kicking each other and stuff and you don't get to see that part so I mean if I had to watch any of these on like a video I'd probably watch Javelin throwing just for the the novelty of it

I mean there's it's not really all that exciting I mean there's not a whole lot of variety there's not these a whole lot of different strategies and all that but what the hell at least it doesn't last very long you know they just run up and run up to the line and throw the javelin and they measure how far it went and whoever threw it the farthest wins I

guess so I think I'm just going to move
on to psa's next

question which is have you decided yet
what you will do to those that end up on
your Black List do they have any chance
of Salvation well technically that's two
questions so actually PSA has
transgressed here and I think his name's
going on that

list and uh because his name is on the
list I don't think it would be
appropriate for me to to actually
specify what's going to happen to him
but he's not going to like it very much
if he ever finds out what it was that
happened to him and nevertheless

everyone has chance of

Salvation so don't worry about that it's
there's no Eternal damnation involved in
in these

lists so I'm just going to move on to

psa's next question what is your

favorite sutra of the samutta nikaya and

ha and the samutta nikaya has a lot of

really good suttas in it so you know like

the first two suttas you know

traditionally the dhammacakkavattana sutta

and the anattakya sutta are both in the

samutta the the first samutta the sagatha

gatha the first chapter of the first

samutta has some

very

archaic just very profound piy kind of

of sutas that are
good there's one um suta from the sutin
Kaya that is that receives a lot of
discussion in nagar's Mula majaka
Kaka which I mean he's going with a
Sanskrit non-teravan version of the
same

suah but it's Maha Kayana I think is
like the the monk who's teaching this
and it's it's very zen-like and I don't
remember the name of the of the suta
unfortunately but the one suta that
really comes to mind that has had more
of an effect on me than this one with
Maha Kayana is um let's see here it's
called the locaa sua and it's in the

nidana samut which is all about
dependent core rising and
it's it's it's a strange case study
because it's it's like a mixture of like
older like more profound material and
like younger less profound material and
the whole thing is a patchwork but the
the main point of it is is really deep
and I like it and so I happened to have
translated it
myself uh some years
ago and so the first part of the suta
goes thus have I heard at one time the
blessed one was dwelling at Sati at J's
Grove in anata pandas Park which is how
a great many sutas
begin then it's like you got the main

meat of the suta here which is in this part at that time a Brahman who was a worldly philosopher approached the blessed one and exchanged the customary friendly greetings with him and sitting to one side that Brahman worldly philosopher said this to the blessed one how is it sir godma does everything

exist everything exists indeed Brahman this is the oldest philosophy in the world said the Buddha so then the the Brahman says well then how is it sir GMA does nothing exist and the Buddha says nothing exists indeed Brahman this is the second philosophy of the

world so then the Brahman says well then
how is it sir godma is everything a
unity and then the Buddha says
everything is a Unity indeed Brahman
this is the third philosophy of the
world and then the Brahman says well
then how is it sir GMA is everything a
multiplicity and then the Buddha says
everything is a multiplicity indeed
Brahman this is the fourth philosophy of
the world but not tending to either
extreme Brahman the Daga teaches the way
by the middle and then it just plugs in
the stock description of the 12 Links of
dependent core Rising which doesn't
really work very well because the Buddha
has just ruled out multiplicity and here

you've got this 12 link this just

spewing

multiplicity so then after the Buddha

gives the uh the 12 links forwards and

backwards or

mainly uh let's

see the like the the creation and the

cessation aspects of the 12 links then

you you wind up with this a stock phrase

again which occurs lots and lots of

times which is see when this had been

said the Brahman worldly philosopher

said this excellent sir godma excellent

sir godma just as Sir godma one would

set a right what had been tipped over

would reveal what had been covered would

explain the road to one who was lost
would hold up an oil lamp in the
darkness so that those with eyes could
see what is visible even so the dhama
has been showed by Sir Goa in many ways
I go to Sir Goa for refuge and to the
dhama and to the community of monks May
sir godma consider me to be a lay
supporter from this day on for the rest
of my life I have taken refuge and
according to the text if we are to to
accept this as
just historical fact that there have
were dozens of people who would give
this exact same speech just as Sir Goa
one would set a right what has been
tipped over etc etc etc that that's just

the standard speech given by people who are converted to Buddhism after having a talk with the

Buddha so it's it's kind of a really convenient case study of how sutas are composed you've got like this nucleus of useful information which is like the the back and forth between the worldly philosopher the

Loa and the Buddha where he's ruling out everything exists he rules out nothing exists that the the middle path the majima ah pip is like in between is and isn't and then the worldly philosopher says well is everything a Unity is everything just one or is everything

many and again the Buddha says that both of those are extremes that you've got this middle path it's not just the middle path between self-indulgence and self- torture it's the middle path between is and isn't it's the middle path between one and more than one one and many unity and multiplicity and so it really gives you uh an insight into what the middle path that the Buddha was teaching is like it's kind of mindblowing in zenik and then monks who did not understand dependent core Rising just plug in the 12 links which doesn't even fit the context here but still it's uh just because of

the like the the dialogue between the
worldly philosopher and the Buddha that
it really does uh have some profundity
that I can
appreciate this just the middle path is
not just the middle path between s andul
self torture it's the middle path
between is and
isn't and there are other sutas that say
that existence and non-existence are
just like a mental
formation so I think it's the kaha Thea
waga says
this pretty sure if I remember
correctly so anyways I'm just going to
move on to the next question this is

from

Gaz and Gaz says what is your general
opinion of

neoplatonism and my my friend Numa would
know more about this than I do because
he's actually a practicing

neoplatonist and uh we we did at least
one video on the subject which is uh on
my playlist one of my playlists on
YouTube probably also on

bito where we discuss

neoplatonism um my general opinion of
neoplatonism I am sorry that it lost out
to Christianity in ancient times that it
was sort of like the main rival of
Christianity with regard to what was
going to be like this like the the mass

religion of the of the people of of the
Roman

Empire and if the emperor Julian the
apostate hadn't died in a war in Persia
after being Emperor for only a couple
years he was trying to get neoplatonism
installed as the state religion and it
it didn't work it was possibly too
little too late at that
point um but neoplatonism I mean it
could be considered an Enlightenment
tradition that plotinus who is one of
the most famous teachers of what would
be called neoplatonism I mean he had
some deep Insight I don't know if he was
enlightened or not but he he was a

profound thinker and his thinking was pretty much along Indian lines with regard to how reality works how this world appears to exist that kind of stuff there was a lot of neoplatonism that I really didn't have much use for when you're getting into all the archons and the different levels of deities and so forth they get really complicated with regard to the like the classification of the different levels and all this um I think that's just kind of

like uh like

clutter that it's not really

necessary but uh yeah neoplatonism

actually went through different phases

like shortly after the death of Plato it became just kind of a skeptical school but generally when people think of neoplatonism they're thinking more along along the lines of the system that Julian the apostate was trying to establish in Rome and it's it's definitely a more spiritual type of ancient Greek philosophy than some of the ancient Greek philosophies and uh again I am it is I do consider it to be unfortunate that it was Christianity and not neoplatonism that became the predominant religion of the West so I think I should just move on to

gaz's second question which is uh
actually two questions but he doesn't go
on the list because even if you divide
it into two questions it's still just
three and his this so his second
question is have you seen the film
stalker and not only have I seen the
film stalker but one of the best essays
I ever wrote at least
stylistically is like an analysis of the
movie stalker and it's online you want
you want my take on stalker just go to
my blog the link should be below
this
video and go to my blog and then you've
got there's like the search option you
know the magnifying glass icon just type

in stalker and it should be the first thing that comes up the stalker is Holy fool so yeah I have seen the film stalker it's it'd be on my list of top 10 favorite movies it's it's rather slow paced but it is a profound movie and the director tarkovski did say that this movie is it's taking up Eastern themes so it's you know it's just sort of on the nature of of samsara really it is a profound movie I do recommend it even though it's it's it's not it's not an action movie and I have also read the story that inspired at roadside picnic and the same guys who wrote the original science

fiction story that stalker based on also wrote the screenplay for the movie so one reason why the movie came out so well even though there's not a whole lot of resemblance between roadside picnic and stalker I mean the name roadside picnic comes from the idea that some very Advanced space aliens just stopped on Earth they had to pee or something so they just stop here briefly and then just continue on their way but they leave behind this Advanced alien equivalent of like pop cans and stuff and some of the stuff that they leave behind has these weird effects that're completely like not understandable unintelligible to humans and there's

just it's so it's like the government
just has to like close it off and make
it just it's like too dangerous to go in
there and in the movie It's they kind of
back away from the space alien idea at
the beginning of the movie they say we
don't know what caused this area to
become so weird but it's like this
surreal

area you go into this area and it's like
your mental states are influencing
what's going on around

you so yeah if you want my take on
stalker then just go to my blog and just
do a search on stalker and again I do
consider it to be one of the best things

I've written at least from a stylistic point of

view so I'm just going to uh move on to the next question which is from Luker I

think and Luke Elzer says how do you deal with the Paradox that Desiring to stop Desiring is a desire in itself would not the only moral act a person could do be immediate self deltion I'm using a euphemism here I know that there was a sect of Japanese Buddhist monks who used to starve themselves to death in such a way to mummify their own corpse do you have any thoughts on this well there's actually three question marks in this in this question

but three is still allowable so how do I deal with the Paradox that Desiring to stop Desiring is a desire in itself well eventually that final desire has to be left behind

also I've I've mentioned this before how like the holy life is or in in many cases it's it's a matter of renouncing the world renouncing all your attachments and

desires and replacing them with this new attachment desire it's this desire for enlightenment and so you just start practicing you out of through this desire for enlightenment you know you've got this you're attached in mind to this

goal of Enlightenment and you practice
and practice and practice and you fail
because this last desire is like your
last major obstacle and so sooner or
later you have to have this Insight that
allows you to let go even that final
attachment and then you can become
enlightened so it's it's sort of useful
and that it's simplifying your
attachments reducing them down to one
big one instead of all these other ones
and it's a wholesome one it's at least
leading you in the right direction but
it's going to prevent you from reaching
the goal until you finally let go of
that one last
attachment so with to the part of here

would not the only moral act a person
could do be immediate self-deletion no
because self-deletion generally
involves unwholesome mental states and
you're just going to get reborn again if
you're not enlightened you just get
reborn just your karma continues to
flow and and just takes another form
because you haven't really transcended
Karma

yet karma is like the kinetic aspect
of your own
unenlightenment

so yeah um the Buddha said that you
should not self delete until you have
attained the goal because otherwise it's

you just like pressing reset or
something and you wind up just having
the same problems that you haven't
solved yet that you haven't transcended
yet so let's see there was a sect of
Japanese Buddhist monks who used to
starve themselves to death in such a way
yeah I think they started eating like
aromatic substances so that they would
sort of embalm their sides before they
died and it's not it's not in accordance
with terraa Buddhism terraa Buddhism
it's you should not self delete unless
you are enlightened and then you can do
as you
please but even most enlightened beings
would not self-d

delete

so yeah I remember a few years ago maybe several years ago at this point somebody bought like a a statue of some Monk had sitting in his living room for years and then somehow it fell and broke or something and he realized that it was just like the lacquered body of an actual Buddhist monk who had gone through this procedure of sort of um eating these aromatic substances and sort of embalming himself from the inside out before he died I don't know what happened to the to the mummified monk after that I think he got sent to a museum or

something but yeah that's that's
certainly not Terra and I don't think
the Buddha would have endorsed that it's
just sort of Buddhism moving off in a
weird Direction which does happen
sometimes so I'm just going to move on
next question this is from
ruie and ruie said would you say the
Buddha had insight into anata before or
after Awakening or did the two form a
sudden irrevocable co-occurrence and I
have no idea what the mental states of
the Buddha were before he became
enlightened it could be that he had some
inkling or intuition of no self which
then like became a full-blown liberating
Insight at

Enlightenment that you know he may have already kind of had some vague idea or philosophy going in that direction but who knows who could possibly know what his mental states were like before his before his Enlightenment other than what you read in the text which is largely

Legends

so yeah whether the Buddha like he had insight into no self or not because that's what anata means for those of you who are beginners at this sort of thing anata means no self also no soul no individuality and uh whether I mean when he started like endorsing that I keep

wanting to say believing that but it's not a matter of belief once you're enlightened so you maybe he believed it before he became enlightened but I mean who could possibly know I have no idea so I'm just going to move on next question this is from dhama river and dhama river says Sab SAR Dua sabar Ana sa D an if everything is an no self like in the previous question if every if everyone is anata whether they realize it or not samsara is therefore more like a fire that is being lit up and fed constantly what really keeps us trapped is the ignorance of the flame that keeps Samara going in that case nibana is more of a putting out of a candle than an

Enlightenment it's like a cation of a
fire and in that same case samsara is
not a place it's an action it's a habit
it's the primordial

addiction and then I think he asked for
thoughts but for some reason there's no
question mark at all here I think it
just kind

of I'm pretty sure there was a question
I think he's just asking for my feedback
on this

idea so yeah samsara isn't a place it's
an infinite number of sort of illusory
places but it's not really a place you
know it's it's like perception
essentially perception is some sort and

so the cessation of perception or rather
the Transcendence of it would be
Enlightenment you know it's like the the
the statues in the uncarved block of
marble that thinking the statue is real
is samsara but once you become
enlightened I mean the the block of
Marble's still there the the statue is
still there in Virtual form but you just
you're no longer like I attaching to the
idea that that statue is
real so yeah I do definitely agree that
samsara is not a place it is like a
process and it's mainly the process of P
perception especially the belief that
the perception is real that the
perception is conveying reality which it

is not it's symbols so samsar is symbols
it's like being stuck in
symbols and after you're enlightened the
symbol may still be there like in like
potentially but you're just no longer
identifying with that and fixating on
that and and like attaching to
that um so going back up to the top here
just I want to do justice to this if if
at all

possible if everyone is without self
whether they realize it or not samsara
is therefore more like a fire that is
being lit up and fed constantly yeah
well it's like
delusion I

guess um yeah that's why Nirvana
literally means blowing out it's like
the blowing out of a fire but it doesn't
necessarily mean that it's Extinction
with leaving nothing behind it's it
really leaves everything behind it
leaves reality behind so it's like the
illusion blows
out but just because the illusion blows
out doesn't mean that there's nothing
left except from like a duded point of
view so what really keeps us trapped is
the ignorance of the flame that keeps
samsara going yeah well that Samara is
the flame I
guess and in that case nibana is more of
a putting out of a candle than an

Enlightenment well I mean it's still an
Enlightenment it's still you're waking
up from the dream you're no longer
believing an an a illusion is reality so
then you become you you wake up you
become Buddha Buddha just means awakened
so you wake up from the dream and then
you it's uh what what is Left Behind is
reality the reality doesn't go
anywhere so I guess I'm just going to
move on to the next question which is
from Romeo and Romeo says what's up with
the Jolly fat Buddha statues I see in
the windows of Asian nail salons Chinese
restaurants and the like who is this
portly figure and why is his image or

statue so ubiquitous that he is often confused with the very Buddha himself what is his significance to Buddhism and yeah I used to be bothered before I became a monk I was bothered by people thinking that that the Buddha was this fat guy and I knew that it wasn't the case because my father always had at least one Statue of hot and that's who it I the Japanese name for him is hot and usually he's got a great big belly that's like uncovered undraped and his hands are kind of up like this and the what the version I read is that he was like a Zen monk in medieval or late ancient China I guess it' be like medieval China and he was sort of

like the like like The Village Idiot
kind of you know he was sort of like
mentally [_] to some degree
although apparently that occurred only
at like the the intellectual level
because you know he was like saintly and
spiritual at the same time so
intelligence and wisdom are two entirely
different different things so anyways he
was like this ordained Zen monk I guess
who would go around asking for for Co
spare change cuz I guess it's not
against the rules for for Zen monks in
medieval China to handle money and then
he would go go to like a sweet shop and
buy sweets and distribute it to the kids

that's what he asked for the money for
and so he became sort of like a Chinese
Santa

Claus and how he gets confused with the
Buddha is that tradition started
considering him to be like like the next
Buddha he's going to be mitraa Buddha
Buddha he's going to be the next Buddha
and he he was sort of like a buhis satva
of the the coming mraa Buddha and so he
was

this fat cheerful kid- loving monk who
was sort of like the the Buddhist Santa
Claus in China and he's going to be
mitraa Buddha in a future life and
people who really don't understand
Buddhism very well will think that

that's the Buddha it's like um I
remember hearing some Christian like a
televangelist saying that the Buddhists
have a false religion because they
worship a fat lazy God and you know just
there's a number of inaccuracies
combined into that
statement but uh yeah it's his Japanese
name is
hot and uh you're supposed to rub his
belly for good luck
whether it actually works or not I'm not
I can't really say for
sure so yeah it was like a medieval
Chinese Zen monk Chan monk at least the
version I read that that explained it

who just got all this mythology bound up
with him and he's he's going to be the
next next Buddha named mraa

Buddha so I'm just going to move on to
the next question this is from Master
Poe and master Poe says have you read
sidarta by Herman Hess or Hessa and yeah

I have when I was in my like mid

20s I went through a Herman hes phase
and read several of his

novels so I did read sedara and uh saw
the movie too it's uh Made in India

movie which was pretty good and I have
to I have to say that not my favorite

Herman hes novel I think my favorite hes
novel would be Steen

wolf but sart is

nice yeah it's it's a good novel maybe
my second favorite Herman H
novel so yeah I've read it I'm going to
move on the next question this is from
LA

infamia and La infamia says how can I
get into that Discord group most of
groups outside they are so
feminized well um like I tell everybody
else if you do a little uh diligent
searching you should be able to find my
email address and then you can uh State
your case there as to why I should send
you the invite
link but I can't just blur out you know
the invite link or anything like that so

you'll have to do a little in little bit of informed searching which shouldn't be too

hard and I'm just going to move on next question this is from

xenoid and xenoid says can you give your thoughts on this video and the video is strangely it's an old Oprah Winfrey clip from I mean it looks like from like the 1980s or something maybe the 90s I'm not sure um I think it's on YouTube and it's about the the function of the

subconscious mind she's talking to some some writer and he's talking about how some creative writing is just like dictation where you just kind of sit in front of the the typewriter you know

it's it's that old of a video and um I think it was Norman what was it no miller not Norman maor but uh I can't remember his first name Miller famous writer named Miller mid to late 20th century who he would just sit in front of his typewriter and just kind of go blank and then just kind of Channel what he was writing he supposedly wrote an entire novel that way and it's it's like not so much a muse like people would have believed in ancient like Pagan Antiquity where it's the muses that are inspiring your your creative Endeavors that it's it's the subconscious mind kind of working its way to the surface

and he's talking about how the subconscious mind works symbolically instead of linguistically like one case he he mentions is the guy who he he discovered the Benzene ring he was a chemist and he wanted to know the shape of a Benzene molecule and he's thinking about it and thinking about it and he can't figure it out and then he falls asleep he's like sitting in front on a couch in front of his fireplace he falls asleep and has a dream about a snake that's biting its own tail and then when he wakes up he realizes that Benzene is is like a ring and it was like this symbolic dream that caused him to realize this and apparently like deep

down he already

knew and it wasn't just that your

subconscious mind tells you in words

sometimes it's through symbols like this

like dream imagery and so forth that um

the subconscious mind communicates to

the conscious

ego so what are my thoughts on the video

um I mean

yeah I guess so that it does seem to

work that way that I'm I'm not exactly

sure why it is that your subconscious

mind knows things that your conscious

ego doesn't know and then sometimes it

will convey that information not through

words so much as through dream symb

symbols and so forth I'm not exactly
sure the of the why regarding that his
idea was that the subconscious mind has
been around a lot longer than language
has and so it's just sort of like
instinctive it's just built into us that
the subc conscious mind is not going to
be dealing so much in in verbal language
as in just
symbols but personally I'm not exactly
sure why it works that
way and I'm just going to move on to the
next question which is from hery gery
man and hery gery man says what is your
best step advice for eliminating fear
and cultivating bravery for someone
who's generally a fearful person well

one thing that came to mind is that the
like the medieval Japanese Samurai would
actually spend time at Zen monasteries
to help them overcome their fear of
death and just practicing Buddhism and
taking it seriously I mean once you get
to the the realization that this isn't
ultimately real anyway that we don't
ultimately exist that it really doesn't
matter that I mean that helps a lot I
mean when I was young I was much more
timid than I am now you know much more
averse to taking risks and so forth than
I am now at least in in certain ways so
I'm in overall I'm more Fearless now um
maybe just because I'm older but it's

hard to say but I I do think that like
30 years of being a Buddhist monk
definitely help me to overcome fear
where it's just I mean you protect dhama
DH protect you everything happens the
way it's supposed to happen and I mean
it's it's created by mind that's one
thing that really works for me is the
idea fear is an unskillful mental state
fear or like worry anxiety there you're
making Bad Karma through doing it so
actually being afraid that something bad
is going to happen increases the odds of
something bad happening that just Det
attachment and just having faith you
know that everything happens the way
it's supposed to happen and you just be

mindful you know take take precautions
you know be careful with what you're
doing and then just do it do what you
say what you think needs to be done and
I mean fear fear is the mind killer as
as it says in in Dune but really it's
it's an unskillful mental state and once
you take that to heart like once you can
really appreciate the idea that fear or
worry or regret any of these kind of
mental States really are just poisoning
your

system I mean that's essentially what
you're doing they are toxic mental
States and so once you can see that with
a fair amount of of insight or Clarity

then I mean it just stops even being
really an option you know it's like well
should I just hit my hand this Hammer
it's like why would you do that you know
in advance that it's going to hurt it's
going to mess up your hand and it's the
same way with like worry or fear that
kind of stuff I mean once you get to a
certain degree of of like progress in
your practice or whatever you can see I
mean it's it's like hitting your hand
with a hammer it's it's all you're doing
is you're poisoning your system you're
making bad karma for
yourself so just a certain amount of
like mindful Detachment like if you're
in the habit of being fearful observe

the fear what does the fear feel like
how does it make your stomach feel how
does it make your head feel you know
what kind of bodily Sensations what kind
of and then just like the mental
sensations of fear it's like if you can
get to the point of fear is arising
rather than I'm afraid then you've
already detached from it's not you
anymore then you have more freedom to
decide what to do
appropriately but again fear is an
unskillful mental state it's bad karma
it's toxic to your system and it just
makes things
worse although it is true if somebody

put a a knife to my throat my heart rate
would

increase so I think I'm just going to
move on next question this is from count
nine and count nine

says oh he count nine went on like this

long surreal description of like

synchronicity around the letter F that

had been occurring in his his life

recently um so he says amazingly I

haven't also found any F sound in poly

no place neither in the beginning nor

anywhere else did you mention it already

or have I slept in the meanwhile or

maybe dreamed completely the whole thing

however it seems that any classical

Indian language has no such use for f

I wonder how was it regarding the Western branches of the Indo-European language and I have done a little research into this and it turns out that the scholars the experts the authorities are of the opinion that in proto indoeuropean the the like the the language that is like the ancestor of English German French like Latin Greek Armenian Sanskrit Persian etc etc there was no F sound and it's kind of weird that f is kind of an unusual s some Asian languages don't have F either like Burmese doesn't have an F sound either

so the original Proto Indo European language apparently didn't have an F sound although like in Greek they've got like

Phi I mean in homeric Greek there was even like an F which is where the the Romans got their symbol for the letter F Well from an F in in like a dma I think it was called in homeric Greek but they have the in Greek they've got the F sound but they believe the experts believe that that came from an aspirated BH in proto indoeuropean so BH became like pH in Greek and then the the F in Germanic languages Germanic languages have lots of FS like uh P became father in in in like English which is a

Germanic language like the word for fire
like it started with a p like pyromaniac
or the funeral P became fire in in
English which again is a Germanic
language um the word five you know comes
like in Greek it's
Penta you know in in in Sanskrit and P
it's Pancha and then it becomes five in
German so there's some law I I can't
remember if it's Grim's law or something
that includes the idea that p's in
older like Indo-European languages
somehow got turned into F's in Germanic
languages so that's how English has the
F sound is that P got turned into F in
Germanic languages or evolved into F

mutated into

F

so um

yeah I'm not sure about Latin I yeah

Latin has like flavious that has has F

sound too and I'm not sure how the how

Latin got the F sound but it's it's

different for the Greeks and the Germans

you know German or the Germans it was P

turned into f for the Greeks it was BH

turns into F and uh it just nothing

turned into F in the the Indian

languages like Sanskrit or

poli and Burma has no F either so they

they usually try to replace it with an

aspirated P which doesn't work very good

you know like fish they try to say the

English word fish they'll if they don't
know how to say f they'll they'll say
pish so I'm just going to move on to
count n second question in the Stream of
samsara do you see any similarities
between a fork clipped operator and the
fairy man well I mean they tend to both
be men I guess who operate a vehicle
vehicle but a forklift operator has no
passengers it's against the rules
strictly against the rules to to carry a
passenger on a forklift whereas fairies
pretty much by definition have to have
passengers otherwise I mean why would
this the fairy man keep going back and
forth across the body of water without

fering anyone

across so I guess I'm

fing like Freight which is an f word

fing Freight with the

forklift but uh yeah I think this is

sort of a a Whimsical kind of a question

and so I think my answer is sufficient

for its purpose and so I'm just going to

move on to count 's thirdd question

which is any news from the

aquarium and uh yeah actually I was

seriously considering um doing an an

aquarium video soon my sweetheart just

tells me to just give it up give up the

aquarium videos because not very many

people watched them but even if only

five people watched my aquarium videos I

would still stubbornly obstinately
persist in in aquarium videos and there
have been some significant changes like
the whole ecosystem like my my previous
aquarium video was talking about how
just adding one new species to a fish
tank can completely radically change how
the whole ecological balance in the tank
that happened
again and um I I got one little Siamese
algae eater about this big and because I
had the way it worked was I was had a
lot of algae in the tank and the little
osyn algae eaters and the snails weren't
really keeping up with it and then I got
these loaches that specialize in eating

snails there was the snail apocalypse
and algae started exploding in the tank
including this black beard algae that
most snails and the the little osnas
won't eat so I get this Siamese algae
eater about this big I put it in there
and like a month later that that same
algae eater is like this big and all the
algae is just
gone and he's like the biggest fish in
the tank now I mean he's like a like a
trout or something
now so if you want more news from the
aquarium I guess maybe I'll do the video
tomorrow and then over the course of
some days just spacing out the videos a
little it it'll go up and I'll be

discussing also um the idea of having
like

a uh like substrates like whether you
should have like a layer of soil
underneath which is what a lot of people
are saying now it's like sort of a new
thing in aquarium keeping where
underneath the the sand or gravel you
got a layer of potting soil so that the
plants will will get like a get more
nutrients that kind of
thing and also just discussing sort of
water quality and so forth so it's going
to be a zero
interest to most people but it's still
of interest to me and so I talk about

it and let's see any more news from the aquarium I did I did get a few more plants which also will be featured in the aquarium video tomorrow I think so I'm just going to move on the next question which is from the Proto Pudo Monk and the Proto Pudo monk says why have the far-left gone totally insane why do they hate Trump and musk so much they are clearly good moral people trying to improve the world I don't understand what the left are so angry about okay well it's kind of like two questions isn't it so why have the far-left gone totally insane well I think a large part of it is I mean you start off with something like Marxism

which I mean it wasn't really effective because it really didn't apply to empirical reality very well you know it's just Marxism just goes against human nature which is one reason why Marx didn't even believe that human nature existed he believed in sort of like the blank slate idea that you know it's like there is no such thing as as human animal instincts and that is just patently false which is one of the main reasons why Marxism doesn't work it is unnatural it goes against human nature and so it has to be enforced at gunpoint as a general rule so that's just starting with that and now you got

like cultural Marxism like neomarxism
that is no longer um under the control
of intellectual white men it's now under
the control of women and just diversity
hires in general and so you wind up with
something like biological leninism which
is an interesting subject like the the
Soviet Union had this handicap in that
it wasn't a person's skill at some task
that got them a position in the
government or a position I mean in a
socialist society you know any position
is a position in the
government but it was like their loyalty
to the party their loyalty to lenon or
Stalin or whatever that's what got them
their jobs and and so you didn't have um

a

meritocracy and that was I mean when you
get away from meritocracy Darwin just
sinks his Talons into you and and starts
tearing you apart because you it's
survival of the
fittest and and this is viewed as like
hate speech by these like hysterical low
IQ irrational new
leftists who think who just have to
insist everyone is the same and so you
just you can just pick people at random
and put them in any job I mean it's it
might not be quite that extreme but it's
definitely leaning in that direction
like shortly after Trump became

president I mentioned this in the
previous video you had an army
helicopter crash into a commercial
jetliner killing a bunch of people turns
out the helicopter was piloted by A
diversity hire then you had just shortly
after that you had an American airplane
flip upside down at at an airport in in
Canada turns out the pilot was a
diversity
hire and it's just it's like you have
this Marxism that didn't really work and
then it gets taken over by hysterical
irrational people many of whom are
stupid but you can't say that you cannot
acknowledge the empirical fact of that
because that's hate

speech and so it's like they're just kicking meritocracy in the head and expecting to do better than meritocracy and Charles Darwin just doesn't put up with that

[__] so that's the first question I guess and so the second the second question from the protos Monk Is Why do they hate Trump and musk so much because they just insist on having their way they prefer their their ideology to actual empirical reality and I mean they used to like Trump and musk up until Trump and musk rejected their ideology and it's it's just like religious fanaticism at this point in fact the

religious fat iism has become
self-destructive because any position
that Trump or musk adopt they'll take
the opposite so Trump and musk will
adopt a position that's supported by 80%
of the country the hysterical left will
immediately start championing
championing this 20% position that is
just overwhelmingly disapproved of just
just out of

Hysteria musk was they liked musk and
then now they're like destroying
Teslas just because you know it's like
now they're opposed to reducing waste
and corruption in the federal
government now they're opposed to
deporting Violent illegal alien

criminals is just this hysterical
fanaticism that has just gotten out of
control

and it's largely fueled by the low
intelligence of diversity hires that
have found themselves up in positions of
of authority on the
left

so says there are clearly good moral
people trying to improve the world well
some of them

are and I don't understand what the left
are so angry about sort of like early
Christians were pretty angry about
Julian the apostate promoting paganism
instead of Christianity they and he just

became the Antichrist right there
boom you it was pretty much the same
with early Christianity in the Roman
Empire any any Emperor who the
Christians didn't like I mean he was Mr
666 he was the

Antichrist so I think I'm just going to
move on to this next part by the Proto
suda monk which isn't a question but I
don't know I'm just going to say it
anyway would love a weekly show on Poo's
political analysis of US World politics
exclamation point we must hear the sage
to straighten our minds in the midst of
propaganda and delusional beings yeah I
don't I don't know if I'd really be able
to come up with enough for a a weekly

rant because that's that's what it would have to be if I was going to do any kind of political show like on YouTube I'd have to be ranting good in order to be for it to be worth my while then it can sort of be

catharsis you know it's like uh a few times recently a person called extremely rare bird was kind of doing like a leftist rant in the comments and I kind of looked forward to it because it gave me an opportunity to do like a counter rant and is I guess for some reason ranting just has a certain cathartic effect that is kind of causes an emotional satisfaction although of

course it's creating more karma and the vicious circle and all that

so I'm just going to move on to the next question this is from Arin and Arin says what did the Buddha teach about dreams I always have super Vivid long dreams each night and wake up feeling like I was dreaming for many hours and living in another life while I slept at times I can identify themes from my subconscious sleep seeping through but most of the time it is very mundane what is your own personal theory on dreams and they align with the Buddha Freud or Yung at all well with regard to I mean the very first question here what the very first question mark I should say what did the

Buddha teach about dreams this is yet another one of these topics that I mean we've had several in this in this Q&A that it's it's a well-known phenomenon dreaming people were dreaming in Ancient India it's just that Terra Buddhism really doesn't have much of a position on dreams like like Abid dama which supposedly explains everything doesn't really explain dreams you know what is the purpose of dreams you know why anything like that I mean there's mention of dreams like the Buddha was supposedly conceived when his wife mahamaya was having a dream of a white elephant that entered her body and

then she woke up pregnant the next day so I mean the Buddha was conceived through a dream according to the legend you know there there's occasional mentions of Dreams in poly literature it's just that it doesn't really explain why people have dreams it's just accepted like gravity as just it's just something that they didn't bother to even try to explain it which is unfortunate I

guess but uh let's see that's that was the first question mark what did the Buddha teach about dreams I mean I'm unaware of him teaching anything really I mean he may have mentioned dreams here or there but there's no real Buddhist

theory of dreams that I have ever been exposed to so at the end the final question mark what is your own personal theory on dreams and they align with the Buddha Freud or young at all well yeah we can leave the Buddha out because again I don't think there there is like an official terrible lot of Buddhist um theory of dreams but um like biologically the purpose for dreams is to process information they have they have found that animals that don't dream have to have larger brains in order to perform the same functions as animals that do dream in fact I mean I when I was in college I did a a research paper

on intelligence in dolphins and in
Dolphin has like an abnormally large
Brain it's it's larger and more
convoluted than our brain and they don't
have like fingers and stuff that would
require extra brain tissue so why does
the dolphin have such a big brain you
know they're they're obviously very
intelligent but it wasn't until after I
had written the paper years later that I
found that uh Dolphins don't dream that
they sleep only as long as they can hold
their breath which in a bottle know
dolphin is like 6 minutes so they have
to take like a little cat nap 6 minutes
at a time and they really can't sleep
very much because there's like sharks

and orcas and stuff and the dolphin
might not have any place to hide they're
just like floating right out there in
plain

sight so that could exp help to explain
why dolphins have such huge convoluted
convoluted brains is they they don't
dream they don't have RM sleep when when
they're taking their little six minute
naps and so they have to have more brain
to do the same thing so it's like the
the purpose of dreaming from a
biological point of view is just
processing information just kind of
taking information that you you acquired
during the day and helping to like

organize it and and set up like neural links like chains of association with other ideas just so that you can integrate you know the like the the sensory input of that day that that would be like the main bi main biological purpose of it um but still like getting back to that Oprah Winfrey video clip it your subconscious mind can communicate to you through dreams and I have found that

Freudian

um dream symbolism does seem to work for me in in my case that I think Freud I mean I don't think that he was like an infallible Oracle by any stretch of the imagination but some of the stuff that

he said um seems to be pretty pretty
much right on and a lot of his his
discussion of dream symbolism like how
water represents spirit and like
dreaming about a building is generally
dreaming about your own body and that
was born out by my father also who said
that after he got old he started having
dreams about being trapped in a
dilapidated building that was falling
apart

so it

does um Freud seems to have been largely
correct with regard to the meaning of
dream symbolism for
example um and a lot of dreams are just

kind of spam dreams you know you can just have weird dreams that don't mean necessarily much of anything but I really do not have a like a a thoroughly worked out theory of dreams I'm not sure if anybody I assume some has to have come up with some sort of

elaborate um you know like very developed theory on dreams and you know why we dream and the meanings of them and different purposes of Dreams um Romas somebody asked ROM dos once about you know the importance of Dreams in a spiritual life and he says for the most part dreams are you're working stuff out at other levels you know at different

levels of reality some of it is you're doing it in a dream state and um I mean sometimes you'll get information that is useful to you and you accept that but for the most part you shouldn't take it too seriously because a lot of it really is just like spam dreams and so forth um and it also reminds me of a weird idea that came from the Seth material um a woman named Jane Roberts who was channeling this multi-dimensional being that called itself Seth and Seth was saying that when you're dreaming you actually are creating like a cruder level of SAR than this waking level and that some of these

people that you dream that you can dream
somebody that you've never met before I
had this one Dream Woman she appeared in
a number of my dreams when I was a young
man I don't think I ever met her in in
real life but she she appeared in like
at least four memorable dreams that that
I was having like in my 20s and 30s that
these dream beings that you're creating
in your dreams that they can continue to
have like an
existence like away from from you on
their own they're they're living in like
this crude kind of Ghost World like a
spirit world or something so I mean in a
way we're creating our own universes
creating our own worlds in our sleep I

guess even a dog that's lying there kind of whimpering and jerking and it sleep sleep is creating some kind of little fake dog world in fact I read somewhere that uh an American possum the only marsupial that lives in the wild in the United States delfus marsupialis um that they spend more time dreaming than awake so they're creating these little murky possum Spirit worlds of possums you know like climbing into garbage cans and and eating dog food off back porches and stuff anyways I guess I should just uh move on to the next question and we are kind of getting down

towards the bottom there's only a few more questions so we're going to be I think we're going to be under three hours that's that's kind of good so next question is from harim cthul and harim cthul says what happened to the spiritual right project yeah that was something that happened a few years ago there was a number of people um that were sort of contacted by the organizer and asked to get involved in this spiritual right project and I was willing you know I'm I'm generally I don't initiate much like with regard to interviews and so forth but if someone asks me to participate in something if it seems worthwhile seems potentially

like it might be a good thing you know
sometimes I'll go along with it and so
we made a few uh videos and there was a
lot of like private talk about you know
like oh just like the the trademark or
what do you call it like the the Avatar
or something you know what we're going
to do and how we're going to do it and
you know what the rules were going to be
there was a lot of this kind of
discussion much more than actually
creating

videos and it was the main problem was
that the organizer you know the person
who was sort of coordinating this who
was whose idea it was just kept changing

his plans and I mean this is just kind of the sort of guy he he he is I think he's still this way where he just would keep changing plans it's like he'd lose interest in this and start wanting to do this instead and then he' he he'd be really gung-ho about that for a while and then lose interest in that or think that it that's not going to work let's try this instead and people just started losing patience with it and dropping out and the whole thing just kind of disintegrated so that's what happened to that and so I'm going to move on to the next question and this is from Toronto and Toronto says I know your background is in Terra but maybe you can

give me some of your spiritual Insight
on a personal situation I am currently a
member of an online zogin SAA and I've
generally been quite enjoying my time
there un fortunately I was recently
confronted by a moderator for my alleged
acts of

Nazism specifically for having a Discord
profile picture with the black sun in it
and talking about going to a Sam Hyde
show I was told that if I post something
incriminating again I would be asked to
leave their Discord server what would be
your call if you're in my shoes well I'm
not I don't not I really don't even know
who Sam Hyde is is I think I saw a

picture of him just recently but still I don't know what Sam Hyde says in his talks or anything like that um well I guess if you're in this Zog chin group that has like a Discord server and the moderator there or a moderator very much doesn't like Nazi

symbolism Nazi

symbolism then I mean you're just going to have to make the call for yourself is which is more important to you being in that group or like having a black son on your Discord

Avatar I mean which is more important to you and then you just have to decide which is more important and go with that and it would be different for different

people I mean if it were in my case I probably wouldn't have a black son on my Discord profile picture anyway but then again I probably wouldn't be on an online Zog chin s

either so so yeah I mean you're just going to have to decide which is more important I mean you wouldn't necessarily have to be dishonest in order not to be showing like what is perceived to be Nazi symbols or any kind of Nazi adjacent stuff

um you know it all depends like how how leftist is the moderator you know it's like just saying that

like girls don't have a p PE like boys
do I mean is that going to be like
misogynistic fascist

Nazism I mean some people some people
are kind of ideologically attuned with
that kind of idea at
present

so yeah I mean what would I what would
be my call if I were in your shoes I
would have to decide which is more
important just being

like outspoken with regard to your
political orientation or being a member
of the group and which is more important
to you that's I mean you're going to
have to make that
decision so I'm just going to move on to

the next question which is the last question and this is from David and this was not under a Q&A video this was under the video that I posted recently with Bri my friend Brian and I were discussing this new age idea of pre-life contracts this there's this idea that you'll you'll decide what your next life is going to be like in advance that it's like a conscious decision from some like overs Soul or something that um I I mentioned in the video that ROM dos mentions in a book that he apparently believed this idea where it's like in order to to work out my karma that needs to be worked out out

and make progress that needs to be made
I'm going to have to be born to like a
20-year-old black crack addicted
prostitute and with you know no father
around and just live in a just handt
mouth existence until I'm 23 and then
you know get stabbed to death in a back
alley and okay that's that's what I'm
going to do let's do
it and Buddhism Terra aut Buddhism in
particular does look at it that way that
there is
no I mean there's not even a momentary
gap between one life and the next there
is is is just an automatic process that
your karma is just seeking its own path
just through I mean almost mechanical

means it's like water just flowing in the direction that naturally it needs to flow you know it's just working itself out without any kind of conscious decision making going on on that is guiding that it just happens whether you like it or not whether you want it or not it just happens naturally and automatically that's the Terra Buddhist point of view so anyways David says why do you exclude the idea of contracts down to contracts with yourself to work Karma out it's possible that you make contracts with powerful entities for various reasons both good and bad people into black magic for example are known

for making contracts with demons but who's to say that you haven't made a pre-birth contract with a demigod like Thor for example that you would fight against the destruction of Europe who is to say Elon Musk didn't make a pre-birth contract that he would deliver agreed upon technological developments was Tesla being totally driven by his own genius or was he trying to keep up his greed upon contract how much trouble do you get in if you die without completing your agreed upon contract well I mean how do you make this contract and when like again according to Theravada Buddhism it's just one moment you die at the end of this life the very next moment you

are conceived in the next life there is no time to be signing contracts just from the ter Buddhist point of view with regard to making contracts when you're alive like people into black magic known to make contracts with demons that's that is a worldly contract that you're making during this life and I mean that's not the kind of pre-life contracts that are being discussed I mean it's sort of like um like a buddhis satva vow could be considered a kind of contract where you're like postponing Enlightenment indefinitely until all beings are liberated this kind of thing that I mean even if you make a bodh

satow in this life then how are you
going to know that you had that bu made
that buddhy satma vow in in a subsequent
existence I may have made bodh satva
vows in previous lives I don't recall
them and I haven't been following that
that vow very well partly just because
I'm really not the person that that made
the contract and there is no oversos from
a terab Buddhist point of view that
would that would be responsible for that
sort of

thing so let's see it is possible that
you make contracts with powerful
entities for various reasons both good
and bad yeah well that's really not the
kind of contract that was being

discussed in the
video what was being discussed in the
video was more like what ROM dos was
saying where it's like you decide that
you're going to be living this kind of
life and it might be an unpleasant
horrible kind of life but it's like some
wiser aspect of you you know your overs
Soul or whatever
just realizes that this is what needs to
be done in order for you to make the
most spiritual progress and even though
it's going to be excruciating for the
ego I mean it's like the decision is
made from a higher level than the ego
that is willing to just damage parts of

itself for the sake of achieving this higher goal sort of like you know we're willing to get some damage on like our hands we're working on a c or something and we're willing to hit our Knuckles against stuff accidentally we're willing to take that risk you know just for the sake of getting this car fixed you know we're willing to take a little bit of damage doing mountain climbing or that sort of thing you know you're willing to take a certain amount of damage uh to certain parts of your body and the idea is like this oversoul is willing to let certain aspects of itself lesser aspects like individual human lives take damage for the for the sake of the benefit of

the

whole and again terab Buddhism doesn't go with that idea maybe some kinds of Hinduism do because ramas was more Hindu than anything else and he endorsed it and in new AG a lot of people endorse it but from the terab Buddhist point of view there really is no oversos to make these kinds of decisions see see who's to say that you haven't made a pre-birth contract with a demigod like Thor well I mean it would have to be during your previous life because there from the terot Buddhist point of view there is no Gap in between one life and the next there is no BAU

realm where you're drifting around in
some Heaven realm making plans for the
next life some Hindus believe that ramas
I remember in one of his books he said
you know if it's your karma to be a
prince in your next life I mean there
might be a waiting list or something it
might take a while before that life is
going to be ready for you to take it and
so you might wind up in some
intermediate state but in terot of
Buddhism the intermediate state would
itself be some kind of spirit existence
so it's just like you stop being a human
you start being this being in some other
realm and then after that then you
become the the human Prince or

whatever so let's see who is to say Elon Musk didn't make a pre-birth contract that he would deliver agreed on technologically I mean who's he going to make the contract with I mean and how is he going to make this contract I mean who is to say that he did or didn't I mean whoever says or doesn't say it I guess so it just depends on how you look at it and I mean I'm open to the possibility of it I do not think that terado Buddhism necessarily has you know the final say on exactly how rebirth happens and it may be that there is a kind of

multi-dimensional overs Soul kind of
being which is still illusory and
samsaric it's just like a higher level
of samsara you know it's just a higher
level of

Illusion ultimately none of it is is
like ultimately

real so how much trouble do you get in
if you die without completing your
agreed upon contract I really don't
think it works that way and I did say it
in the video that it's not that you have
make some conscious decision so it's
like somebody has this decision they're
going to be born to the drug addicted
black prostitute and die when they're 23
you know it's not like they remember

making that decision after they're
born you know it's like it's just it's
like your destiny it's like you're not
choosing some contract that you can
possibly violate you are choosing your
fate you're choosing your destiny and
it's going to happen whether you like it
or not whether you want to do it or not
it's still going to happen I mean that's
the way it works in
theory it's not like you're sitting down
writing you know signing your name to a
to a contract and then some notary
stamps it that kind of
thing
so yeah I mean I kind of covered this

this information in the the video with
with Brian and I guess we're going to be
making more vide videos I haven't even
uploaded all the videos I did with him
last time and then there might also be
an aquarium video if I can get working
on it before the the timer makes it go
into Moonlight mode because you got to
have enough light that you can actually
see Rama the first the Siamese algae
eater doing his business in there and so
on and so

forth so as I should always say at the
beginning and almost never do if you
have any questions you think I can
answer and I mean I'm not like an
omniscient Oracle so there's a lot of

things I really don't know much about
like the history of the Chinese prison
system and so forth who developed it and
and why or not Chinese but
Japanese or what the Buddha was thinking
what he believed in before he became
enlightened I mean I don't know how
anybody could know that anymore than
they can know what what Hercules was
thinking so if you think I can answer
the question or I think that 's a good
chance of it especially with regard to
ter of Auto Buddhism early Buddhism you
know
monasticism meditation Burma me
personally that kind of thing maybe even

throw in some biology stuff because I know some stuff about biology philosophy religion in general but the more you the more obscure you get the less likely it is that I'll be able to answer but every once in a while somebody will just hit the right cord and ask me some obscure question that I happen to have given a lot of thought

about

so um hit the like button if you made it this far I suppose and

uh subscribe if you haven't already

check the uh URL links below the video

and uh try to stay off lists and be

happy

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

139 which I think may actually be a prime number. I am your host Po Bosan and any of you who can demonstrate that 139 is not a prime number by say factoring it out in the comments is welcome to do so and I will sit corrected.

This is my beverage. And this on my head here is my favorite baseball cap. And I've discovered that just to put on a baseball cap is easier and faster than washing and

drying my hair. So that's what I'm doing today. I didn't take a shower this morning. I took a shower last night after coming home from work. Had bed head this morning. So, I've just been wearing a baseball cap whenever I appear in

public. So, we don't have a whole heck of a lot of questions today and so we should be well under three hours this time, possibly even under two hours. Who knows? And I suppose I should start answering questions because otherwise it will last a very long time to get to the end of this. And the first question is from Master Poe. And Master Poe asks a three-word

question. Freud or Yung? question mark.

And I'm not exactly

sure like what he means by this. It's

like which one do I like better? I mean,

of the two, I think Young was a wiser

person than Freud. Freud was like a

scientific materialist, apparently. just

just a flatout

atheist and

uh Jung at least had some appreciation

for deeper things, more hidden

things. Um like Rahm Doss said in one of

his early books that Freud was like a

master of second chakra whereas Jung was

more into third chakra. So that would

make Jung more spiritually advanced than

Freud since Freud was stuck at the
chakra that was second from the
bottom. However, of like late 19th,
early 20th century psychologists,
um Freud has influenced my thinking more
than Jung has. mainly with regard to
what Freud said about hysteria and that
was really groundbreaking. He was like
the Galileo of of psychology. I think
maybe not the Isaac Newton of psychology
but definitely the
Galileo. And what he said about hysteria
was I
mean everybody has desires. Freud had
this rather naive idea that naked
savages living in a wilderness somewhere
would not be his would not be um like

repressed. But civilized people have to repress their natural urges. Like a man just can't like like molest any woman that he finds attractive or you're not allowed to just beat up anyone you don't like. At least you're not supposed to in a civilized society. So according to Freud, everyone has to repress their natural urges. And those natural urges don't just disappear. They just lie lurking latent in the subconscious mind where they accumulate and build up pressure until they finally start percolating up to the surface in the form of neurotic symptoms. And hysteria is like that. And

it really helped me to understand myself and my own behavior and human behavior in general a bit better. Just that whole idea just the subconscious mind. Um there must have been some people who had an idea of the subconscious mind before Freud came along. But just how repressing your urges doesn't just make them go away. They just they stay like at a at a subconscious level building up pressure until they start really causing problems. And they can cause serious health problems too. And as a monk, like a very strict monk, conscientious strict monk, then I mean a monk would be even more repressed and potentially at least even more neurotic and hysterical than

the average civilized human being, which helps to explain just the raging hysteria

of like some Catholic convents and monasteries and just like very repressive culture. like the Puritans of the the North American colonies like in Massachusetts or like Spain during the Inquisition like like 16th century where at the same time they're very restrained very moral at least superficially but then it's just like mass hysteria can just cut loose at any time and then you just got like howling mobs and this sort of thing.

So, getting back to the question though,

Freud or Young? Um, I think I I think

Young was the wiser of the two, the more

spiritually advanced of the two, but

Freud

um some of the stuff that he was saying

or writing has had more of an influence

on my understanding of the human

condition.

Also, a lot of what Freud said about

dream symbolism seems to uh hold out for

me. It seems to be largely true in uh

according to my own

experience. So anyways, I'm just going

to move on to this question and this is

from Phil and Phil says, "Can you see

ghosts or do you believe you have access

to any supernatural abilities that

average people do not?"

And um with regard to seeing ghosts, apparently when I was very small, I could see the ghost of a lady who had died in our house before we moved in. Um one time in Burma, I apparently saw some kind of apparition. But with regard to psychic abilities, especially at the conscious level, I I do not have that nearly to the extent that my father did. My father claimed that he could see auras, he could see ghosts. Ghosts would kind of accumulate around him trying to communicate that kind of thing. Um, he did a lot of experimentation with what

he called the occult like ESP and and witchcraft and this kind of stuff. So, he was definitely more the psychic type than I am. In my case, um, with regard to supernatural or paranormal abilities, it's it's not really under my conscious control. It's like synchronicities, things that I'm not doing deliberately. Like many times, my woman and I have been sitting together and she'll be just starting to open her mouth to say, say something, and I'll blurt out what she was about to say. Not on purpose, not because I'm deliberately reading our mind. It's just that we're like on the same wavelength enough that we have sort of a group mind, that kind

of thing. So that sort of thing,
synchronicity, especially if you're
doing intensive practice, the like the
the occurrence of synchronicities,
uh, which is like teaching of Yung
synchronicity, um, that increases. So, I
guess I'd have to put that on Young's
side of the of the equation with regard
to important ideas. I mean,
synchronicity is is up there, I
guess. But, uh, yeah, I mean, for me, I
do not have like psychic talent at the
conscious level, but at a subconscious
level, stuff happens that could be
called paranormal or whatever.
sometimes or at least it's

synchronicities. It's sort of a
meaningful

coincidences. So anyways, I'm just going
to move on to Phil Lee's second
question. Thoughts on modernity as the
most fundamental theoretical basis for
all practice? And for those of you who
are not fluent in poly, modernity is
recollection of death or mindfulness of
death. And I really don't consider
mindfulness of death to be the
fundamental theoretical basis for all
practice. I think that there are certain
Buddhist theories, Buddhist
philosophical doctrines that are more
important than simply reminding yourself
on a daily basis that you're going to

die eventually, if not today, than some other day, but it's definitely going to happen. Um, I do think that first and second noble truths would be more conducive to

um

inspiring serious practice than the idea that we're going to die. I mean, people have known that we're all going to die for a very long time. The ancient Greeks, they knew we were all going to die. you know, like in the uh the Iliad, um Achilles, who is really kind of a jerk. He's philosophy philosophizing about how we're all going to die. And back then, they just took that idea and

said, "Well, we're all going to die."

So, just kind of justifies killing your enemies. And when you when it comes time for you to die, you just face it with a little bit of manly

fortitude. So I mean, in their case, it certainly wasn't um fundamental to any kind of dharmic practice. I mean, it could be just taken the other way, just towards psychopathy or something.

But the first and second noble truth, the idea that to exist is to suffer and that desire is the cause of all suffering. I mean that is a very good like

foundation for any kind of inspired dharma

practice. So I guess those are my thoughts on that particular subject. And so I'm just going to move on to Philly's third question, which is kind of a followup on a previous question. If all your books burned down and you could get a fresh copy of only one of them and you could never buy a book again, which would you keep? I guess it'd have to be like a copy of my own Atakawaga translation.

Um, so yeah, I mean that would be it. It would just be my own translation. I wouldn't want to translate that and then just lose it and never have access to it. So, I can't like pick it up and look

at it

sometimes. But if it if it weren't something that I myself had written, I don't know just technic I if you if you consider the book of the new son by Jean Wolf all five volumes of it if you also include like the epilogue that if that wasn't considered to be one book I mean I might just keep that one just you return to it again and again as were a kind of scripture or just like a good translation of the sutin pa um which contains the atawaga even though it would be my own translation of it because I never translated the entire sutin pa. So yeah, let's just move on. Next

question. Next question is from Quoistor, which is also a kind of follow-up question.

And Quistor says, "If the paying back of karmic debt is accomplished via equanimity to Wedina, um, would this still be possible in higher realms considering there'd be no discomfort there? Or would progress on the path be accomplished through equanimity and detachment to only these subtle, pleasant sensations?"

Well, I mean, there's going to be some kind of discomfort even in heaven realms. You know, it could just be like boredom, just contraction of spirit,

relative contraction of spirit. But I mean, dooka, the first noble truth applies to everything, to everywhere in samsara, including heaven realms. So, there's still going to be dooka or unease, suffering in in heaven realms. It's just going to be more subtle. But again, I mean, if let's see, paying back of karmic debt is accomplished via equanimity. It'd be not so much equanimity as mindfulness. That when I mean mindful detachment, which I guess you could call equanimity, although not all equanimity is mindful. I mean, some of it's just being numb or whatever. That wouldn't be like right

equanimity though I guess. So like
mindful detachment is how you um I don't
know if you call it paying back a karmic
debt. I mean whenever karmic your karma
reaches fruition that's the paying of
the debt. And so all you're doing by
mindful detachment is just not making
new karma which then perpetuates a kind
of vicious
circle. You know, it's like you do
something which causes like a karmic,
you know, backlash which causes you to
react which creates more karma which
backlashes which causes you to react
which makes more karma which backlashes
and you get have this vicious circle

just self-perpetuating cycle that keeps some sorrow going.

So, um, through mindful detachment, you know, you you can't stop the karmic fruition. I mean, there's there's ways you could sort of minimize certain odds, that kind of thing. But, um, I mean, karmic fruition is the payback of whatever you did that made the karma.

So this karmic or this uh mindful detachment is just kind of breaking the cycle and that can be exercised with regard to excuse me with regard to painful or pleasant phenomena. So something really nice and pleasant happens to

you. Again, mindful detachment, which breaks the cycle, although that's more advanced practice because most people don't want to stop pleasant stuff from happening to them. They don't like the unpleasant stuff, but they like the pleasant stuff. And so it's like um you know, being in one of these negative, vicious circles, you know, that's like being chained. Whereas if you're bound up in a positive, you know, pleasant cycle, vicious cycle, self-perpetuating cycle, you know, it's it's just like you're bound up with comfy silk ropes, but you're still bound up. You're still in bondage, so to

speak. So yeah, anything that occurs to you, you know, any kind of weight in any kind of feeling is the fruition of karma according to orthodox terraada. So any kind of mindful detachment, I mean you can have that in heaven, in hell, as a human,

whatever. I mean the the principle is the

same. So I'm just going to move on to Quistor's second question, which is kind of a strange theoretical question. If a baby is brought up by an AI robot with all the simulated love a mother would have and with the same tactile experience, would this baby feel loved or would it need to feel the emotional

energy of love which would not be present from machinery? I would assume that for someone who is like inherently like a superficial person, not much depth to them, it wouldn't make much difference. But to someone who has more like spiritual depth, there might be a noticeable difference between like a female android mothering a baby and an actual mothering a baby with the female android not having any genuine feelings is just mimicking the behavior of a loving mother. Um, yeah. to to the more sensitive like spiritually more advanced kind of babies that they're presumably would be a difference that they might

actually be stunted in their mental or spiritual development in this life as a result of not receiving genuine love but just sort of a superficial imitation of love

like done by a

machine. But to the average normie kind of a person, it might not be um a noticeable

difference. I mean, most normie type of people might actually do better with an an android mimicking genuine love than having just inattentive, neglectful parents that are like real humans.

So yeah, I think it would be different on a baby bybyab

basis. And so I'm just going to move on

to Quistor's third question. Is a self always ego-based or can awareness or pure consciousness also be considered self even if there's no attachment? I'm thinking awareness or pure consciousness may become self as soon as attachment occurs. Um well there's different ways of defining self. In terra Buddhism it is mainly a subjective self. In Mahayana philosophy it can be any kind of like separate individuality.

So a separate individuality let's say this cup that to believe that this cup exists could be a kind of self view from like an objective perspective that there's any kind of like separated

individuality that this really is a cup
instead of it cup being just a
convenient label that you stick onto
this as a kind of generalization to make
it much easier to navigate samsara.

tomorrow. So I

think I think

quistor is referring to self in the
subjective sense

and is it always ego based? Yeah. I mean
there there is the sutta in the the

atikawaga the sudnipata that says the

the conceit I am is the root of all like
differentiation which results in some

sorrow like um one of the synonyms for

nibbana is nepapancha which means

non-differentiation so once you start

dividing stuff up and like labeling things and classifying things and interpreting things, you've got some sorrow. And according to some poly texts anyway, the beginning of that is the idea I am, which is like ego. I think ego literally means I am. I could be mistaken on that.

So

see, can pure consciousness also be considered self? Well, I mean if you go with the idea that nibbana is pure formless infinite consciousness or like the upanachadic idea that Brahman is pure formless like infinite

consciousness then I mean the Hindus at least would say that's a kind of self that's the like the capital A atman I mean that is the true self of all beings is this infinite consciousness which is also God whereas As in Buddhism, the idea that nibbana is infinite consciousness was

apparently I mean it was it was an idea that was entertained in in ancient India and it has found its way into a few sutas but it kind of fell from favor you know it it just sort of lost out in the the the competition of ideas in in the evolution of terabara Buddhist doctrine.

Um, so is a self always ego based? I would assume so. Can awareness or pure

consciousness also be considered self?

Anything could be considered some kind of self once you objectify it. Once you turn it into a like a concept, then in a way it has already become a self. Once it's an it then then it's a it's a self in a way at least from an objective point of view. So let's see he says I'm thinking awareness or pure consciousness may become self as soon as attachment occurs. Well, before the attachment occurs, I think you'd have to have um the self before the attachment occurs. Or maybe they would happen just the I am just the attachment to the idea I am

arising from this consciousness
somehow that uh you know that would be
the beginning of the self and the
attachment and the suffering and samsara
and all the rest cuz there it's a it's a
a package deal, you know. It does isn't
like one thing just starts and then that
causes this which causes that. I mean
it's just there it's dependently
coarising. So I'm just going to move on
to the next question. This is from
PSA and PSA says your show has become so
successful globally and
intergalactically I think I've got
almost 2,000 subscribers now that the
number of episodes is reaching
inconceivable figures. Have you

considered using exponential notations
to express such gargantuan and
immeasurable numbers?

Nope. So, see PSA's next question is,
why are you so ruggedly handsome? It's
the beard. It's that's that's all it is.

So, PSA's third question, last but not
least, what is your favorite sutra of the
Kudaka Nikaya and

why? Well, let's get back to the
exponential uh notation one. Yeah, I
guess this would be like Q&A number
 1.39×10^2 . I guess I mean it's
still easier at this point to say it's
just number 139. So, we're going to have
to get into even higher numbers before I

start using exponential notation. So, let's just get back to the third question now. Last but not least, what is your favorite sutra up the curaya and why? That's a tough one because probably more than half of my favorite sutras are from the kudkinikaya. Like the sutanipata is in the kudkakinaya. The atikawaga is in the kudkinikaya. So it's like the paramataka sutra of the atakawaga. I mean that's that has long been one of my favorite sutras. Also the sudataka sutra of the atakawaga of the sutinata of the kurikaya is one of my favorite sutras. Um also like the baja sutra of the udana is another one of my favorite

sutas. So yeah I guess I'd just say the paramonta suta or the sudant. I mean it's it's like a tie for first place I guess.

Yeah, just just to just to mix things up a bit, let's just say for now at the present moment, the sudataka suta of the sutin pata is my favorite suta of the kudicaya. Possibly my favorite suta of the entire poly tip. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Romeo. And Romeo says, "Are you familiar with Joseph Campbell and his book, The Power of Myth? either the book or the long form PBS interview. If so, what is your

analysis of it? And I'm really not that familiar with Joseph Campbell and his book, The Power of Myth. I remember PBS was pushing it big time during like their membership drives if you donated a certain amount of money to PBS. This is like back in the 1980s that you'd get like I think it was the man with a thousand faces or the hero with a thousand faces. I mean, something like that by Joseph Campbell. And so they were giving a lot of press to Joseph Campbell and discussing Joseph Campbell and that sort of thing. And that's about the only exposure I really had to Joseph Campbell. I mean, I had his soup

sometimes, but that's totally different,
I
guess.

So, yeah, I really don't have much of an
analysis. So, I guess I'll just have to
just say nope to that one and move on to
Romeo's second question, which is more
general. and I'm thus more likely to be
able to at least knock a dent into
answering this question. What is your
overall opinion of mythology, especially
on whether it has any practical effect
on an individual's unconscious
mind? That's kind of strange that he he
singles out the unconscious mind. I mean
it has uh certainly has a practical

effect on the conscious mind because the
mythology is is essentially how you
interpret the
world and I mean usually like nowadays
we think well
previous cultures had mythology and we
had sort of like a semi- mythology like
when I was growing up it's like Star
Trek and Gilligans Island you know it's
like they were sort of like arch
etypes, you know, the Gilligans Island,
it was populated by
archetypes or, you know, the Beverly
Hill Billies, that kind of thing. You
know, it had sort of replaced the older
quasi semi- mythology of America like
Paul Bunyan and Pos Bill and John Henry,

that kind of stuff. But nowadays, young people don't know who Paul Bunan was or who Gilligan

was, which is kind of sad to me.

But mythology, I mean, that's it's it's like a a kind

of fictional interpretation of reality.

And personally, I like to give an

example, my woman likes watching like

health videos on YouTube, and you'll

have these guys sitting around

discussing as though it were just some

groundbreaking fact. there's some new

chemical that they've discovered in

human biochemistry and they're talking

about how this kind of food inhibits it

and it's useful in the synthesis of this kind of enzyme and all this kind of stuff and they're talking about it like it's real like this is reality that they are talking about and they're not talking about Apollo or you know driving his chariot across the sky this kind of stuff they're talking about these these chemicals in our body that and how eating this kind of food or this kind of lifestyle can inhibit or promote this kind of chemical which is useful or harmful in this sort of way. And a 100 years from now, 200 years from now, people will look back on that and consider that to be the mythology of this scientific age that science really

is the the predominant religion of the west. It's it's more sophisticated than say early Christianity or classical paganism. You know, it's it's more grounded in empiricism and thus it has like a more stabilizing effect. You know, it's it's sort of locking down our world into something predictable, but still um it's it's like beliefs. It's like nowadays science has helped us to like produce like comprehensive like universal sort of beliefs that help to stabilize this mind degenerated reality that we're living in but it's still mythology.

So what is my overall opinion of mythology especially on whether it has any practical effect on individual's unconscious mind? Well your unconscious mind it's it's really hard to say what the features are of the unconscious mind because it is unconscious but still it's just the assumptions of the world you're living in which for the most part are like semiconscious subconscious. It's not like you you're like replaying your world

view through your intellect at all times just reminding yourself of how it is that you interpret this version of reality.

So the mythology is largely just this

body of assumptions that people make just to give meaning to this world and that's going to be like playing in the background which is pretty much of a subconscious or unconscious event. You know it's it's assumed it's you know implied in pretty much everything we do. our world view is just sort of acted out, you know, it's it's largely um it's it's profoundly conditioning our behavior and our attitudes and so forth. So, mythology, trying to give like a a a more obvious example of modern mythology other than just movies, that sort of thing, you know, like the Matrix, you know, it can be used as a

kind of philosophical symbol. People can use the word matrix as a philosophical term now, that kind of thing. So, that's a kind of myth. But I guess in order for it to be a real myth, it has to be believed as true when ultimately it turns out that it's not true. So maybe uh I don't know some some of the glorification of like political leaders, that kind of thing, that might qualify as mythology.

But uh mainly mythology is just an attempt at the human mind to superimpose meaning and structure and regularity on this world that we're living in which does help to like regularize it and is that a word

regularize and just sort of make it more predictable and sort of keep the scary paranormal at bay. You know, the the more of a a

comprehensive theory you've got to account for the world you live in, the less likely it is that there's going to be gaps that scary, unpredictable, paranormal phenomena can can slip through and really start wreaking havoc on on

people. So, I assume that would be my overall opinion on mythology. It's not something that I think about a lot.

mythology really isn't something that people think about all that much unless

they are reading like Norse mythology or classical Greco Roman mythology or Indian mythology or Mesoamerican mythology but they really don't apply much mythology to their own civilization and this is I mean our mythology should be the most important mythology but the thing is you don't recognize it as mythology because you think it's true, but you have to know that it isn't true in order to recognize it as mythology instead of just empirical fact.

So it is kind of a handicap in understanding our own mythology when you know just practically by definition we we can't know that it's mythology unless you're just sort of

looking at other people like the mainstream. Let's say you're out of the mainstream looking at the mainstream and and just sort of as an anthropological study seeing what it is that the normies believe. You know, sort of like the whole this world is going to be just this desolate oven apocalyptic dead planet within 10 years. And the 10 years just keeps getting moved forwards, forwards, forwards. you know that's a kind of mythology that you know the world is dying because we're producing too much carbon dioxide you know that is a kind of

myth and so it's I mean that kind of mythology can be um generated or endorsed by governments for example to kind of get the people to behave in a more manageable way in a way that the government wants them to behave that sort of thing And that's probably was true in ancient times also. Certainly with regard to the Catholic Church, that was true back like in the middle ages when the Catholic Church was the most powerful institution in all of Europe. But I guess I should just move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid. And speaking of Christianity, Xenithoid brings up Christianity here. He says, "Jesus says the truth will set

you free. However, the famous Christian existentialist Saurin Kirkagard is quoted as saying, quote, "The truth is a trap. You cannot get it without getting you, without it getting you. You cannot get the truth by capturing it, only by its capturing you." And then Zenithoid says, "Can you explain this discrepancy?" And when I read this quote from Kirkagard, it did remind me of a different quote from Alber Kimu from the myth of Seisphus, which seems to be similar. And so Kimu says, "There exists an obvious fact that seems utterly moral, namely that a man is always a prey to his truths. Once he

has admitted them, he cannot free himself from them." So Kimu would go with Kirkagard, I think. But the thing is that Kimu really isn't talking about like ultimate truth. He's just talking about beliefs. It's just what we consider to be true. And what you consider to be true becomes the truth for you. And you become enslaved to that. Sort of like the the guys on the health videos on YouTube. They're saying, you know, it's like when you get older, it's like you cannot replace lost muscle tissue. it's almost impossible and it's like they are reinforcing this idea you know that's becoming part of their world structure

and so in a way they're enslaving
themselves to

this or whatever it is you know eating
this kind of food will inhibit that kind
of enzyme which is then going to to to
play havoc with your biochemistry and
it's based on

this relatively minuscule it's still
amazing the knowledge of like
biochemistry just amazes me how way back
in like the 60s or 70s you had people
working out the TCA cycle, the Krebs
cycle, you know, how it is that gl a
molecule of glucose gets broken down in
in a sequence of steps with energy being
captured from some of these steps that

can then be used to fuel, you know,
other other functions.

in in a in a living system. I mean that
is just so amazing to me that that is
possible that they that they learn that
much. But still it's so infinitely
complicated that you're the human mind
is never going to really fully grasp it.
They're just going to grasp little bits
and pieces of it and think that they
understand pretty well until something
comes along. like the whole idea that
eating eggs was bad for you because of
the cholesterol. And then I mean it was
just it wasn't even controversial, you
know, it was they did studies proving
that the average person's life would be

prolonged by something like 3 years if they if they just stopped eating eggs.

And now it's like

nope.

So I think I'm kind of wandering away from the question now.

Let's just get back to the question, shall we? Jesus says the truth will set you free and Buddhism also pretty much is of that opinion that to know the ultimate truth is liberation. So in that sense, the truth sets you free because realizing reality is liberation from bondage, a liberation from from suffering and samsara and all that. So with regard to ultimate truth, I I think

Jesus is right. With regard to just beliefs like conventional truths, it may be that I mean Kimu would be right. And I'm really not sure what Saurin Kerkugard was referring to exactly whether he was referring to ultimate truth and was he referring to ultimate truth or just beliefs that one considers to be true but really ultimately or not conventional truth. So anyway Kirkagard's quote the truth is a trap. You cannot get it without it getting you. You cannot get the truth by capturing it only by it's capturing you. Well, I mean that could be interpreted either way that sort of like an orahant

um like in in Buddhism he attains to the ultimate truth and then there's all this stuff he can't do anymore. He can't tell lies anymore. For example, it's like he has to always do the right thing.

According to Orthodox Terravada

Buddhism, you cannot be fully enlightened without being an absolutely pure saint in addition to being a sage.

And so, I mean, that's pretty much it. I mean, any semblance of free will would largely be gone because you just of necessity be doing the right thing in every situation, which in a way is kind of slavery.

So yeah, I think the the quote from

Kierkegaard could be interpreted either way as with regard to ultimate truth and he it does seem to be he just has it in the singular just truth and not truths.

Um yeah it's like you cannot get the truth by capturing it only it's capturing you only by it's capturing you. Yeah. Well, I mean, the truth is greater than we are. You know, we're just ephemera, you know, here today, gone tomorrow. Whereas the truth presumably is eternal. So, yeah, it would get us more than we would get it. Sort of like love, you know, it's it's sort of like you don't really get love. Love gets you.

You know, you just sort of get absorbed into love. That kind of thing. I'm I'm talking about like spiritual love and not just like human reproductive instincts.

So in order for for me to fully explain the discrepancy, I'd have to know more about the context from which Kirkagard made the statement, but it could be interpreted either way like with regard to ultimate truth or just conventional truth.

And I mean you could just interpret the case either way really, you know, whether the truth sets you free or the truth enslaves you. In a way, it's just

how you how you choose to look at the situation. In a way, it's liberation, but at the same time, it also very much like constricts your choices because you you can't make any bad choices anymore. at least if if we uh accept orthodox terraodan philosophy as a guide with regard to that. So in a way you are you are liberated from the truth or liberated by the truth ultimate truth. Um, but certainly conventional truths enslave you. So long as you consider them to be really true, then you're you're it's just like a ball and chain. It might be necessary for most people to have some kind of structure of beliefs, you know,

kind of regulating their version of reality, but still it's it's like prison bars. It's like a mental prison. But again, I really I really can't say exactly what Kirkagard meant without having a fuller context with regard to why he said what he said. You know, what what would be the the preceding paragraph and the subsequent paragraph, that kind of thing.

So,

oh, I see here. So, let's see. Can you explain this discrepancy? That was one question. And then he's got two more questions based on the same quote. says,

"Who do you agree with?" And I would say that uh I think Jesus in the in the New Testament is correct and the truth will set you free. But also Kimu was right, even though that that he wasn't really included in the question that your beliefs, what you consider to be true, enslaves you. And where Kerkagard fits on the spectrum, I'm not sure. I mean he might be saying something along the lines of the terra Buddhists where when you realize the highest truth then you pretty much become a puppet of God like like in the philosophy of St. John of the cross when you mortify your self-will and become perfected then you don't have you're not

following your own self-will you don't have any self-will you just become like this puppet of god and in terravada Buddhism an arant is kind of the same way except there is no god for him to be a puppet of he's just like a puppet of dharma that kind of thing which really is not it doesn't strike me as as being extremely liberated when you no longer have any choices, but it's a different kind of liberation. It's liberation from samsara. And what the what the meat puppet that's still walking around making noise is doing is largely irrelevant at that

point. So anyways, the uh the third question is how does this relate to the divide between conventional truth and ultimate truth? Yeah, I've already been discussing that. So yeah, the ultimate truth would certainly set you free. At least in one sense it's freeing you from samsara but conventional truths to the extent that you cling to them which includes just believing them to be

true that I mean they enslave you they are they are the bars of your mental prison but they may be necessary for navigating this world. I mean, for an arant, they're just using like the vestigages of worldly beliefs that they

no longer really cling to anymore. It's just sort of on nature taking its course at that

point. So, anyways, I'm just going to move on this question. Let's try and see if we can get this one under two hours just for just for jollies, for cheap thrills. This question is from Luke Kelzer. And Luke Kelzer says, "Do you believe that there could be an argument to be made that we human beings are in fact avatars of the one true God having a self-inflicted time and spacebound experience on Earth as part of some kind of cosmic game or test and that after death we have the option to return to a

state of pure bliss." And an argument could be made along those lines because it has been

made. Quite a few spiritual teachers teach this sort of thing. Even Paul Low, a man that I consider to be very wise, has put forth pretty similar arguments. And it's there's this

idea that God is like

this one, the one capital O one. And then just to experience what it's like to live in

multiplicity. God divides himself up into an infinite number of beings that are all doing all this stuff to learn about, you know, whatever it is. But I just don't buy it at all because God is

already

omniscient. God just infinite formless

consciousness doesn't need anything.

doesn't need any kind of game or test at

all. It's already

infinite. So I think what is much more

likely is the theory of the block of

stone. You know what the Dao Ching calls

the nameless uncarved block where you've

got the block of stone the infinite

infinite stone sizeless because there's

nothing to compare it with. That's all

there is. There is just this block of

stone and it contains every possible

statue inside of it in like virtual

form, potential form, but it's all

they're really in there. And I think that is much more plausible than that. God, even though infinite and omnisient, still has to do this stuff in order to fulfill itself somehow when it shouldn't have to fulfill itself because it's already omnisient, omnipotent, completely infinite. It doesn't need anything.

So yeah, I mean there could be an argument made along those lines, but I just do not consider it plausible. But it has been made a lot well quite a few spiritual teachers have taught that sort of thing. But I just I just don't buy it. So I'm just going to move on to this

question. This is from Thermal Squid.

And Thermal Squid says, "Is your computer powerful enough to run Steam games?" Um, I'm not sure. I I've got like an Apple MacBook Pro, which, you know, it's not bottom of the line, but it's not top of the line either. It's sort of like midlevel with regard to, you know,

the whatever whatever is in the guts of it. So, is it powerful enough to run Steam games? Maybe, maybe not. I don't know. So anyways, Thermal Squid's second question is, would you be down to play games on your PC if you found the time? If you find the time, especially ones

that require unipolar focus, and I wouldn't want to become a video game junkie anymore than I already am. I've got one video game on my phone that I play pretty much every day and it's a it's a zombie game and it's like a turnbased. I really do not like having to hurry. My favorite kind of games, including video games, are like turnbased where you can take your time and strategize and decide what you're going to do next instead of it's being like a test of speed and agility and that kind of stuff. I mean, I could do fairly well with that sort of thing, but I just I do not consider it relaxing and fun. It's just sort of like stress

inducing.

So yeah, this this app that I downloaded on my phone, which allows me to kill zombies remotely, is uh it's it's it's an entertaining and kind of satisfying game that I wind up spending like on average it's like \$8 a month on this game. I mean, it's free to play, but you can get like these bundles and things that that speed things up. I don't like pay to win, but still.

So, ones that require unipolar focus.

Yeah. I mean, if it's a strategy game where you're not like having to speed click and going as fast as you can, then

yeah, in a in a way it's it's pretty good. So, anyways, Thermal Squid's third question. Do you think playing video games is a waste of time? Um, not entirely. You know, it's not all black or white. Like keeping your mind active is good, especially if you get older. That having keeping your mind active helps to keep you like relatively young, keeps your mind from degenerating, kind of stave off senility, that kind of a thing. Um, anyone who read the novel or watched the movie Enders Game can know that kids playing video games may save the world from enemy invas alien invasions. You know, you get really good at like killing enemies in a video game.

It's I mean the modern the modern military is not all that different from playing a video game. I assume that a lot of the soldiers that are guiding drones and missiles and so forth started off with video games. Not that that's necessarily a good thing, but I mean it's it's something. So, I don't think that playing video games is a total waste of time. It can help you to relax. It depends on what kind of game you're playing.

I've generally gravitated more towards like physics games, like puzzle games,

that kind of thing. I still do evil
sudokus every once in a while now, too,
which is just like it's like mental
exercise. It's sort of like the mental
equivalent of doing push-ups or
something. So, I mean, that's good. You
exercise your brain that and your brain
gets stronger. Sort of like muscles. You
exercise your muscles, your muscles get
stronger.

Um, but I mean I really would not want
to just become like a video game junkie
to the point of just like spending all
of my free time playing Grand Theft Auto
or Red Dead Redemption or
something.

So I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from Meditators Library. Meditators Library says, "Is there any free book by you that can be downloaded from the internet?" My atakawaga translation is downloadable, but that's that's about it with regard to free books that can be downloaded from the internet. There's uh a few different versions of my Atagawaga translation that can be downloaded. There's like the original handwritten version um that might still be um available on Wikipedia of all things. If you look at the the Atika Waga article in the Wikipedia that uh I it used to have my

original handwritten

um version or edition of the atikawaga

um that was in like the the end notes

that you could click on it and you'd

have access to

it. Although

um it has been slightly improved in in

later editions. So, it's not the best

edition other than just being in my own

handwriting. So, that would be that

would be the only one I I know of other

than maybe something that got pirated,

but I don't know why anyone would bother

to pirate any of my other books. So, I'm

just going to move on to the next

question. This is from Ruie, and I think

this might also be a kind of follow-up

question. I don't remember if Ruie was the one who asked me if the Buddha had like insight into anata or no self before he became enlightened or if it came when he became enlightened. But here's Rui is saying awakening without realization of anata or realization of anata without awakening. I don't think you'd have full realization that um unenlightenment like like the text say it's like the conceit I am is like the root of samsara. So I think you would have to become

[Music]

enlightened at the same time that your

uh that this conceit I am would
completely vanish.

So I think that they would be
simultaneous realization of anata and
awakening but I mean you could still
accept it as a as a theory but you
wouldn't

fully penetrate it. I mean you wouldn't
have like complete perfect understanding
of it. you know, you wouldn't have
complete mastery of this notion of of no
self that it would still just be like a
like a working theory or something that
you didn't fully understand until
finally when you break through to
ultimate reality then then you fully
realize it.

So I would say that uh the two the full awakening and full realization of anata would be

simultaneous. And so I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from Dhamma

River and Dharma River says in the suta

Dan Nikaya 16 which is the um Mahapari

Nibbana Suta the suta discussing the

Buddha's final days on this

earth. Anyways I'll just start again

here. Dama River says in the suta

deanaya 16 the Buddha said to Ananda

quote if it is desired Ananda the sa may

when I am gone abolish the lesser and

minor rules

unquote. And then Dhamma River says obviously we are only speculating here but could you please give your personal opinion on which ones are the lesser and minor rules that the Buddha was referring to? Disclaimer, this question and answer is pure speculation. The Buddha never specified this. Yeah, it was when the Buddha said to Ananda, "If it is desired, Ananda, the sangha may when I am gone, abolish the lesser and minor rules." Um, this was brought up at the first council. and Ananda pretty much got censured by the rest of the first council for not asking the Buddha what those lesser and minor rules were. And then you've got these 500 arhants or 501

including

Ananda

who can't figure out what the lesser and minor rules were.

Supposedly you had some arroants according to the the like the canonical account of the first council. You had some orants some of the Buddha's wisest most accomplished disciples who thought that only the four parajikas would not be lesser and minor rules which means that a monk could kill animals tell lies get drunk fondle women and that's just silly. I mean I don't know how any fully enlightened disciple of the Buddha would think that only the four parajika rules

should be

retained. So even even like killing animals and getting drunk for example those are just pacidia offenses. Those are just midlevel offenses. I mean even like punching a lay person in the nose is only a ducata offense which is the lowest level of offense. So I don't think it would necessarily be by category by like ecclesiastical classification of what kind of rule it is. It might simply be that the lesser and minor rules are the ones that are not replying specifically to ethics that it's just cultural. So you know telling lies, killing animals, that sort of thing would be ethical from the from the

Buddhist point of view. But something like having to shave your head every two months or two finger widths, whichever comes first. I mean, mo even most monks don't really know that rule very well because they just it's just the tradition. You shave your head once a week or whatever. Um, you know, eating only in the morning. I mean, that's not really an ethical I mean, it's there's nothing inherently immoral with eating a meal at 2:00 in the afternoon, that sort of thing. So, I would guess assuming just for the sake of argument, the Buddha said this that

the lesser and minor rules would be the ones that were not like that were not ethical rules. They were just like cultural rules of of like etiquette that those like in different cultures you might have different etiquette like a strict monk in America offends people sometimes because he's following ancient Indian etiquette which is just doesn't fit modern western etiquette like refusing to shake hands with a woman. I mean, I mean, you could argue that either way, but I mean, there actually are quite a few like new age leftist feminist female types and a few male types also who are just offended by the fact that a monk

won't touch a woman. Even though nuns aren't supposed to touch men either, but I mean, some people will just get offended really easy, I guess.

So yeah, the lesser and minor rules, if I had to guess, it would just be the ones that are not inherently ethical, but are just like cultural etiquette stuff. And there's lots of rules like that. In fact, I mean, some of the relatively relatively advanced rules are like that. like the rules about what kind of wool you can use in your sitting cloth, what colors of wool you're allowed to use in your sitting cloth.

You know, that's paid offense. It's the

same level of severity as killing an elephant. So, yeah, that's my answer. Speculative though it may be. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Troas is. And Troas is says, "Are you recording now?" And Yep. Yep. I am. I hope. I sincerely hope cuz we've been going for an hour now. And so Tras is the second question is, "Have you ever eaten any of the Polish foods?" And I mean, I think most Americans have eaten pulsa kilbasa, which is a kind of Polish sausage that uh my sweetheart and her mama call kilbasi. So yeah, I think most Americans have eaten that, although it might not be authentic kilbasa. You know, it's

like some actual Polish person comes to America, tries to kill Basa, and just promptly just spits it out in and just like it's it has demeaned their dignity even to put it into their mouth. I mean, that's possible, too. Although, I did work on a Polish ship and so I did eat some Polish food. I did. I did for whatever reason in when I was like in my early 20s. I was 20 21 years old. I spent my 21st birthday on this on a Polish ship and uh I just for some reason could not bring myself to eat tartar, which is it's raw hamburger with a raw egg cracked on top of it. And the Polish sailors really liked it. They

thought raw hamburger with a raw egg on
it was was excellent, but for some
reason I just couldn't bring myself to
eat it. Um they they had a really good
salad. It was like a tomato and onion
salad with tossed in some kind of oil.
That was good. They made really good. It
was sort of like jack
mackerel shish kebab things. It was on a
stick with like tomatoes and hunks of
onion and stuff. That was
good. I was never much into beets. There
was something like borched or something.
some kind of beet slurry that they would
eat that I mean I I could I would I
could eat it but I didn't particularly
enjoy it. The the Polish on on the ship

anyway they had excellent bread and excellent cheese. So I did eat Polish bread and Polish cheese although that was a long time ago. So my memory is is fading now with regard to the full menu on board the good ship Sagitta.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from Jimmy Lad. And Jimmy Lad says, "How did you figure out the visa situation when you were a monk in Myanmar?" Well, as a monk in Myanmar, I had lay people who would volunteer to take upon themselves the duty of getting my visa renewed periodically.

So, as a monk, I really didn't have to do very much other than just make sure that my visa was in the hands of the person who was going to get it stamped or rather my passport was in the hands of the person who's going to get the the visa renewed in time for them to get the visa renewed. But it costs money. Monks aren't supposed to be handling money. And um I was ordained in the Tomulu tradition. And so the tomulu tradition in Burma had a kind of capiaakaraka aet it was called. It was sort of like the the lay people supporting the monks of the tonulu tradition. They had this organization and one of the senior

members of the organization just would magnanimously volunteer to take care of the visas of the few western monks who were in the country which when I was there was pretty much just me.

So yeah, so I mean I really didn't have to do very much. It was it was handled by lay people. And so Jimmy Lad's second question is any details on practical daytoday life when you were a monk would be helpful also. Well details on practical daytoday life as a monk. I mean it's it's good to be able to build a fire pretty well.

Um, you know, you start with little sticks and and maybe some paper. Use

candles if the weather is damp. How to
how to filter water. You know, it's like
you there's a muddy river and you find
some sand on the bank of the muddy
river. You can scoop out the sand until
it it's like a basin. It fills up with
water. You scoop out the water till it
fills up again. You scoop out the water
until it finally it's clear. You can
drink that water. The the sand filters
the water. that kind of thing. I mean,
as a monk, a lot of the practical
details, I'm like how to bake a bowl,
how to dye your robes, how to sew robes,
that kind of thing. Um, you have to
learn that as a monk. It's not something
I could really explain very well. I do

have in my first book, Essays on Terra
Buddhism. I did have an essay on how to
bake a bull because even a lot of monks
really don't know how to do it.

So details on practical day-to-day life
in Burma especially. The number one
advice I would give to anyone who goes
to Burma is be

patient. You got to be patient. I mean
the buses don't run on time. Things
don't work the way they're supposed to.

The electricity goes on and off at
random. You just have to be

patient. But I mean the lifestyle of a
monk is very simple. And so you really
don't need a lot of details on practical

day-to-day life. And it's going to depend on where you're living. Are you going to be living in a forest? Are you going to be living in a monastery in town, some big monastic university, some temple in the suburbs in California or whatever? You know, it's the the day-to-day life is going to be different in under any of these different scenarios.

So yeah, mainly the the day-to-day life of a monk is you get up, you go for alms, you come back, you know, you eat your you eat your meal, you wash your bowl, brush your teeth, that kind of thing. Doing in the rest of the day is mostly like

meditation, walking meditation, sitting meditation, maybe a little bit of reading, maybe you got to go and fetch water from the well, that kind of thing. take a bath in the afternoon after the sweat has stopped flowing so much. And I mean, it's it's very simple. So, there's really not a whole lot of details or practical day-to-day life unless there's some specific scenario that would need some kind of details, but um I'm not sure what those exact details would be at present moment. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. is from Austin and Austin says, "Do you believe that Westerners are poisoning Buddhism

by incorporating Marxist, feminist, transgender, and LGBTQ ideologies into it? Not a week goes by where I'm confronted by these nut jobs in Buddhist spaces. They will completely throw out traditional teachings to fit their own subject and feelings and political agendas. And this has been going on from the beginning since since ancient times that different groups of people have been corrupting dharma. I mean poisoning Buddhism is kind of strong term but corrupting it is is very apt. is certainly getting corrupted. And I mean that started in India before it even spread you know outside of the the Indian subcontinent. I mean I could name

some names certain Mahayana Buddhist schools for example even a few pre-Mayana Buddhist schools. You can even point out to some stuff that's within the terravada tradition as corruptions of what the Buddha taught that it just it's just part of being human that any sort of really wise enlightened teaching is going to get corrupted when it falls into unenlightened

hands and most hands are unenlightened ones.

So certainly in the west that terravada Buddhism is being corrupted mightily by let's see here Marxist feminist

transgender and LGBTQ ideologies partly because western leftists cannot tell the difference between leftism and dharma.

They just assume that the Buddha being fully enlightened would have to be politically correct in accordance with their ideology.

So, I mean, if the Buddha says something that's say derogatory towards women in the text, well, he wouldn't have really said that. That's just false. And I've already mentioned a number of times that there actually are

some social activists on the left in America who profess

Buddhism who say that even the second noble truth of Buddhism should be

modified. that it's not just clinging
and attachment that causes suffering.
It's also white patriarchal oppression.
And when you get to that level, I mean,
I would call that poisoning Buddhism.

Yeah. That's that's beyond mere
corruption at that point. I mean, that's
just [_] it
up.

So, yeah. I mean, that's part of the
problem is is these leftist Buddhists, a
lot of them just cannot tell the
difference
between Dharma and leftism. They just
assume that they're the same, and
they're not. I mean, there's a certain

amount of overlap. There's a certain amount of overlap between Dharma and fascism, too, I presume.

So, yeah. Welcome to America. Welcome to the West. I mean, fortunately in America, this like radical progressivism, as though decline and fall were progress somehow, this radical progressivism is kind of going out of fashion. The majority of Americans no longer favor it. I mean, they're not even willing to be patient with it at this point.

whereas in like in in the UK or in Western Europe that it's still still in fashion, let's

say. So, yeah, I'm I'm relatively optimistic, cautiously optimistic that in America at least things are going to turn around. The corruption will abate to some

degree. Anyways, I'm just going to move on to the next question and we're actually getting down towards the bottom. This is going to be way less than two hours. This is going to be one of the shortest Q&A videos I've done in a long time. So, anyways, the next question is from Fred and Fred says, "Is our experience mainly based on feeling and emotion?"

And that's kind of an interesting

question because that was sort of a a
major topic of philosophical discussion
like in the late
1700s like with David Hume and Emanuel
Kant where they were pointing out that
that rationality really cannot um I mean
it can't do
anything that pure
rationality pure objectivity cannot not
motivate an action that all
action is motivated by irrationality by
the
passions. And I should have I should
have uh recorded the the quote from Hume
where he was talking about how you know
intellect can be and should only be the
slave of the passions because that's

what it is that no matter how intelligent um like a scientist is or whatever still everything he does is motivated by irrationality pure logic. There is no logically necessary reason why we should get out of the bed in the morning why we should do anything. There's no there's no logical necessity to the idea that eating is somehow inherently better than just starving to death. That it's based on value judgments. That what we do in life is based on value judgments which are irrational in nature. It's just what helps what helps the human species to survive and propagate is I mean is the

kind of values that are instinctive to the human species and so that's it's these instincts human nature is driving us not the intellect the intellect is just a slave to these irrational aspects of human nature.

So Fred says, "Is our experience mainly based on feeling and emotion?" I'd say, "Yeah, actually." Um, I mean, calling it emotion, feeling emotion might be uh not quite subtle enough. It's just sort of this basic irrationality, which I guess you could call just very subtle feeling and

emotion. So yeah, I would say that Fred is correct that our experience is mainly based on feeling and emotion. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question already. We only we had less than 30 questions this time. So this could be a refreshing change of pace for those of you who uh have objected to three-hour long Q&A videos cuz I mean there have been some Q&A videos. They got up to like three and a half hours. It was like a marathon of of question answering. So anyways, this last question is from

Rakasa. And Rakasa

says, "Regarding the supernatural, it seems to me that you're pretty open to modern paranormal phenomena such as ghosts, telepathy, etc.,

But you have expressed skepticism towards fantastical elements in ancient mythology. What is your criteria in evaluating these kinds of stories as believable or not?

Well, a lot of the ancient mythology, um, I mean, it's it's pretty obviously people making up stories, you know, like the Earth is on the back of a tortoise, you know, and it's tortoises all the way down. The tortoise isn't resting on empty space.

It's just this infinite pile of tortoises, you know. It's like you can say, well maybe in ancient times it really was like that until we changed our theories which then changed the nature of the world. I mean, you could argue that sort of thing, but I mean, a lot of the time, a lot of the the myths, you know, like the pagan, like classical Greek pagan myths where the gods are very rapey, you know, Neptune or like what was it? Poseidon is, you know, he's got the hots for some human human female and rapes her and and like uh Zeus was pretty much doing that all the time. and and these kind of

things. It's and then sometimes there's myths that you can kind of figure out how the myth arose like Jason and the Argonauts going to get the golden fleece. And my father explained to me when I was a kid that the golden fleece was based on the fact that when you were like prospecting for gold like in a stream, you put down a fleece. And in Burma, they still put down like a thick carpet of stuff that catches the gold particles. So, the golden fleece was probably based on this idea of using like sheep pelts to catch the gold particles when, you know, they're processing the the slurry that they're, you know, they're they're trying to

extract the gold from it, that sort of thing. Or I've got this idea about centaurs. The idea of the centaur that's half man and half human is based on um like originally you had non-indo-europeans living in Greece and thereabouts. They probably did not have domesticated horses. Then all of a sudden you've got people on horseback coming through just kind of raiding the area and like conquering parts of it. And at first it was it was sort of like the the the Aztecs when they first saw Spanish soldiers riding on horses, they thought it was a monster. They thought it was just one creature, you know, part

part animal and part man. And it may be that the whole theory of centaurs comes from that is the first people seeing, you know, Indo-European invaders riding on horseback.

So, um, my skepticism towards fantastical elements in ancient mythology, um, to some degree it's it's just kind of based on like anthropological, you know, trying to make sense of how they would come up with this stuff. And sometimes they're just pulling stuff out of their rectum, just just coming up with any kind of story to help explain things because people hate not being able to explain something.

um even if they can't explain it, they want to say, "Well, at least our experts can explain it because it's kind of scary not to be able to explain or understand something." And so in ancient times before they had, you know, any kind of scientific method, they would just come up with all kinds of all kinds of stories about gods and and other supernatural beings just to fill in the blanks to kind of make sense of the world they're living in.

Whereas now we've got science as as largely our mythology is or actually scientific method is fine. It's just scientism or the interpretation of

science that goes by the name of scientism or scientific realism that really believes that science is explaining reality. That is our modern mythology or at least that's a major aspect of modern mythology. Plus, I mean, all the leftist hysterical stuff too would count as mythology or any like apotheosis of Donald Trump could count as a kind of mythology on the right also. So, my criteria in evaluating these kinds of stories, I mean, some ancient stories about supernatural stuff, I can accept. Like, I have no problem with the idea that Jesus of Nazareth could heal the sick.

I got no problem with

that. I mean, a lot of even Christians don't believe that anymore. That that really that's just impossible because science can't explain it. So, I mean, what I would consider to be plausible or at least, you know, something entertainable as an idea would be pretty much the same now as in ancient times. You know, you've got somebody who can heal the heal the sick with a touch nowadays or heal the sick with a touch 2,000 years ago. I mean, that's it's the same kind of deal for me. It's mainly with regard to kind of the wilder just the larger scale supernaturalism as an attempt to fill in

blanks in human knowledge before
scientists came along with objective
like empirical observations that uh kind
of helped to stabilize help to fill in
blanks. But even science is I mean it
doesn't really explain reality. It's
just a more sophisticated kind of
mythology.

So my what is my criteria in evaluating
these kinds of stories as believable or
not? Well, I mean you're better off not
believing anything. Um

but something is is would strike me as
more plausible. I mean somebody who's
able to do

miracles. Um fine. I mean I I can accept
that. you know, Neem Curly Baba up on

the the altar up there. He he was uh he did some amazing feats based on, you know, people that that knew him, stuff that was supposedly impossible, you know, like appearing being in two places at the same time, that kind of thing. So, I mean, in ancient times, I don't it might be more likely that that kind of stuff could happen. But I mean, with regard to Icarus flying too close to the sun, which melted the wax, holding the feathers onto his fake wings, that kind of stuff, I mean, I consider that to be probably fiction. A lot of stuff in the ancient texts that I would also consider to be

fiction. Like poly texts, there's a lot of stuff in the poly text that it just doesn't really pass the test of plausibility for me. like when the Buddha was born, you know, he's just born free of goop and just takes off walking and speaking fluent poly and then after that after he gives his little speech on how, you know, he is unsurpassed in this world and, you know, this is his last life and everything, then he reverts to being a baby. It's it just seems more plausible that that would be just sort of later devotionism that got added in. And there is some wisdom in the the statement by do David Hume that you

should believe in a
miracle only if the that story being
false would be more miraculous than the
miracle itself. And I mean that was just
sort of a way of of him bashing
Christianity in in a backhanded sort of
way, but still
um I mean it's it's hard for me to put
it into words. It should be fairly
self-evident just from what I say that I
mean I can be I'd be skeptical of the
same things in modern times as if I read
about them happening in ancient times. I
mean the my my [__] detector would
be going off with regard to similar
things in both cases or I would consider

something plausible in both cases. But some stuff I mean it's just it's so completely beyond the pale that I would consider it much more likely that it is fiction than that it really happened. And that happens in modern times too and also in ancient times. But I mean, I can't really just draw this precise line saying, you know, everything on the to the right of this line I would believe or at least accept as plausible and everything on the left I would just reject as [__] Um, you know, it has to go by a case-byase basis, I suppose. And that's it. That's the last question. And we've only been going for less than an hour and a half. So, just

to kind of take up some space at the end here before giving the usual spiel, I'll discuss my beard a little bit. I have received some praise or some compliments with regard to the beard, especially when I start putting little like rubber bands in it. And then I I have also received some criticism like from my my woman's mama. She didn't like it at all. But I mean, people that don't like it, I think it's partly just because it's it's so unusual. It's just not fashionable. But it is an experiment and I am experimenting with this. And also there was a poll on the Discord server where the majority of people actually wanted

me to grow my beard long and braid it with a muer bead hanging at the bottom. And uh so it is an experiment. And for those of you who don't like it, I guarantee you it's going to get a lot worse before it gets any better because I am eventually going to get it long enough that I'm going to braid the son of a [__] or at least do like Leo Moracholi in his YouTube videos where he's got like a a series of rubber bands that makes it look kind of like a braid just kind of hanging down. It's not going to get really super long though. I'm got to draw the line somewhere. So, with that as like a bonus answer to a question that was never

asked, I'll just say like I usually say at the beginning, but almost never do.

If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially about like early Buddhism,

um, or related topics, philosophy in general, that kind of thing. Um, feel free to ask no more than three questions per person, per episode, please.

and uh like and subscribe if you have not done so already. Let's see if we can get up to 2,000 subscribers this year so that my my following will be even more astronomical than it is

now. And uh I guess be happy if if you're into that sort of thing. And I'm

going to stop recording now.

Okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number 140. I am your host as usual, Po Basa. This is my beverage which I mean I've been kind of phony just now

because I've had to restart this video like the third time. In fact, at one point I had to like delete and trash my OSB Studio and redownload it just to get it to work. Restarted the computer.

Everything is just for some reason somebody some higher being or lower being or some entity is trying to prevent me from from doing this

Q&A. And so I've already started on the beverage. I'd put the umbrella back in

just for appearanc's

sake and I'm starting late. It's going

to be after midnight by the time I'm

done with this. Especially after if I

have to keep starting the video over and

over

again, but I had to go out and buy dirt

today and because I'm going to plant a

peach tree probably tomorrow, the the

gods

willing. And uh then I had to come home

and my woman groomed me. She used to be

a professional dog groomer. And she's

going for the schnowzer look. She says,

"I have hair like a

schnowzer. And for those of you who

don't like the long beard, it's going to

get longer. It's getting longer. It's almost long enough to start with a tiny braid. And sooner or later, there's a good chance that a muer bead is going to appear at the bottom of this. It's only an experiment. All things are impermanent, but brace yourselves.

And we've got approximately somewhere in the neighborhood of 40 questions spanning from the ridiculous to the sublime. And so I guess we should just wade right into

this. And the first question is from La Infamia, who has kind of a female name in the YouTube comments, but recently joined the Discord server and has a male

name in the Discord server. So, it could be that we're just

inclusive in our Discord or some such.

But anyways, La Infamia says, and I have to admit, La Infamia, being a newcomer,

um does not fully appreciate the

limitation to three questions per

episode. So, we're just going to be a

little bit uh indulgent here and just

lump la infamia's first three questions

into one question. So, the Infamia's

first three questions that are beginning

they're being lumped into one question

are do monks can train or fight in

Lewe? And Lewe is like Burmese

kickboxing I'm pretty sure.

And then he and then Lefamia says, "It's

like a religion in Myanmar. The Lewe matches question mark." And then also Lefamia says, "Did you watch one?" So I'm just going to lump all those into the one question of what about Burmese Leto kickboxing? And uh with regard to can monks train or fight in Lewe? Um, they're not supposed to. It's just like the sloppiest, laxest, least conscientious monks that would do that sort of thing. Um, so I'm sure that there are monks who do kickboxing. For example, monks who were into kickboxing before they became monks. They might still do

some kickboxing stuff after they're monks, but the lay people tend to frown upon this sort of thing. In Thailand, it's even worse. Like monks who even walk around in the afternoon in public can get scowls and grumbles from the lay people because they're held to a higher standard. They've got rules of discipline to follow. And so really it is just the least it's the least conscientious most shameless monks especially in the big cities like Mandalay which still exists in smoking ruins after the big earthquake I assume that uh they're the ones who are into this. In fact, I read a long time ago

um that around 1988, there was a riot in
Mandalay started by Buddhist monks who
were refused boxing tickets. You know,
they wanted to go to a boxing match,
possibly kickboxing because that's the
big thing in Burma. And so, they tried
to get into a kickboxing match. the
ticket vendor would not sell them
tickets because they're monks and this
is inappropriate for monks and so they
just ran a
muk. Or so I read. And it wouldn't
surprise me because Manderlay monks are
notorious for being some of the worst
monks in
Burma in in

general. So monks, yeah, if they train or fight in leto, I'm sure that some of them do, but it's it's not the best sort of monks. Um, there are certain like monasteries in the Mandandalay area that have soccer teams, too. So, sometimes you'll see out in a field like monks um you know, their their loins girded out there kicking a soccer ball around like playing soccer. And that also is something that serious monks would not seriously consider. But Manderlay monks, pretty much anything goes. They're kind of like medieval Catholic monks. You know, there's a few saintly ones, but the overwhelming majority are kind of the other end of

the

spectrum, or a lot of them

are. So, um, see, Lamia says, "It's like a religion in Myanmar the Letoway matches." Um, I really wasn't exposed to it. I didn't hear about it very much.

Um, yeah. I mean, there's a there's a a kind of it's called caneball, I think. I can't remember the Burmese name for it, but it's it's a ball about this big made out of wicker. And it's just sort of a hollow. I mean, it's got you can see the spaces through it, you know? It's just a wicker ball, not really solid. And it's sort of like a hacky sack used to be in America where, you know, Burmese guys

will sit around kicking this cane ball around. And sometimes they'll even play a kind of volleyball where you're only allowed to use your feet to kick this thing back and forth. It usually doesn't go back and forth across the net very many times, at least not with the rank amateurs that I observed.

So

um I wouldn't say that it's like a religion in Myanmar. I mean the main religion in Myanmar of course is Buddhism which is taken far more seriously than kickboxing. But I mean it might be that kickboxing is taken more seriously in general in Thailand than in Burma. But I mean I'm sure that there

for some people it's like a religion.
you know, there's all these different
groups of people, different interests
and so forth. I just really did not
associate with those people because I
was pretty much living in caves and like
remote forest huts when I was living in
Burma. So, the last part the last part
of this question is did I watch one?
And no, I have never seen a kickboxing
match except for like brief bits on on
television. For example, there was a
Southeast Asian Games several years ago
where a Burmese man won in kickboxing
against a relatively large Australian
kickboxer. and the Burmese were just

beaming with national pride over that that this little Burmese kickboxer beat up the big Australian kickboxer. But aside from that, it's um my experience is that it really is not that big of a deal in

Burma. So, I'm just going to move on to Lamia's second question. Considering all the kickboxing questions just to be one kind of group compound

question. Infamia says, "Did you get any tropical disease while your time in

Burma? If yes, how you dealt with it living in caves or rural villages with no western medicine just waiting until the disease is gone?" Well, I had

falsifum malaria like seven or eight

times when I was in Burma.

And I mean, everyone like westerners know that you're going to live in some place like Burma, you got to have the pills that will cure you of malaria wherever you go. You know, you always like you you've got a first aid kit. It's got like antibiotics and first aid cream and that kind of stuff.

Dewormer, that kind of stuff. And you got to have malaria pills. That's one of the most important things.

So the first two times I had it, I was hospitalized. The first time I hadn't had malaria before. Fortunately, I knew enough about malaria that I knew that I

was had like this killer headache all the time and nothing would like aspirin, nothing would make it go away. And then I'd have like chills and fevers on alternate days. So like the third day or the third time I had the chills and fevers. Like one day chills and fevers. Second day I feel better but I still have the killer headache. Third day chills and fevers which are worse. Next day after that I feel a little better but have the killer headache. Next day after that chills and fever again. Then finally I realized I got to have malaria.

And I hadn't been in a in an area that was endemic with malaria for several

months at this time still. It was just latent in the system until it found its opportunity to burst forth and chills and fever and killer headaches and so forth. So I wound up in the hospital with that one Christmas day. Somebody came visit me and I just come out of my cave say, "Merry Christmas. I have malaria." And they just kind of loaded me into the jeep and took me into town and took me to a hospital.

And then I got malaria again about a year later. It was always when I was visiting Alando Kathaban National Park. When I go to Alando Cathab National Park, every time I went there, I'd wind

up catching coming down with malaria at least

once. So I went to the hospital for that, too. But then and then when I had the second time I had malaria, I wasn't nearly as sick as the first time because I took the medicine quicker that time.

But still, I had a a fever of 105 degrees

Fahrenheit, which was not particularly good. I mean, I probably cooked my brain a little bit. There are people in Burma who have had severe malaria who they're just nutty. It's like their brain cooked cuz their fever got so high. But after the second time, you know, it's like one day chills

and fever, next day no chills and fever,
day after that chills and fever again.

It's falsipro malaria. You take the
pills and the pills which are based on
quinine are almost as bad. Like the the
side effects of the medicine of the cure
is almost as bad as the malaria itself.

It's just lots of like vertigo and you
know it's you don't feel really good
when you take the pills

either. And aside from malaria the only
tropical disease that I had of note
would be I had got some kind of
hepatitis and three different doctors
gave me three different diagnosis. I
mean fortunately it wasn't B or C. It

wasn't one of the bad hepatitises that
you don't cure. It was just some kind of
a but

one one doctor the first one said that
it was like some kind of side effect of
of malaria or no yeah malaria which I
hadn't had malaria in a while so I was
kind of skeptical of that. Uh another
doctor one in Rangon told me that
dysentery amiebas had invaded my liver.
He called it uh amiebic hepatitis which
is interesting. It's it's kind of the
most interesting sounding disease like
was it like attacked by

amiebas but I think probably the the
third doctor just said it's probably
just something that you ate or drank and

uh yeah I would guess that that's probably what happened. a monk who goes for alms round. It's like among villagers that have not much concept of hygiene or especially of like germ theory that I mean I've talked about this sort of thing before people like just sneezing directly into the food before offering it that kind of thing. So yeah, I had malaria like seven or eight times and you just have to have the pills otherwise you die.

Um, the Burmese have like a certain natural resistance and gradually even someone like me built up a gradual

resistance, but still I'd be dead
several times over if I didn't have
mephaquin
tablets and uh the hepatitis I might
have survived, but I was very sick. That
was a weird time. It was a very
different kind of of sickness than
malaria just because it just felt
like like my life force was running low
like my battery was in the red kind of a
feeling. It was just just my my vitality
was just at low E. It was it really I
was starting to think maybe I was going
to die that
time. But I didn't. I got
better. And uh I guess I'm just going to
move on. Next question. This is from

Thoughtful Fog and this is uh not particularly dumb oriented, but uh what is your favorite pizza? And I guess my favorite pizza would be black olive and onion thick crust, preferably Sicilian style. Although I do like pizza margarita with pesto on it. That's good, too. But yeah, just black olive and onion thick crust with extra cheese. So, I'm just going to move on to Thoughtful Fog's next question. What are good questions to ask meditation masters? Well, I mean, you can ask them how they became a meditation master. You know, what kind of meditation technique

did they start with and you know, how did they develop it over time until they reached mastery? I mean that would probably be a good kind of question to ask a meditation master is you know what kind of meditation did you do as a beginner that helped you to progress to becoming a meditation master and even if they explain it to you it won't necessarily work with you because one size does not fit all with regard to meditation. What works some people they'll take to a certain kind of meditation like a duck takes to water and other people they'll just never make any progress with it. you know, there's just their mind is working in a

different way that that responds better to a different kind of meditation. But if they're a true meditation master, um, in like with regard to teaching it, they might know several different meditation techniques that that you could try, that sort of thing. But of course, good questions to ask a meditation master would be questions about meditation and how to become a good meditator, you know, how to how to get uh make progress in meditation, questions like that rather than just asking them, you know, what what's their favorite pizza and so forth. So, next question from thought

fog is, do you still meditate? And I I
no longer sit in formal meditation. I no
longer sit cross-legged on the floor
doing formal meditation. I just assume
that I mean it I'm not going to be able
to do do any justice to the kind of
meditation I was doing when I was living
alone in a
cave. So I don't want to just keep
wallowing with elementary level
meditation techniques. And so if it
spontaneously arises like M or just
spontaneous mindfulness of whatever I'm
doing, that's fine. But no, I do not sit
cross-legged in meditation anymore. So
I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from PSA. And PSA

says, "In this video," he's talking about the previous video where I was wearing a baseball cap. He says, "In this video, you look like a Canadian trucker with that hat and beard. It looks like you just can't escape your good looks. On that note, what is your opinion of the Canadian truckers getting their bank accounts frozen by Justin Castro a few years ago? Well, I mean, I do not approve of protesters getting their own money deprived of them. It's like I mean that's just authoritarianism just the standard kind of castrated social Marxism that the left favors

nowadays. So I mean the worst they were doing was just like blowing their horns in protest in populated areas. But uh aside from that I mean they they had the right to protest. It may be that they were violating some city ordinance by blowing air horns in populated areas or some such, but still that would not justify having their bank accounts frozen by

Fidel Justin

Castro. So, let's just move on to PSA's next question.

Are you a Clemson Tiger or a Gamecock fan? And the answer is no. I've never been into college sports. Never. Not

even for five seconds. I just never had any interest in college sports, college athletics, you know. I might watch like a a track meet or something in which I know nothing about any of the competitors just to watch them compete. That sort of thing. But Clemson, I mean, Clemson is the big thing. There's a lot of people with Clemson bumper stickers. And there's one guy at work named Lee who's just totally into Clemson. He wears like a Clemson base, not a baseball cap, but just like a beanie. Says Clemson, you know, orange. A lot of orange, the like the Tiger track. And one time he told me that at night he

relaxes by watching reruns of old
Clemson games like from the like the
1990s. And I just don't get it. I've
just I've pretty much lost interest in
professional sports also. So, yeah, I'm
Bob Jones. Bob Jones all the way. Bob
Jones University in in Greenville, South
Carolina. If if they got an athletics
department. If they don't, then I'd have
to go with uh what's the other one?
Furman. Furman University. I think their
their team is called the Paladins or
something like that.

So yeah, let's just uh move on to PSA's
third question. And by golly, it is a
Buddhism

question. And so PSA says, "Is there any

part of the Abid Dama that you particularly like or would highly recommend others to read and study?"

Um, I don't particularly like any of it really and I wouldn't highly recommend others to study it unless that you just want to be literate in terra Buddhist orthodoxy just so that you'll know what terravada Buddhism officially teaches.

In which case I would stay away from the Abidama texts

themselves and read something like the Abid Damata Sangaha which is what most Abidama students in Burma study. You don't go straight to the poly texts which are practically unreadable.

They're

so hyper technical and intellectual

that some some Abidama texts I mean it's

it's like trying to study a calculus

text.

But the abidamata sanga which in Burmese

is called dingju

um you know it's sort of a compendium

and

synopsis summary of the the basic

teaching basic teachings of abidama and

there are books in English that are

modeled on the abidamata sanaha like I

think uh sat usila nanda wrote a kind of

synopsis or summary of abidama also So

there's a uh Dr. Mintin man in Burma

wrote the essence of Buddha Abidama. If

you live in in Burma, it's almost impossible not to have a copy of it because people will keep offering you copies and no matter how many of them you give away, you just keep getting more. I met Dr. Mintinmon. He was a very nice guy up until he realized that I did not take abidama seriously. Did not think that the Buddha really taught it. and then he wouldn't look at me anymore. But the one book of Abidama that I did read with some interest is the kata watu which I think is like the third or fourth book of Abidama. And it's unlike all the other books. It's really I mean it shouldn't really be an

Abidama book. the the katawatu it's I mean it's not dealing with you know how mind works and this sort of thing like causal relations like Patana teaches this sort of thing that katawatu is mainly kind of a guide to terra Buddhists in debating the monks from other schools of Buddhism and I mean that's a pretty good indication the Buddha the Buddha didn't really teach it because it it arose around the time of the emperor Ashoka and it's regarding like disputes or controversies with other philosophical schools in Buddhism that didn't exist in the Buddhist time but did exist in Ashoka's time. So, I mean, that's kind of

interesting. In a way, it's kind of sad when your side, Terravada, um, you know, they use really lame arguments like bad logical reasoning and so forth to win their points, but it does give you um a a good idea of the philosophical landscape of Burma in ancient India around the time of Ashoka, like 3rd century BCE. So, that's kind of interesting. And in the Polytex Society translation, it's got a long like introduction, a scholarly introduction by the translator discussing the evolution of Buddhist philosophy and like the the branches of the the Buddhist family tree sort of,

you know, first you had the the first
great schism between the Mahasangika and
the Staveras and then the different
branches, you know, the different
schools that arose from each side. It's
it's interesting. It was at least it was
interesting to me but um I mean it's not
really

necessary like the old the English monk
nyan vera used to say that the less
abidama you know the better because it's
the less you have to unlearn in order to
really know dhamama
correctly.

So I mean for me it would just be like
an academic thing. If you just want to
be literate in what terraatarata Buddhist

orthodoxy teaches then it it may be to
your advantage to be familiar with
abidama like just studying the ab damata
sanaha or some book based on the
abidamata sanaha would probably get you
farther than tackling the abidama texts
themselves. And the kataw watu is is
kind of like an anthropological study on
early earlyish Buddhism in India like
around one or 100 years or 150 years
after the after the time of the
Buddha. So I'm just going to move on
this question. This is from
Xenithoid and Xenithid says, "What is
going on karmically when a chicken's
head is cut off and the body is still

running

around? If there's no consciousness left in the chicken's body, then I guess you could say that it's just the karma of the observers of the still moving headless body to see something weird and it has nothing to do with the chicken's karma. But I don't know. Yeah, I don't think it would have much to do with a chicken's karma. I mean, technically, when when somebody cuts the head off of a chicken, I experienced this when I was a kid. We lived on a small farm. We butchered chickens. Sometimes the the chicken is just like flopping all over the place after his head gets cut off, which is just like the the firing of of

nerve impulses. And this is kind of a macabre kind of a story. But I was told that during the Napoleonic Wars that the French soldiers would do the same sort of thing to humans where they would cut off a human like an enemy soldier's head then and then they'd have like an iron plate that they had been heating in the fire. They'd stick that onto the neck, the stump, and then the body would actually get up and run around. And that was that was how these French soldiers amused themselves back when French soldiers were still badass. So um it's really not the karma of the the

the soldier who is diseased because you know his spirit has already moved on.

The chicken spirit such as it was has already moved on. It's from the like the biological point of view, it's just like random firing of nerve

impulses. Although you could say that from a karmic point of view, it's more the karma of the observer than the karma of the deceased individual whose spirit is no longer there. Their karma has already the the the momentum of their karma has already moved elsewhere.

So from a purely like like from the point of view of uh subjective idealism then certainly that uh their behavior would be your own karma the karma of the

observer but that would apply even when the person's still alive you know whatever a living person does that you are witnessing that you are experiencing that's your karma not theirs I mean it's they're making their own karma by doing this stuff, but it's the fruition of your own karma that causes you to see it and experience it. So from that point of view, it doesn't really matter whether the chicken or the enemy soldier is alive or dead that whatever that they they're doing, that's your own karma when you are witnessing it. Even though they're making their own karma, but that's

that's on them.

If it wasn't your karma to experience it, you wouldn't experience it. So, I think I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second question, which is still discussing a chicken with its head cut off. Do you believe the body of the chicken is still sentient after it has lost its head? Well, um the human body, like in a coma, would be similar. You know, it's like the enemy soldier with his head cut off and the chicken with his head cut off. I mean, they'd be dead. I mean, there wouldn't be like the brain consciousness anymore, but still there would be a kind of like a basic body

consciousness, sort of like a a colony
of protozoans that are still alive.

um it' probably be a little more
advanced than a colony of protozoans
because there would still be somewhat of
a nervous system that to some extent
would still be connecting parts of the
body. There'd still be the like the uh
the spinal cord which does perform
certain stereotypical brain functions.
So there could be a kind of you know
subconscious sort of quasi sentience. I
mean I don't know if you'd call it
sentience. It would be there's a certain
level of consciousness still
there but it wouldn't be like the main

being that has the karmic stream that has already moved on to another existence by the time uh this sort of thing happens.

But you just have like this lower level of I don't know. I don't even know what you'd call

it. You know, some sort of animal like a jellyfish that doesn't really have a brain. That sort of thing. It'd be sort of that level of consciousness

maybe. So, I think I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is, do you believe in the B0 realm? And are we recording? Yeah. as we are. Although I'm a little more insecure this time because I had to had so many

problems trying to get OBS to to start up. It kept crashing over and over again until finally I had to just delete the the app and re redownload it. But let's just uh get back to this question

here. So Xenithoid says, "Do you believe in the Bardo realm or is it just an instant click from one body to the next?

Perhaps some Bardo realm shenanigans could explain what's going on with the chicken. Yeah, I don't think it's BTO realm shenanigans that are causing the a decapitated chicken to flop around like the chicken yard.

Um, again, it's probably from the from the scientific point of view, it would

just be like random nerve firing, that kind of thing. But with regard to the Bardo realm, um the terraodin idea that there is no intermediate state that just one moment you die, the very next moment you take rebirth as some other being. I don't think that's necessarily in conflict with the more Tibetan idea of this intermediate state called the Bardo realm. Um it just would be that the BTO realm would be a kind of spirit existence. So you would cease existing as a human and then immediately take up this kind of spirit existence that would correspond to a BTO realm until the time is ripe for you to take on like another human existence or whatever other kind

of human other kind of existence you're going to take.

So yeah, it it supposedly from a terraodm point terabot Buddhist point of view, it's the instant click from just the very next moment that you have to take there has to be like an unbroken continuum of consciousness. So as soon as you cease being conscious and alive in this life, it's just boom. You have to like take rebirth. rebirth linking consciousness and it just continues like more or less of an unbroken unbroken stream of

consciousness so to speak. Um, but again, you could like have a 40-day long spirit existence, you know, some sort of lower dawa realm, higher PA realm kind of existence that is sort of a filler until you're ready to take the next human existence or whatever the existence is going to be.

Maybe it's like you got to wait until the conditions are just right because you're supposed to be born in a certain way to a certain kind of person and you know she's only eight months pregnant or whatever and so there might be kind of a weight where you would take a different kind of existence as you know like I said low-level da realm highle pa realm

that kind of thing

just processing or doing whatever it is

that you do more or less along Tibetan

book of the dead lines maybe not I

really can't

say. So I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is

from and says are you a chess player and

then there's sort of a a subsequent

question here of online chess and I

haven't played a game of chess in many

years before I became a monk for

Christmas one year I got a computer

chess game. This is back before it was

all done on a computer screen. It was

like an actual board with little pieces

that you moved around. And I figured I was a pretty good chess player, sort of. At least I considered myself to be a pretty good chess player. So I thought, well, I'll just start at level one and just keep playing until it starts beating me. You know, just keep going up one level after each victory until it's the, you know, I meet my match, so to speak. And to my humiliation, I was beaten at level one. So, I went to a bookstore and bought a book on chess tactics and strategy and read about half of it. Books on chess strategy are pretty dry reading. But I learned enough from the first half of this book on chess strategy that before I became a

monk, I played that same computer chess game at the highest level and won. You know, it might take 45 minutes for this little chess computer chess game to make its next move. It was thinking a long time, but still I was able to beat it. I I I played one game at the highest level and and won. So, I pretty much, you know, that was sort of my meteoric career as a chess player. Uh, I think I'm all Apple computers or I'm pretty sure all Apple computers have a chess program on them. I have a fairly good chess chess game on this computer. I can play against the computer and I maybe did it a few times

as a monk. Like maybe 15 years ago, I was just sort of bored or something and just decided I was going to play some chess against the computer. And you know, I did fairly well, but uh yeah, it's it's not something that I'm really avid about. And I've never played online chess. I've I've played against another human and I played against a computer, but when I played against another human, it was like on a real chess board in real life, so to speak. So, I'm just going to move on.

Next question, which is from Phil. And Phil says, "Astrological significance of beverage." And I am happy to

announce that this coffee has no
astrological significance

whatsoever. So I'm just going to move on
to Phil Lee's next

question. What if prime numbers contain
the secret of Samsara? Well, I kind of
doubt it. In fact,

uh, yeah, I mean, yeah, I kind of doubt
it. I really don't think so. So, I think
I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's
third

question, which is as

follows. Has anyone really been far even
as decided to use even, go, want to do,
look more

like, and

uh, yes.

So, I think I'm gonna move on to the next question here. I don't know what Phil was on when he was asking these questions, but

uh it's it's it just I get the feeling that it was a fairly intense experience.

So, next question is from Romeo and Romeo says, "In the vein of Master Po's Fred or Yung question from your last Q&A, Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World?"

And I mean, I'm not exactly sure what the question is asking. It's like, which book did I prefer? Which which book do I think more accurately represents like post-modern western

civilization? Which book do I think was more well written or more precient? I'm not sure what the question is exactly. You know, the all he's got is Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World. And of the two, I prefer Huxley's Brave New World. I prefer Huxley's oldest Huxley's writing style to Orwell's writing style. Orwell's I mean he's very depressing. Um you know it's like in Orwell's novels it's like the hero the most likable person in the story always gets utterly destroyed by the evilst person in the story. So Huxley was a little more subtle, a

little more sophisticated I think. And I do think that his Brave New World is comes closer to the globalist cyberpunk dystopia that we are beginning to observe

lately. Like a lot of people will just say that you know what's happening now is like Orwell's 1984 and there are certain parallels you know like the Ministry of Truth anyone I mean it's like the cockroaches have come out in broad daylight ever since Trump ran for president the first time that it's now just painfully obvious that the mainstream media are just shameless propagandists and they just keep doubling down and their credibility is

jot and their days are
numbered. But for the most part,
Huckley's Brave New World more
accurately describes what the globalists
are trying for and you know what has
already been set up. Like for example,
in Orwell's 1984, it's mainly using
terroristic tactics against your own
people to keep them in line. Whereas
Hxley's Brave New World, it's you're
you're using more the carrot than the
stick. You know, you're just keeping
them like in a state of doped up
euphoria and just consumeristic dopamine
hits and that's how you keep them under
control. And another thing from Hxley's

Brave New World that was really one of his main points is that you want to eliminate any strong feelings. So it's like with consumerism, you just condition people if you have any desire for anything, gratify the desire immediately. Don't let it build up. Don't have strong attachments for another person, don't have family sentiment. Like in in Huxley's Brave New World, one of the the the deadliest insults that you could ask or you could say to someone is, "Who's your mother?" Because I mean they did away with any kind of nuclear family in the Brave New World, you know? I mean, in the Brave New World, they went to the extreme of

babies being produced in in

like

biofactories, but still, I mean, you you

weren't supposed to get married. You

weren't supposed to be faithful to

anyone. You're just supposed to move on

from one person to the other. Just be

sexually promiscuous. No family

responsibilities. no loyalty to family

that might replace your loyalty to the

government, that sort of thing. And

that's pretty much what's happening

nowadays. So, yeah, I do think that

Huckley's Brave New World comes closer

to the current state of affairs than

Orwell's 1984, even though there is some

Orwellian stuff going on, too.

So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second

question, which is, do you think these books were works of

fiction that just happened to foreshadow the dystopian worlds that began to take shape after they were

published? Or are they actual blueprints for elites to set them up? I think they were both cautionary tales. They were

both not necessarily prophecies but

warning of the direction that that like western

civilization could be headed. You know,

it's like Orwell was essentially warning against what would happen if Marxism

took over the West. That's what Orwell was warning about at the time. Whereas Huxley, he was observing like American just western consumerism from like the 1930s and 40s. I'm not exactly sure. I think it was in the 1930s that Brave New World was published. And so he was observing consumerism then and just sort of extrapolating into the future, you know, what direction it would be going in. And he extrapolated fairly well. He missed a few things like um in in the Brave New World, the the Brave New World was still predominantly ruled by men. You know, he missed out on the whole DEI stuff, which is maybe one reason why the

Brave New World was so efficiently run
is because it didn't have diversity
hires [__] [__]
up.

So, let's see.

Do I think these books were works of
fiction that just happened to foreshadow
the dystopian worlds that began to take
shape or are they actual blueprints? I
think they were warnings. Both of them
were warnings. It's like this could
happen if you don't be careful if you
don't open your
eyes and we pretty much dodged the
Orwellian
bullet.

Um but the brave new world where it's

just the government is using dopamine hits to keep everyone docile and just you know causing them to if they feel strongly about anything they're going to feel strongly about whatever the government wants them to feel strongly about. So yeah I was definitely globalist. The Brave New World was a globalist and it was more uh humane I guess than Orwells like like in the Brave New World they they wouldn't take the dissident like the people that just don't fit in the people that are just too conscious that can't just go along with this this mindless conditioning that everyone's following

along with. And they I mean they
wouldn't just like torture them to death
like in Orwell's 1984. They'd just get
sent to some island. So that would be
preferable I

guess. If I had to live in the Brave New
World or in in the 1984 Oceania, then
I'd have to go with with Huxley and
maybe I'd wind up on one of those nice
islands. So I'm just going to move on.
Next question.

This is from

Kundrew and Kundrew says, "Are there any
stories from the Paw Watu that are
memorable or stand out to you?" And
there really is only one. And I've I've
told this story before on my in my

Q&As's. There's the story of there's this woman who was a virtuous woman except on one occasion she was unfaithful to her husband. And worse than that, when he was suspicious and asked her about it, she denied it and even made this oath. It's like there was like this big black dog walking by, you know, and she says, "If if I'm lying, may that dog just kill me." Something like that. And so, not just because she was unfaithful to her husband, but also even more importantly, because of this false oath that she made. She swore to a lie that in her next life she because she was mainly very virtuous. She was

her she and her husband were making donations to the monks all the time. So she she wound up living like a goddess in the foothills of the Himalaya mountains. You know, she'd be like level of the four great kings like deva realm. And you know, it's like pleasure pleasure gardens with these celestial fruit trees. This huge mansion that she lived in. She had this this troop of like 500 attendants who were like her 500 friends who who who vouched for her in when she was lying. You know, they they like lied for her and said, "No, no, she didn't do anything wrong." So she lived like a goddess except every night she'd go into like this trance

state and come down out of the mansion and this big black dog would devour her leaving only the bones. The bones would then fall into this lotus pond and then in the water she would grow a new body, climb out of the water, go back up to bed and the same thing would repeat every night. And that's the way the pas in the pa watu are. It's it's kind of strange that in uh in Terra Buddhism, it's like a spectrum like ghosts and gods are on a spectrum where the highest ghost is just right up against the lowest god. And sometimes the only difference is they live like gods. You know, they they have like the palaces

and everything, but they had did this
one wrong thing. usually something to do
with not donating being stingy towards
monks or something like in the paw watu
there's a lot of
that and so you know they might be like
naked or they might smell bad or
something that that's like their their
punishment you know they're like a god
except for they got this one defect
still and so eventually there was this
heroic king who it was like some kind of
celestial peach or something some fruit
that got washed down into the Ganges
River from this from this palace that
had the pleasure the celestial fruit
trees and everything and if you eat of

it then it may not make you immortal but
it like makes you young again. It
prolongs your life. And so this heroic
king went off in search and found these
this

this goddess and they was he was the
first man that this this this woman this
this pa and her retinue of female pa
servants had seen. And so they're all
just a man a man you know they're just
like all all excited all in a tizzy over
that. and he wound up, you know, having
the romantic affair with her and found
out about the dog and then he kills the
dog and her, it was mainly her karma had
worked itself out. She had paid her dues

sufficiently that, you know, it was it was in accordance with her karma that this heroic king human male killed the the dog that was eating her every night. But then he had to go back to his kingdom and left her behind. And I don't remember exactly what happened after that. Uh, but I do think I even have a blog post where that is translated. Uh, I can't remember now. You might go to my blog and just do a search on Paw Watu or something and it there's a good chance it would turn up there.

But

uh mainly the pto watu it's it's one of the latest additions to the

polytopica and it's it's kind
of I mean if you read it you see that it
was probably written by wise guy monks
talking about how by you know supporting
the sa you're going to have great things
happen to you but if you like don't
support the sa very well then bad things
are going to happen to you. And you
know, it's just I mean, it still happens
to this day in Burma where some of the
Seattle will be giving these sermons on
by offering robes to the monks, you're
going to have you're going to be
reborn rich and beautiful, this kind of
stuff. And that seems to be one of the
kind of a predominant theme throughout

the Paw

Watu. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Kundrew's second question.

which is do you think the average lay person would

benefit from reading the paw watsu? Why

or why not? Um I mean it's it's

interesting like legendary stories and

it can give you insight. I mean it's

part of the

polytopica and so it'll give you insight

into the culture and like mental states

of the formulators of orthodox

terraovvada. Um I don't think it's

necessary to read it at

all. I think most terra Buddhists do not

read the ptoatu. If you just want to

read stories that are like entertaining and maybe even uplifting and give you some insight into what society was like in ancient northern India, you'd be much better off reading like the Dharmapata commentary.

I think the Dhamop commentary would be much more beneficial to someone wanting to read

stories from ancient India than reading the pa watu or the weim mana watu

also. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugu and Yugu says why do enlightenment people still need to meditate sitting and walking? I don't think they still need

to meditate.

I think an enlightened person is always going to be in a meditative state no matter what they're doing. Although if they were if they became enlightened through practicing dharma like they're a monk for example, they're going to continue doing monk stuff because they're still a monk. And you know, meditating if if you're enlightened, you know, you're getting into really profound meditative states. I mean, you might as well be doing that as doing something else.

So I do think that a fully enlightened being really has no need for for meditation anymore. It's could just be

sort of like residual habits or it's just a convenient way to pass the time. It's just the thing that they've been doing, you know, it's like the traditional thing or the cultural thing or just the thing that they've been doing personally for years and so they just continue with that. But really meditation is part of the raft. You know, formal meditation like observing your breaths and that sort of thing is part of the raft that once you cross over to the other side, you don't need it anymore. You don't just carry it on your shoulders, you just leave it behind. So, but still I do think that an

enlightened being is going to be in in a profound meditative state all the time.

They don't really need the gimmick of sitting cross-legged anymore, although some of them may still do

that. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Maitraa

Buddha. And Maitraa Buddha says, "Is there any evidence that the Buddha

existed outside of Buddhist scripture?

How do we know for sure he existed and

that he's not an amalgamation of local folklore of wise men making up stories and parables to express

wisdom? Well, one part of this, how do

we know for sure that he existed? I

mean, you you can't know for sure that

that you exist, you can't know for sure
that Abraham Lincoln existed. There's
photographs and all that, but I
mean, Bertrren Russell pointed out in
one of his books that there's no way you
can prove that some god with a strange
sense of humor didn't just create this
world five minutes ago, implanting in us
memories of things that never happened.
There's no way you can prove that. I
mean, skepticism like rules. You you
just
can't I mean, skepticism can shoot down
just about any
argument. So, we can't know for sure
that the Buddha existed. We can't know

for sure that India exists even now.

Even people living in India can't be 100% sure. And in fact, the philosophical ones would probably doubt it because they would consider it to be Maya or illusion.

So there's

that. But also, is there any evidence that the Buddha existed outside of Buddhist scripture? I'm not sure if there is any like the Pali texts are not reliable. I mean, whether they mention the Buddha at all. I mean the Pali texts were composed considerably after the Buddhist time because the Pali lost their texts twice and it was all handed down orally

for

centuries. So I mean that's not

persuasive evidence even if there is

mention of the Buddha in in Jane texts.

Um I don't know of any inscriptions that

go back to the time of the Buddha. I

mean, the best evidence the Buddha

existed is just the like the body of

text of all the stuff that he supposedly

did and said, you know, you've got like

his birthplace, his death place, the

place of his enlightenment. You've got

like the stupas commemorating this that

go back to ancient times. Um, and also

you've got

relics. So, relics are are part of my

Buddha's second question. So, I guess I'll address that when I get to that. Let's see. How do we know for sure he existed? We don't. We can't. Nobody can know. And that he's not an amalgamation of local folk wise men making up stories and parables to express wisdom. I don't think that that's the case, though. I think it is more likely, more probable just going with the whole conventional truth approach to reality just empirical worldly reality that it is more likely that God Buddha existed even if most of the stories attributed to him are not true. Similarly, I feel the same way about

Jesus. There's been a lot of people, including some people that I know, who think Jesus never existed, but I do think it's more likely that he did. You can't prove it that he did. You can't prove that he didn't, but it does seem more likely. You know, I I accept it as a working hypothesis that God Buddha existed and a working hypothesis that Jesus of Nazareth existed. In fact, hell, I still think that there's a good chance that William Shakespeare really did write his own plays. Although, I have a a good friend who's really on the Francis Bacon bandwagon. Or there's there's also the

weird thing is that there's like
persuasive cases for like two or three
other people that wrote Shakespeare's
plays. And I mean, it really doesn't
matter. I mean what really matters is
does dharma help you to cultivate wisdom
and and purity and so forth. That's
really the important thing. So even if
the Buddha never really existed
u dharma is still legitimate. Whereas
Christianity if Jesus never existed then
Christianity pretty much collapses
because how can you accept someone as
your savior if they don't exist?
But with Buddha, I mean, it wasn't
really based on a personality cult or it
shouldn't have been anyway. It's like,

you know, after he is gone, the dharma is your teacher. And if dharma works, you know, if it helps you to get wiser and better, then it's all good.

So yeah, I mean, you can't really be sure about anything that exists outside of your

mind. Even some of the stuff that exists inside your mind, you can't be sure of. And I just finished my primary beverage beverage, my designated primary beverage or DPV, DPB.

So, I'm breaking into the emergency backup

beverage. And I even had this urge earlier that it was just like this

little insight that maybe I should have two emergency backup beverages, but I just didn't follow through with that.

So, we're going to see if I live to regret

it. So, let's see here. I guess I answered that question. So, I'm going to move on to my Treya Buddha's second question, which regards relics. As far as his relics, if scientists could would carbon date them, will it approximate to someone who existed around 2,500 years ago? I would guess, yeah, I have seen some of the Buddha's relics. At least there's good evidence that they really were the Buddha's relics, that they came from Peshawar. They're the Peshawar

relics that are you can look at them in
Burma at the they're at the base of
Mandandalay Hill. I've been to see them
twice, at least
twice. And I mean, there's some pretty
solid evidence uh like a chain of
custody kind of a thing going all the
way back to ancient times. It's like
after the Buddha died, his relics were
divided up into I think it was like
eight eight portions and there were like
eight pagotas or stupas built
commemorating these relics. Then during
the reign of the emperor Ashoka, he
broke into those and divided them up
more and and made more stupas around

India commemorating the Buddha's relics.
And then when the the Kushan king
Kaneska conquered northwestern India, he
he did it again. He broke into some of
Ashoka's stupas and you know he he
enshrined the relics in in more stupas
and more importantly he uh at least with
regard to the story his capital city
which was near what is now Peshawar in
Pakistan
um he he built this huge pagota which
the Muslims destroyed but it was this
huge pagota in his capital city and as
this emperor, you know, he wanted
legitimate relics in his great huge
pagod. So, I'm sure he would have made
some effort to get like legit genuine

relics of the Buddha out of some of
Ashoka's or at least out of one of
Ashoka's stupas and then he enshrined
them in in this huge pagoda at Peshawar
and then the Muslims destroyed the
pagoda wiped out Buddhism in the area
and so it was like in British colonial
times some British
archaeologists were they were thinking
well I there this there was this huge
pagoda here at one point. Let's just dig
down right in the middle of it and see
if there's some sort of like a relic
chamber. And sure enough, they found
this relic chamber that was it was like
a a golden casket. And inside the golden

casket was a smaller crystal, like a a
vial kind of a thing. And it had
Keshka's name inscribed on it. And
inside this crystal vial was little
pieces of bone. And you can see them to
this day at the foot of Mandalay Hill in
Burma, if you can get into Burma
nowadays. And so I would guess that if
someone carbon dated that some one of
those little pieces of bone that it
would probably come out, you know, maybe
a little after 2,500 years ago. They've
sort of modern western scholars have
been revising the times that like the
dates of the Buddha, you know, like
almost a century ear or later than
tradition has it. But still, it wouldn't

surprise me at all if it really was the Buddha's relics. And also, there's like a um the burial stupa of who was it? I think it was I think it was Sar Puta. I think traditionally they know where that one is too.

So, they might be able to find some some uh relics, you know, like biological fragments of bone or something there also that they could test. It's too bad that they were cremated cuz then you can't clone them and create like a new Godmma. Although, he might not become enlightened this time. I don't I don't know how that would work to if you could

somehow clone, you know, like Godma, you know,

Shakyamuni. Of course, he wouldn't be enlightened when he was born. That would be weird. I mean, it might be a whole different karmic stream enters that body and you might wind up with a very different person.

So, yeah, I'm I'm guessing that the Peshawar relics are I mean, I can't know for sure, but still there there is some fairly good evidence that they really are relics of the Buddha. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Fred. And Fred says, "Are we all stoned?" And I

think what what PSA or No, it wasn't
PSA. It was Philes. I think Phil may
have been stoned when he asked his
questions. Um, but I think Fred is being
more philosophical here. He's not asking
if we're all loaded, which we are not.
Some of us maybe are.

Some of us may have drunk half a bottle
of cough syrup right before watching
this. Who

knows? But I mean at a more
philosophical philosophical point of
view, we all have moa. We all have
delusion or what could be called
semiconscious stupidity. Like the word
moa based on my understanding of the

term, it does mean something like semiconscious stupidity. And so pretty much anyone who isn't enlightened could be in that kind of stupor that is similar to being stoned. I mean in a way you could say we're kind of intoxicated on the defilements that kind of thing. You could interpret it philosophically and say yeah we're all stoned on defilements or delusion or whatever. But I do appreciate the short question. It's only four words. And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb. Sometimes also still known as Libra Lamb and and also, you know, etc., etc., and

so on so

forth. Man of many names is Stellar Supreme. And he says, "Can you tell the story of your father being a hobo at one time riding freight trains?" And it is true that my father was born in 1921. He was a relatively old man when he had me. And so he was alive during the Great Depression and he ran away from home as a teenager and became essentially a hobo. I think he he was an alcoholic by the time he was 18 and just riding freight trains across the country up until um he eventually uh he joined the CCC for a while which was the Civilian

Conservation Corps. Uh like he helped to dig a back door into Oregon caves at Oregon Caves National Monument I think it's called. So this is like um the Franklin D. Roosevelt's, you know, trying to support the the American economy by just having the government paying people to just do public works stuff, that kind of thing. And then eventually joined the army and fought in World War II. But he did have some stories of just riding freight trains and talking about how there was like a hobo

um you know, like a a a code of honor sort of. And also they they had like codes where like if there was like a

soft-hearted person that would offer
offer handouts to hobos and some hobos
they'd leave like this little mark on
their on their fence so other hobos
would know that this person offers food
or whatever it is. And I don't know if
hobos even still exist. I think nowadays
it's more like meth and fentinel and
stuff that that people you don't see
very many just
winos or you know homeless people that
are just
drunks but times have changed in that
regard. So yeah he he was like a real
life hobo who rode freight trains across
the country and eventually you know did

other he did all sorts of things. I mean during the depression and my father was he

always how do I explain this you know he was always a

nonconformist was not a follower he was an explorer of

frontiers my father really loved

frontiers he eventually wound up like

big game hunting and gold prospecting in Alaska which is where I was born

um so yeah

He's he was a hobo. And so I'm just

going to I'm just going to move on uh to

Stellar Supreme, etc., etc. Second

question, which is what were some of his

wild stories of hobo jungles? And one

story that he he would tell me was just what they would drink because this was also during the time of prohibition. So alcohol was illegal just like marijuana is still illegal in in some states of the union where um one thing that they would drink was shoe polish that shoe polish had some kind of ethyl alcohol in it and you you'd have to let the the the black stuff sink to the bottom. So, you have to set it aside for a while. Like some hobo would steal a case of shoe polish that, you know, they'd set it aside waiting for the big party and then they'd pass around the bottle of shoe polish and the last person to take the

drink, he'd get the black stuff all over his teeth and his mouth and he'd get laughed at and ridiculed.

Um, possibly the wildest story though my father told of being in a hobo jungle was he was walking along and he saw this hobo cooking chicken legs over a fire.

You know, just like you know holding the chicken leg, you know, kind of turn it in his hand over this fire. And my father asked him, "Where'd you get those where'd you get those drumsticks?" And so the hobo leads him around to this freight car of a freight train. And there's crates of live chickens in this this freight car. And you can't get he couldn't get the whole chicken. This is

this it's an awful story, but he
couldn't get the live the whole chicken
through the like the bars of the the the
crate. So, but he could like yank out
yank legs off these live temporarily
live chickens. And then he's just going
around and just roasting them and
burning off the feathers, I guess. just
roasting them over the
fire. And that kind of [__] happens in
this

world. And there are some people that
don't see anything wrong with that. I
mean, it was really it's the the whole
idea of being humane towards animals is
a relatively modern idea. I mean, there

have always been people who have loved animals and been soft-hearted towards them. The prophet Muhammad apparently had had like consideration towards animals and so forth, even though he did promote, you know, bloody animal sacrifices, like you you're supposed to cut the throat of a camel at at Mecca, that kind of thing. But, uh, it was just like even in Christianity, you know, killing an animal is just it's just not on the moral landscape. I mean, it's just does it's not part in in the equation at all. You know, it's like Jesus helped his disciples catch fish after he died according to the story. You know,

killing animals is just that's why there that's what the Old Testament says. You know, this is we're here. I mean, humans just have dominion over nature, including animals. And we can do whatever the hell we want to. We can kill animals if we want to. It's a and then we burn them and it's a pleasing aroma for the Lord.

So yeah, that is kind of strange to me that just this whole idea of compassion towards animals is relatively rare in the human race. Anyways, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Norman. And Norman says, "If you could

redo the path from your early 20s, how would you proceed or do things differently?"

Well, I mean, that would be assuming that I I wouldn't know then what I know now. And so, in all likelihood, I wouldn't change anything. I mean, if I could know then what I know now, I might do things differently because I wouldn't have to do what I already did. You know, it's like, why go to college again and and study the same stuff when you've already learned it? you know, why study the same things as a monk that I've I've already learned. I already know that stuff. So, from that point of view, I could do something different. But I

don't think that's really the
implication in Norman's
question. In Norman's question, I mean,
it's like, if I could redo the path from
my early
20s, how would you proceed or do things
differently? Yeah. I mean, I I really
don't think that I don't I don't think I
should mess with anything because things
have worked out pretty well. So, I
shouldn't try to fix anything. If it
ain't broke, don't fix it. So, I think I
just leave it the way it
was. If I had my whole life to live over
again, knowing then what I know now
already, I might do things very

differently. Like, I'd buy Amazon stock when it went on the market in 1997.

probably wouldn't have to be a monk. Look for my sweetie when we're still young. That kind of thing. But yeah, I mean, if I didn't know then what I know now, I just do it the way I did it because everything happens the way it's supposed to happen and things seem to have happened fairly well.

So, I'm just going to move on to

Norman's second

question, which is, "What personality or genetic traits have you noticed in people with high

attainments? How can one honestly assess

whether enlightenment is within reach in this lifetime?" I don't know. I don't think it's possible really to assess whether enlightenment is within reach in this lifetime. I mean with some people it's maybe fairly obvious that they're just like wallowing in samsara completely lost in the illusion you know they're completely bluepilled completely stuck in the matrix but even even somebody like that they can suddenly have like a near-death experience or some such that just slams them into a different state of consciousness whereas there are some

people who have high attainment ments
that are just stuck in those high
attainments and they can never really
completely transcend this world and
become enlightened like some Hindu
swamies they just get more and more
refined more and more refined more and
more refined but it's like they're still
stuck they're stuck in a very refined
level of samsara but they're still stuck
in

samsara and that's the way it is with
most relatively wise people most dharma
teachers most dharma teachers that kind
of thing you know they're they're not
enlightened yet and they might have less
like realistic chance of becoming

enlightened than some other person who just has a near-death experience and gets slammed into a higher mental state. So, you can't really tell for sure. Maybe some personality traits like more being more introverted and less extroverted or even being somewhat homely or having some sort of social handicap that prevents you from really doing well in society and just getting lost in it where you have some kind of circumstance that keeps you sort of on the fringe as a kind of outsider. Like St. John of the Cross, one of my favorite examples, he was like less than five feet tall when he was full grown

just

through they think through just chronic malnutrition as a child. He had such a rough childhood that just helped to push him in the direction of saintthood. So let's let's consider this question one more time. What personality or genetic traits have you noticed in people with high attainments?

Uh yeah, they tend to be kind of introverted, quiet, um not really effusive, emotional kind of people.

Although even ausive emotional kind of people can still have some kind of experience

that just kind of knocks them loose from some

sorrow. So it'd be more of a statistical thing, I guess. And how can one honestly assess whether enlightenment is within reach in this lifetime? I don't think you can. Anything is possible. That's that's one thing that uh it's it's like a great comforting thought from me even though it can be interpreted positively or negatively that anything is possible and that you should never say well I I can't become enlightened in this life because you don't know and if the belief that you can't become enlightened helps you not to become enlightened you know you just get locked into it sort of like what I was talking about in the previous

Q&A with that quote from Albear Kimu
where it's like you know whatever you
consider to be true enslaves
you and a lot of people that are into
all this health you know biochemistry
stuff on YouTube videos if they they
really believe that that is true then it
this kind of locks them into that you
know in a way it enslaves them it
becomes sort of like a like a
prison so you're better off
not making up your mind with regard to
that sort of thing. You shouldn't think
that you can't become enlightened
because who knows anything is possible.
So I'm just going to move on to the next
question which is from the

protoseudk and the protose pseudom monk
um he generally has headings
uh at the beginning of his questions and
the first heading is on po following
Hindu teachings and then the question is
if the only enlightened beings you
believe to exist have been two Hindu
saints why not practice Hinduism or
vanta instead of terabara Buddhism?
Well, I don't think that they're the
only two beings that I believe to exist.
Although they would be pretty much at
the top of the list of people in the
like the past hundred years who may
really have been fully enlightened would
be Ramana Maharshi and Nim Karoli Baba.

Both of them Hindus. One of them the Vishnavite and the other one a shyite. You know they had different approaches to Hinduism.

But you know like Nim Kurly Baba was a devotee of Hanuman the monkey god whereas Ramana Maharshi was a devotee of Arunachala which is a hill sacred to Shiva in South India. Um so I think it just kind of turned out that way. I mean maybe way of Burma maybe he was fully enlightened. I never met him but I have heard only good things about him. So let's see. Uh why not practice Hinduism instead of Theravata Buddhism? It just doesn't resonate with me as well as Buddhism.

Buddhism is more intellectual. It has less less fairy tales. And the fairy tales that do exist in Terravata Buddhism can be just set aside and ignored because they're not really important. You know, they're not essential to the teachings. It's just like window dressing or frosting on the cake or whatever. So Buddhism definitely just resonates with me much better. It's more philosophical. It makes better sense. But making good sense isn't really necessary for an enlightenment tradition. I mean if if you got the devotionism to to just worship

wholeheartedly Vishnu or Shiva or
Hanuman the monkey god or Arunachala the
hill or whatever or Jesus Christ or the
Virgin Mary or whatever I mean just
wholeheartedly just complete faith in
that then you can go far with that too.
is just that I'm a lukewarm
philosophically minded westerner with a
capacity for skepticism and critical
thought. And so Buddhism, I can have
more confidence in that. I can feel more
at home with terra Buddhism than with
systems that require belief in elaborate
fairy tales that are just built right
into the whole system. So that you can't
get rid of the fairy tales without
getting rid of, you know, without just

gutshooting the whole
system. So that's why and the
protoseudong second question has the
heading on the compatibility of Hinduism
or Korea yoga and terra Buddhist
monasticism. So the question is many
Q&As ago I asked you about yoga or Korea
yoga. I feel very drawn to Korea yoga.
Uh Korea, not Korea but K R I Y A which
in Pali would be K I R I Y A Ka which
means like functional in in
Pali. But I'm concerned how one could be
eclectic combining spiritual traditions
as a Terra Buddhist monk. For example,
how can a monk practice as hat yoga in
rags? One would need something loose but

covering private parts and monks don't wear pants. I think you call it underwear. Also, do monasteries allow monks to read other books, try other practices, pranayama, chanting, etc. Finding a guru in the Himalaya mountains. Trivial questions, but vignia is so strict one must ask. Not having these freedoms might delay me from going forth. Okay, so it's kind of a complex question here. See where is the first question

mark let's

see many question see for how can a monk practice asas hata yoga in rags you can gird your loins you know like with the monks that play soccer or a monk who's

going to climb a tree or a monk who's
going to climb a ladder or something
there's ways to take your lower robe and
just kind of wrap it into like a loin
cloth so that your legs have more
freedom of motion and so forth. So you
can do that. I mean, you can't do it in
public, but in the privacy of your own
meditation hut, hell, you can do yoga
asas naked. So long as you're not in
some exposed area where people will see
you. So let's see here. One would need
something loose but covering private
parts. Not necessarily. You could you
could be naked if you're all by
yourself. Also, do monasteries allow

monks to read other books? Yeah. I mean, some strict monasteries, especially if you're a junior monk, they'll just say just read what you're told to read or read poly texts, don't bother with Western psychology, don't bother with Hinduism, that kind of thing. But other monasteries are going to be more open to that. Um, there's no real vighna rule against I think there's a rule against nuns studying esoteric stuff, but there's no rule against monks studying it. And also in the Buddha does say that it's good to be bahusuta like in in the the mangalasuta the list of 38 blessings being bahosuta is one of them and

bahusuta means having learned much just
having like a comprehensive view having
being having being having being having
being having being familiar with other
religions other philosophies other
points of view and so forth actually can
help give you a sense of perspective and
understand dharma
better at least
potentially. So let's see. Do
monasteries allow monks to read other
books? Some do. Try other practices like
pranayama or chanting om. Well um once
you've got five years of seniority under
your belt, you can go solo. You're no
longer living independence upon a

preceptor or upon an acharia or teacher.

And so once you're on your own, you can pretty much do as you please. I mean, within the within the confines of the Vignia rules, there's no vignia rules against doing pranayyama or meditating on the syllable m. You know, meditating on m is really hardly any more heterodox than meditating on buddo, which is common in Thailand, even though it's not taught in the sutas at all. So the the whole idea of meditating on buddo which is a like a Thai forest tradition practice I I'm unfamiliar with with I'm unaware of any teaching in the sutas recommending that it's just it's a kind of mantra meditation using a Buddhist

mantra and would work just as well it would seem to me.

So finding a guru in the Himalaya mountains. Yeah, I mean that might be a little trickier within the the confines of the Vinaya rules, but it's still possible. So yeah, I mean your first five years as a monk, you have to live in dependence upon a teacher or your preceptor or some other teacher and you pretty much have to do as they say, you know, within within reason.

But once you're you've become a Mahāyāna monk, you know, a monk of middle standing, once you've had at least five years of seniority, five rainy seasons

under your belt, then you can do as you please. You can read Western psychology, you can experiment with Hindu meditation techniques. I mean, so long as you're not believing in, you know, that Jesus is the only begotten son of God who died for your sins and and and that sort of thing. As long as you're not like a a devout Christian or, you know, so long as you haven't abandoned the basic principles of Buddhism, you can still sort of experiment and and study different things and try different things. Um, and I mean, so long as it's you're not breaking the rules and the rules are fairly lenient with regard to just like learning other things. I mean,

you might be discouraged from learning like astrology, that kind of thing, but it's not technically against the rules, even though it is discouraged in the sutas.

So yeah, I don't think it's the the vineyard rules are very precise with regard to how you do certain things, how you clean your hut, how you use the toilet, how you eat your meal, this kind of thing. But with regard to what you're allowed to study, it's pretty wide open. So you you have more freedom of mind um than freedom of body as a monk. As a lay person, you may have more freedom of body than freedom of mind, but as a as a

monk, it's the other way
around. So I think I'm just going to
move on to uh the protose monk, formerly
known as Cool Whip. his third question
which is which has the heading of on
Hinduism leading to truth with its
emphasis on samadei
notasana. And so the question is how can
Hindu yogis become enlightened when they
follow the path of
shamata. It's all about deep states of
meditation to become one with infinite
formless consciousness not understanding
reality through the four foundations of
mindfulness. reality as it is. I'm
curious how you reconcile this Hinduism
as a path to enlightenment with orthodox

terravada. Hinduism says creation is God's play or leela. So they are much more permissive. You can enjoy sensuality as long as you are detached as everything is God. Simply connect with the awareness, become one with it. You can have sex, dance, listen to music, chat, paint, play games, have a family, etc. The key is detachment. You can be drunk and be detached. Less renunciation. If terraata seems too austere, Hinduism is a nice uh you can have your cake and eat it too alternative. But will it lead you to nibbana simultaneous spiritual and worldly life? Excited to hear your

thoughts. Well,

Hinduism, it's not just one system.

Hinduism has this broad spectrum of the ridiculous to the

sublime. And some of it is wiser than some some other aspects. Like in

Christianity, it's the same. In

Buddhism, it's the same. You're going to have traditions and schools that are wiser and then you're going to have traditions and schools that are less

wise. You know, like some of the contemplative orders in monastic

Christianity would be more wise in my opinion than the Jehovah's Witnesses, for example, even though they're both under the rubric of

Christianity. And Hinduism is it's possibly even a broader spectrum than Christianity has. So in the Buddhist time, the the Hindus or, you know, the the the vadicists, you know, the Vadic Brahmans, they were living a life that wasn't all that different from what the Buddhist monks were living. You know, they're just living out in the forest. They may have been tending a sacred fire out there. They had like like matted long matted hair instead of shaving their heads, but it was fairly similar. There was a lot of of overlap.

And with regard to Hindus, I mean, I've

heard this argument before. I've heard this German monk at P was really smug about it. He was like, Hindus can't possibly become enlightened because they don't practice witha. They only practice samata. And he's really smug about it. Like he really knew what was what. But insight isn't something that you practice. Insight is something that arises spontaneously and it is most likely to arise spontaneously after attaining these deep samati states. It's like I've explained this many times before, but it's like your mental states are like waves and consciousness is like the water. You know, consciousness is like the essence of your mind and your

mental states are just forms that this consciousness assumes. So most people are lost in the forms. That is what samsara is. Samsara is the forms.

Samsara is the waves. I like this wave and I don't like that wave and this wave is better than that wave and I want more of this kind of wave and less of that kind of wave and they just have no concept of water at all. Or maybe they'll just turn water into some other kind of conceptual sort of wave phenomenon that isn't really water anymore. You know, they just converted into a wave and called it water just just so that it'll fit into this this

waveoriented mentality.

So I mean you want to become enlightened. A good way of going about it like the traditional ancient Indian Buddhist way is you get your mind as free of waves as possible. Just flat calm as close to a flat calm as possible and then you stop being distracted by these waves and then you're much more likely to get the insight into the essence underlying the waves because you don't have the waves distracting you anymore. And Hindus do that. So I mean if we or insight can arise spontaneously in a practicing Buddhist after coming out of fourth Janna why not a Hindu

also. So I think the Hindus they don't have as much of a shortcut as Buddhists do. You know it's like in Buddhism you don't really have to be a total master of Janna. It's like some people can see through the waves and just start seeing water when it's still relatively choppy seas. Maybe some Hindus can do that too. But with Hinduism, there's more of an emphasis on getting to the flat calm stage, perfecting flat calm as well as you can. And then like psychic powers can arise also from that sort of approach. Um, in Buddhism it's like you you become enlightened as soon as you can. As soon

as you can bail out, you bail out. There is no end to the path. You just keep following the path until you don't need to follow it anymore and you bail out sideways so to speak.

It may be that Buddhism has more of a concept of that and makes and thus more I mean people are less shackled to this idea that nirvana or liberation is at the end of the path when the path really has no end.

So it may be that Buddhists have somewhat of an advantage but Hinduism um still to this day I would not at all be surprised if there had been more enlightened Hindus than enlightened terravada Buddhists partly just because

there's more Hindus you know just
statistically there's more
practitioners that can potentially
become enlightened in various ways and
like just ramen Nim coroli Baba
comparing those two you know they're
very different from each other their
whole approach to religion was different
at least at the the outward empirical
levels you know ultimately liberation
would be the
same
so let's
see yeah I really don't think that terra
Buddhism has a monopoly on enlightenment
I do not think that Christianity has a

monopoly on enlightenment. It may be that some people become enlightened as much in spite of a limiting tradition as because of it. But still, you know, there's you may be a practicing Hindu and you have the near-death experience that just slams you out of out of your samsaric rut, which is what happened to Raman Maharshi. He was not a religious person, a particularly religious person. He was a high school student doing his homework and he suddenly has this kind of a panic attack. He feels like he's dying. So he just lies down, gets ready for death and it was just

boom. He had his liberating insight as a result of just lying there motionless, not thinking. And it was a kind of he just went into this deep meditative state and just penetrated samsara.

So yeah, I it may be that a Buddhist or a terra Buddhist has some sort of advantage, but I don't think that a Buddhist has any kind of monopoly on enlightenment.

So I don't know how well I answered that question but I'm moving on to the next question anyway and this is from Scoladin or Scooladine who after experimenting with various various names

has come back to his his home of
Scoladin or Scooladine and he says would
you kindly explain the spirituality of
the trial by France

Kovka and yeah I'm not sure about the
spirituality of

But I do think I kind of understand the
trial by Kofka. It's

like I mean I haven't read it recently
and I haven't watched the movie recently
either. The the one I think it was

directed by Orson Wells or Orson Wells

is in the movie too. It it has a very
different ending, but still it's it's

within the the spirit of of the trial

that I think the crime that Kofka or

that Kay was guilty of in the trial is

just questioning the validity of his culture that it's the people that aren't on trial are the ones that are just going along. You know, they're going along with the brave new world. They're completely lost in samsara. But once you start being skeptical of it, suddenly you're on trial. And it's like, you know, the the the system will just try to destroy you or force you to assimilate or just, you know, eliminate you. Assimilate or eliminate, one or the other. And one of the the main ways of not being on trial is through women. that you know as he like Kay in the story is using women as a kind of escape

from the trials and tribulations of his trial. Um I can't remember there was some statement he makes towards the beginning. It was like shortly after something happened. He he he found out that he was being investigated or he was he got sucked into this trial system. It was I think his his wife died or something. So it was like, you know, it was this event that caused him to start questioning the value of this life that everyone just takes for granted. And it was much more so when the trial was written when, you know, you still had just sort of a conservative western civilization, almost all white people. And you know, you just get you you you

go to school, you you you know, you're born, you you you obey your parents, you go to school, you graduate, you get a job, you buy a house, you get a wife, you have kids, you get older, you retire, you die. And that was like 99% of the population followed this without question. And it was just what you do. And when you start questioning that that is really the crime and the system really doesn't doesn't like that. I think the system is now much more diffuse. You know there's much more variation allowed but still it's the same kind of deal as if you start being skeptical of the whole system the system

kind of turns against you in a way. I think that's what Kofka was writing about in the trial. I'm glad you didn't ask me about the castle, which is much harder to understand. I read that once and I and I'd have to read it at least one more time in order to really get any kind of idea that I've wrapped my head around the castle. But the trial, I've read it a few times. I've read like various versions of it because the original trial was it was published from a manuscript just kind of loose chapters that a friend of Kofka just arranged in a certain way that aren't necessarily the way Kofka intended. You know, there's ways like examining the text

that you can like you can see that it's out of order chronologically the way the the final edition was published. So you can rearrange the chapters and it makes a little bit better sense. But I do think that the crime that Kay committed that caused him eventually to be killed was just questioning the validity of of the culture or of just some sorrow in general. And it it reminds me of one time he goes to one of these these hearings associated with his his case and I mean he looks at one of the law books on on the desk and it's got like this crude sexual pictures scrolled like in the in the the the blank pages like

the fly leaf or whatever. And it's it really is sex is one of the main things that holds the system together.

And there is a statement that uh everybody is involved in in the trial process. Like all the people that aren't on trial are the ones that are like participating in the system that you know is sort of like they're responsible for the trial. Which does mean it's kind of like society and the beliefs of some some society you know like some Saric group unenlightenment is the establishment system. And so any kind of skepticism towards that is the crime against sort of nature in a way. So let's see

here. I guess I answer that question about as well as I'm likely to. It's really not fresh in my mind. I haven't read the trial recently. So Scoladin or Scooladine second question. Would you kindly explain the synchronicity of twins? And then he's got his characteristic bullet points. The the protose pseudo monk has headings. Scooladine has bullet points. And so the bullet points say, "There have been documented accounts of twins separated at birth, but they share many similarities. They marry similar looking women with the same first name, use same brand products, same hairstyle." Yeah,

it's true. I I've read about cases like that, too. like like identical twins especially who were separated when they were infants. It's like they send each other a birthday card. They send each other exactly the same birthday card. You know, it's they just have the same tastes in things. You know, they like the same kind of women with the same kind of names and you know, they have similar jobs or whatever. You know, it's just sort of like two versions of the same person. And it is possible that um uh a more Buddhist explanation is that they were just you know they're sort of like twin spirits. They're you know they've sort of uh occurred together

life after life. You know it might be that they're twins in this life. It may be like their father and son in a different existence. They might be husband and wife in a different existence. just you know this just for some reason in uh Edward Arn Edwin Arnold's the light of Asia his his poem about the Buddha that the Buddha and Yasodora his wife were kind of like that too I think I think I if that's the right poem but there's I remember reading this poem where you know the Buddha and his wife Yasodora were just sort of life after life after life appearing together you know in various

relations you know they were kind of bound up together. They're they're two karmic streams. We're just sort of like doing this dance around each other. And it could be like that. That would be a more Buddhist explanation. A less Buddhist explanation would be that you've got a karmic stream that just bifurcates and splits in half. So it's sort of like one being splits into two which I mean there would be a certain overlap between that theory and and the previous one but uh like karmic stream splitting into two would not be orthodox terra Buddhism. I've I've never read anything that would support that hypothesis in terra Buddhist

texts.

So, let's

see. I guess I mean I mean there's other ways of of guessing what the meaning of it is. You know, it's like the same being gets reincarnated twice in the same time frame and it's like two versions of the same being, but that would be you're getting farther and farther out with that.

Um, not all identical twins really are so identical that I mean some identical twins really are not just like the same person twice. Like even Siamese twins, like the original Siamese twins, I think they were named like Chang and Ang or

something like that. One of them was a heavy drinker and the other one didn't drink at all. Although he didn't have to. He'd get drunk whenever his brother drank, I suppose. But I I worked with two identical twins just a few years ago and they were clearly they had different temperaments and usually the more alpha of the two of two twins is going to be the one that was born first. I'm I mean I'm not exactly sure why that is. He might be born just 8 minutes first. Eight minutes before the other one, but still for some reason you know his the parents will will you know he was the one that was born first. So, you know, he he he gets named first when they're

talking about the two the two kids, you know, Jim and Joe that, you know, if Joe was born or if Jim Jim would be born first, so it's Jim and Joe instead of the other way around and Jim would just sort of be like considered the elder brother and just take on more of an alpha personality. Or it may be that two identical twins, they both of them have sort of individualistic leanings and so one of them will adopt one kind of attitude and the other one will adopt a different one just to be different. And if the other one adopted his first, then the first one would would do something different just to be different just

because they both have this individualistic wanting to be different kind of attitude.

So that can it can be that way too. But just their similarity from the from the biological point of view. It's just that you know they've inherited like psychological qualities that you know the left just vehemently sometimes hysterically wants to deny. You know there's no such thing as human nature. There's no human animal instincts that it's it's all cultural that like intelligence tests and all this kind of thing. It's all cultural. We're molded by our culture like like Karl Marx would say we're products of our culture and

that it's not genetic.

But I mean the empirical evidence points
does seem to indicate that
many probably most of our personality
traits are genetically
conditioned. And so you've got two
genetically identical identical twins.
they're going to have the same like
psychological genetics. So, in a lot of
ways, they're gonna have the same kind
of taste, maybe the same favorite color,
they like the same kind of music, that
kind of thing, just because they're it's
like their inherent
congenital character, their
constitutional factors are so similar.

Although it may be that they both have this maverick kind of attitude which will then cause them to deliberately diverge from each other and be different. But from a karmic point of view, um the best Buddhist explanation would be that they've just they've been associated with each other lifetime after lifetime after lifetime and they've just grown very similar. So, I'm just going to move on to Scoladin or Scooladine's third question, which is, "Would you kindly explain past life memories?" And then he's got in his bullet points, "Brian's friend, John Kaminsky, shared an anecdote once about how he drove his

friend and his kid to a stranger's home because the kid was claiming past life memories and wouldn't shut the [_] up about it. The kid walks up to the house. An old lady appears. They talk. Old lady returns with a shoe box full of crap. Kid walks back to car with box of crap. Then straps on newly acquired gold watch. Heads explode. And I mean, I've read quite a few case histories like this. Um I think his name was Ian Stevenson. He was a professor at the University of Virginia or something like that who wrote books compiling case histories like this. And I mean it was pretty much just like Scoladin or

Scooladine says with regard to like little kids they remember being somebody else and you know they'll in just keep insisting that you know I'm not this little kid you know I'm this prosperous pharmacist who lives in this village 40 miles from here and you know I died of like a some kind of poisoning and And so there's there was one story that was kind of touching. This little girl, she just insisted that she was you born in that house over there and she could name the people that live there by name. Yeah, I guess you'd have to name them by name, wouldn't you? But I mean, she finally she gets brought there and she starts bossing around these grown people

and they they're kind of like smiling at her like she's just this cute little girl. And then she says something like, "I'm still your mother. I'm just small now. And I mean, there's a lot of cases like this. And so Ian Stevenson was using that as a kind of scientific or empirical evidence for reincarnation that sometimes the kids would know stuff that they shouldn't. I mean, they wouldn't really be able to know unless there was some kind of conspiracy, I guess, some sort of deliberate hoax.

But it doesn't necessarily work out the way Terra Buddhism says it was. Like one

of the most memorable cases in one of Ian Stevenson's books is there was this boy in India who apparently died of smallpox. And so his father went out to make the the arrangements for the burial. His son had just died. But then when he comes back home, the boy is awake again. But he's claiming to be somebody else. He's claiming to be this Brahman that lived in a a neighborhood not far away. or maybe it was a town not far away. And since the family he was born into wasn't Brahman, he would refuse to eat his mother's cooking. There was like this Brahman neighbor lady who had to cook his meals for him. And he would just insist that, you know,

I'm not this kid. I'm this other person.

And so I mean that I mean that's kind of in violation of the Buddhist teachings.

And technically it kind of works. is just reincarnation into a body that's already like 7 years old after the previous occupant of that body had passed on. So maybe there could be some way that it would be in accordance with Theravada Buddhism, but generally it is not supposed to work that way. Also, I read a different book by Ian Stevenson where there was some Thai Ajaan talking about how he was reincarnated or reborn before his other life had died. That for a while he was sort of vacillating

between this baby and this like ancient person on his deathbed. You know, there was he was just bedridden kind of in a semicoma a lot of the time, just unconscious a lot of the time. took him a long time to finally fade out. And so he was sort of fading out as this old person and fading in as this new person like simultaneously. And that's not supposed to happen in Buddhism either. And who knows? I mean, it's mainly just like anecdotal, you know, just unverifiable evidence. But there is a lot of that kind of evidence, many cases. And Ian Stevenson was was deliberately trying to find out trying to find kids claiming to

be this other person where the the two families hadn't really communicated yet so that he could really find he could do his best to see if they could name names and know stuff about this other family that they couldn't possibly have heard yet through intercommunication.

So, um, yeah, apparently some little kids can remember their past lives. My little brother, for example, used to talk about when he was a man, but you know, this could just be like the imagination of little kids in that case.

Anyway, Ian Stevenson also was uh doing a study on

birthmarks. How some people will have like a birthmark that that corresponds to some fatal injury they received in their previous life. You know, like a weird purple line here when they died of getting their their neck gashed or that kind of thing.

So, could I kindly explain past life memories? That is the question.

And I mean I don't know exactly the mechanism of how it works that some little kids can can still they still have lingering memories from the previous life that I mean it's it's like a psychic

power in Buddhism that once you get into these meditative attainments you get Janna and psychic powers then you can remember your past lives. My father tried to do that through hypnosis and through hypnotizing himself or being hypnotized by another person. He could have past life aggressions and you know he was he he strongly identified with some Scottish fellow who lived back around the the 1700s named Jason Haskell for example and it could just be like hypnotic imagination just cooking up these realistic vivid memories of stuff that never happened. I mean, you it's it's hard to know for

sure. There's another case
of my father was friends with this
husband and wife who lived on a big farm
out in the country and they would take
in troubled teenagers. Just the fresh
air, just being away from town, the cows
and everything just kind of helped them
to ground themselves, these kids. And it
would often help them to kind of
straighten things out for themselves.
you know, there less distraction from
this, you know, punk culture or whatever
it was. Just the fresh air, doing, you
know, light chores, milking the cows,
collecting the eggs, that kind of thing.
It just helped them to kind of get their
feet back on the ground and straighten

out a bit. But anyways, there was this one teenage girl, maybe 14 years old, who was out there, and all of a sudden, she just lost all interest in her appearance. She lost all interest in school. She wouldn't communicate. She'd just shut up. She didn't want to talk. And so, um, this this husband and wife knew my father was a hypnotist, asked him, "Would you be willing to hypnotize this girl and just kind of help to to resolve this problem that she's having that she won't tell anybody about?" So, my father said, "Well, I'm willing to do it so long as she's willing." And she would have to bring

somebody that she trusts, preferably another girl, you know, some friend of hers as a chaperone just, you know, just for ethics, you know, just with no scandals, no hint of scandals, anything like that. You know, there should be someone she trusts as a chaperone when he hypnotizes the girl. So, it all work it all worked out that way. This girl brought a friend of hers and my father is hypnotizing the the girl in question and suddenly he notices that the chaperon, this other girl has got her eyes closed and she's waving her arms around like this. And my father asks, "What are you doing?" And she says, "I'm swimming."

And he

says, "Where are you swimming?" And she

says, "In the South Pacific." And he

says, "Wh are you swimming?" And she

says, "My ship has been torpedoed by the

Japanese." And he ask he asks her name.

And she says her name is Mark

Ellison. And she's a a sailor during

World War II who drowned in the South

Pacific. And my father's fascinated by

this. He wants to he wants to know like

the name of the ship and maybe even Mark

Ellison's serial number so he can verify

this stuff.

but he's he's not really there for her.

He's trying to help this other girl. So,

he just kind of puts that on the back burner. And, you know, he just suggests to the first girl who's clammed up and everything that uh if if she's got any problems, it helps to tell, you know, to talk it out with somebody to just, you know, unburden her heart with somebody that she trusts. And then he he took them both out of the hypnotic trance. Then they went for a walk through the through the woods because we lived out in the country there too. And the the girl just kind of blurts out to her that even though she was like 14 years old, she was pregnant and she didn't even know who the father was cuz she was that kind of girl. She started

early. So anyways, my father was still intrigued by this Mark Ellison case. And so he hypnotizes the girl again, but this time she has no interest at all in Mark Ellison. She won't regress to Mark Ellison. Instead, she wants to find a calf on the farm that is lost, that a cow had her calf somewhere that they can't find it. And I mean, cows do this sometimes. And so, she just located it. It was somehow in like a clump of blackberry bushes on the other side of the fence. She found the cow or she found the calf, but she wasn't interested in Mark Ellison that time. So my father never was able to follow up on

that which is generally how it works.

It's a liinal kind of thing that is you

can't really verify it very

well. It's like the whole system is sort

of rigged against verifying

it. So how this actually

works I don't know exactly. I mean from

the Buddhist point of view it's and the

Burmese would call it luinza which is

just a person who is influenced by their

previous existence like a transsexual

person is kind of a luenza. It's like

they're making a transition from male to

female and the transition isn't complete

within a single life. Or there was one

case in the Ian Stevenson book about

this girl in Burma who insisted that she

was a Japanese man that apparently a Japanese soldier died in Burma during World War II, was reincarnated as this Burmese village girl and just she just vehemently insisted. I knew this one of my main supporters in Burma. Um, there's a good chance that she was a man in her previous existence. She was just a like a dedicated spinster. She never got married and she was just this aggressive kind of bigoted kind of prejudice kind of a person. and and she showed me pictures of her as a girl and she would always be hiding her face cuz she was ashamed of being a girl even at like the age of three or four. She'd want to wear

boys clothes. She she'd cry if they put girls clothes on her. She'd cry if they gave her like a girl's hairstyle or anything like that. And it was pretty clear to me from a Buddhist point of view that she was probably a man who was very like misogynistic, very chauvinistic against women and then as sort of a karmic payback got reborn as a woman in this life. So I'm I'm not answering the question though, am I? How would you kind would you kindly explain past life memories? the stuff that that carries over like in past life regressions tend to be the most emotionally intense like emotionally intense

experience experiences seem to create
the most

karma. And so those are the one those
are the memories that usually come up in
past life regressions. And from the
Buddhist point of view, for the most
part, it's just rebirth and like
residual memories from a previous life
somehow carrying over into the next
life. Although that's there's also other
ways of explaining
it. So, I've already talked about that
for several minutes, I guess. So, I
think whatever rambling I did on that
topic will be considered my answer. And
uh I'm just going to move on to the next

question which apparently is some kind of joke question that I don't really understand. And this is from Shush. And says, "Cow goes moo, frog goes croak, and the elephant goes toot. Duck a quack, and fish go blub, and the seal goes ow ow ow. But there's one sound that no one knows. What does the fox

say?" And somebody in the comments under this comment says, "I reckon Ponyo is one of

0.001% of Americans that won't know that reference unless the monasteries in Burma blasted it through their speakers." So apparently it was some kind of song that I've never heard

before. And based on the lyrics here,
it's just as well that I've never heard
this song before. But I do know the
answer. See, the cow goes moo. Frog goes
croak. The elephant goes toot. Ducks say
quack. And fish go blub. Well, fish, I
don't think they really go blob. And the
seal goes ow ow ow. But what does the
fox say? This the fox goes earthf.

Because when I was a little kid, like
three years old, you know, it's like
when when there's little kids, the
parents or grown-ups will ask you these
questions. You know, what does the cow
say? The cow says moo, you know, and
what does the frog say? And the frog

says croak. And my father would ask me,
"What does your mama say?" And it was
just the tradition in my family that
mama goes like the fox because when
she'd get the hiccups, she'd make this
irfing sound that my father said sounded
like a
fox. So foxes go earthf kind of like my
mother
hiccuping. So there I knew the answer to
that one. And I'm moving on to the next
question. This is from Tumo Plots, which
apparently is German for
playground. And so playground says,
"What was your training like as a novice
monk?" And it turns out I was a novice
monk twice. I was a temporary novice for

five weeks as a kind of dress rehearsal for being a fully ordained Biku like a year before I finally took the plunge. And then I was also a novice shortly before I be my ordination as a beu. I was a novice for a total of one day like the second time. The first time um my training is I was a don lab just a temporary ordination and they recommended that I be fully ordained as a monk because you get more benefit from being a monk because the Burmese are spiritual materialists and just think that you're going to get better karma for a higher ordination. But I didn't want to do that because I didn't know

the rules. You know, I didn't want to be a sloppy monk and I'd be better off just as a novice just to test the waters. And you know, I do a little studying. I did a lot of

meditation. Um, you know, just reading poly texts, you English translations. I didn't know polyette and meditating a lot. And that was about all I was doing for those five weeks. Um, the first time I was a novice and the second time I mean it was 24 hours so there wasn't a whole lot of training going on then but I don't know if playground is even asking

about being a sinara you know in in

Teraba Buddhism there's two levels of of

ordination for a male three levels for a female two levels for a male there's sana or novice and then there's biku or monk and Uh yeah, I mean as a novice I mean it wasn't that difference from just being a monk, just being a junior monk. I I took poly lessons and vineia lessons from my teacher utania um and meditated a lot and studied and that that was about it. You know, I'd do like little chores around the place. I'd water the bamboo plants up by the pigota, that kind of thing. But I mean there wasn't really anything really intense. So I guess I answer that

question and so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Robert and Robert says, "How do you view evolution if matter does not exist?" And this is a good question and it's something that has been kind of a challenge for me also and that I really do not think that physical matter is ultimately real. But from an empirical or scientific point of view, it's fairly obvious that organic evolution more or less in accordance with Charles Darwin's theories has occurred that just looking at the fossil record for example, you know, at the oldest levels, the the oldest geological strata, no sign of life. Then eventually you start getting

signs of anorobic bacteria like colonial encrusting bacteria. There'll be fossils of that. And then there's nothing but anorobic bacteria for billions of years. And then like maybe a billion years ago, there's enough free oxygen in the atmosphere due to photosynthesis and so forth that finally you can start getting ukareotic organisms like protozoans that then start becoming colonial. They start being making clusters and turning into animals and plants. And it's just you can see through the geological strata that you know the the more you the higher the strata the newer the strata the closer

you get to what you see nowadays you know like the older strata no mammals no primates no birds no reptiles I mean not even fish at first and then you just have like like clamlike creatures wormlike creatures that you know gradually they're they're diversifying dying through random mutations and just the the dying out of the bad mutations and the promotion, you know, the success, competitive success of the good mutations, which are like one in 10,000 until finally you wind up with, you know, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, primates, homoids, humans. Not that we're at the top. It's like whatever is alive today

is all at the

top. So how does that reconcile with me thinking that there is no such thing as like ultimately real physical matter?

Well, one thing is I mean it doesn't have to be it doesn't have to be real matter. I mean it's so long as it is the perceptions of it. It may be that there were

beings that were observing the earth that were participating in this. Or it may be that even this this early life had very simple primordial mental states that had their own karma, you know, and it's just it could be sort of like

Schopenhauer's concept of will where you've got this essentially a mental state. will is essentially a mental state that is just wanting to fill every niche that it can to just like manifest itself as fully as it can just through this will to exist that I mean that could have been going on you know back like a billion years or more but um the only way that it could really have happened even if it wasn't material would be you'd have to have some sort of small G god some kind of Brahma who is sort of generating this you know with their own mind or at least kind of

locking it down by perceiving it you know sort of collapsing the state vector by seeing it but aside from that I still have to accept the possibility that there really was no evolution before modern humans until modern humans came along and just sort of collapsed the state vector down into some stable configuration that would account for our existence from an empirical point of view which is hard to wrap your head around I have to admit but like uh Arthur Cclark used to say the universe is not only stranger than we imagine it is stranger than we can imagine

But it either
happened at the level of mentality or
it's just kind of jerryrigged
retroactively as a way of making sense
of the world we live in from a
scientific point of view. Like for
example, photons. It may be that photons
simply did not exist until humans like
hypothesized them and then started like
capturing them with scientific devices,
you know, measuring them, that sort of
thing that they just kind of like
coalesced
this I don't know what you'd call it
almost like a primordial chaos or
something just coalesced it down
into something that makes sense from a a

materialistic point of view.

So those are like my two main hypotheses. One is that you had some higher being who has all this going on in its mind. Maybe a group of higher beings just sort of you know who knows how many higher beings all sort of at the same on the same page of samsara so to speak that are kind of locking in these events. I mean that's one way of looking at it. Or it could be that it was just the uncollapsed state vector u_m from a material point of view that when mind became advanced enough it was able to sort of collapse things down into a

plausible kind of explanation of things which still is not entirely like 100% concrete. you know, there's still these weird loopholes and you know, scientists are saying now that some scientists are saying that, you know, evolution couldn't possibly happen because of this or that kind of mechanism that that wouldn't allow it to happen. It's just mathematically impossible or some such. So, who knows? It may be that that when there's another Capernac revolution that there's just going to be a revolution in understanding how we got here. So, it's still kind of a it's kind of a challenge for me to reconcile the like a kind of idealism or just there is no

that matter is not ultimately real
with pretty obvious to anyone who knows
the evidence that organic evolution
occurred over a period of billions of
years on this planet.

So, I'm just going to move on to
Robert's next question. Why do our minds
create a world where we see evidence of
evolution? Yes, I've already kind of
kind of touched on that where we need to
have some kind of plausible explanation
because if we can't come up with a
plausible explanation, it destabilizes
our samsara. It destabilizes our version
of reality. We have to lock it down with
these beliefs that are believable and

just God made it that way is no longer really believable to a post-modern materialistic mindset. And so you have to have some kind of scientific scientifically plausible explanation.

And it

it it's just kind of hard to explain otherwise. either that or it's like I said that you've got higher beings that were already setting this thing in motion before we came along which does I mean that's a fairly fairly good guess also. So I mean there were volcanoes long before people knew what volcanoes were. Stars in the sky long before

people knew what stars were. We still don't really know what stars are. You know, we've got our scientific explanations and they're pretty pretty locked down, pretty solid. Ultimately, it's not true. But within the context of samsara, that's what a star is. You know, it's this thermonuclear explosion going on. you know, gravity kind of holding it together while it's like the force of the the hydrogen atoms fusing into helium is pushing out and it's in a state of equilibrium producing lots of heat and light and so forth, lots of radiation.

Um it's it's just uh

what whatever this version of samsara
the minds in this version of samsara
have settled on that or it could be even
before that and it's it's very hard to
explain and that's one reason I suppose
why the Buddha didn't even want to go
there. So next question from Robert. Is
there a mind only evolution that maybe
happened in our realm? Yeah, I
mean mind does seem to be
more obvious than matter to me that
anything we know is going to be mental.
I mean you can hold up the cup, you
know, it's it's red, but that's that's a
visual perception. That's mental. You
can feel the weight of it, but that's a
tactile sensation which is mental. You

can feel its coolness because the coffee is gone. The hardness, tactile sensations which are mental. You can tap it. You hear the clank. Auditory sensations which are mental. You only know this. This only exists mentally. So evolution in that sense is mental because you know the whole theory of evolution is mental. The whole understanding of evolution is mental because understanding is mental. But it could be also that there's more of a karmic spiritual kind of evolution of mind that and I mean you start with primitive life forms on this planet and as life forms have become more complex

also mental states have become more complex. I doubt that an ammonite mollusk had as complex of a mind as we do. They but I mean they ruled the oceans up until fish came along.

So yeah, I mean I'm quite open to the idea of mental evolution both as kind of like what lies behind Darwinian evolution like Schopenhauer's will manifesting itself kind of fueling evolution that way or also more of a karmic spiritual evolution at a different level. I think both of those are plausible arguments. And so I'm just going to move on. Next question, which is the last question. I didn't even realize that

until just now. It's from Luke Kelzer.

And Luke Helzer says, "What do you think of the statement, no one is more hated than he who speaks the truth?" Well, I think that that's kind of an exaggeration. You know, it's it makes a pathy little saying, but I think there are people that are hated more than people who speak the truth. I mean, people who speak the truth, they tend, I mean, traditionally, stereotypically, they wind up being martyrs, you know, persecuted into oblivion, that kind of thing.

But yeah, I think there are people who are hated worse than people who simply

tell the truth.

So let's see. You know, just just really an evil person is going to be hated more than some saintly person or just some honest person who tells the truth. But it is true that people who speak ugly truths. And there are ugly truths, that mean true statements that you simply cannot say publicly or your career, your reputation, your life will be destroyed. At the very least, you're just going to be marginalized into a nobody that no one will listen to and you won't have any platform. You'll be kicked off all social media and all this except for maybe Bitshoot or Minds where you can just rant rant away and nobody

cares. But there are fairly obvious facts, empirical facts you cannot say in public or you're just going to have a ton of bricks dumped on you.

like for example human

biodiversity can't go

there. So there's definitely

uh like an element of truth to the

statement that no one is more hated than

he who speaks the truth. It's it's but

it's it's not really true that no one is

more hated. It's just that people who

speak the truth

outspokenly are going to face a hell of

a lot of resentment and you know they

may wind up being martyred to the system.

You know they're sort of like uh K in in
Kafka's

trial. You know they wind up uh as part
of the the process. I think that's the
original um the original name of the the
book is d process. It's it's in German
just is the process rather than the
trial. So this kind of goes back to
Kafka because the person who speaks the
truth or the person who has an inkling
that there is a truth that is beyond
what everyone is believing that they
become like criminals.

They become enemies of the
system. Hate speech. There's they're
purveyors of hate
speech. So yeah, I don't agree that no

one is more hated than he who speaks the truth. But he who speaks the truth is going to result in a lot of resentment and hatred and so forth from a lot of people who are not nearly so honest or not nearly so

perceptive. And uh I guess we're done.

So gosh, I I'm I'm going faster. I guess this is less than two and a half hours.

There's quite a lot of questions.

Although some of them were pretty easy or just had short

answers, but then some of them I was just kind of blathering along for several minutes without ever really addressing the question. So we did

pretty

good. And so if you have any questions about things that you think I can answer, especially if it has something to do with dharma or dharma, um I mean you want you're just kind of curious about something or other. I mean that's

fine, but um yeah, it's it's good if it's like philosophical kind of question that that I can actually understand. There was one question that I just didn't understand at all.

So yeah, if you have any questions you think I can answer like early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism in general, Indian spirituality in general, Eastern

spirituality in general, spirituality in
total general, things like that,
meditation, monasticism,
Burma, that kind of thing. And my meta
goes to the people of Burma who
experienced a devastating earthquake
recently. I mean, the Burmese, they
really can't catch a break sometimes. In
a way, it's kind of ironic that it's
they're the most devoutly Buddhist
country in the world, and they're having
like tropical storms and earthquakes and
military dictatorships and civil wars
and this kind of stuff going on all the
time. But in a way,
it's maybe better than what a lot of

people in some place like Chicago are going through right now or Detroit or Oakland that are I mean some places that are just like hell realms. At least the the problems in Burma are relatively simple and straightforward, whereas the problems in America, they're kind of like got more of a poisonous root to them, it seems to me. But I mean, there's always going to be dooka. Everyone's going to have problems. And I'm not even answering a question anymore. So like and subscribe if you haven't done already. And uh remember, no more than three questions per person per episode,

please. And uh be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and answer

number 141. I am your host Pony Basa and this is my beverage and we don't have a paper umbrella for it today. Just

kidding. Here we

go. Style and sophistication.

And some of you who are not

mathematicians may be disappointed to

know that 141, although odd, is still

not a prime number. It is $3 \times$

47. And before I start answering

questions, I would just like to announce

that I've got exciting news in that last

night I found out that this beard is now

long enough to braid. And I was going to have it braided by my woman before I started. But what happened was I spent a good part of the early afternoon like spreading drainage gravel in certain areas of the backyard, about two tons of it. And my beloved woman was helping me. And uh even though I was doing most of the heavy lifting, still the like the the South Carolina hot sun mixed with pollen and everything kind of like conked her out. And after dinner, she hit the bed and uh she's been there ever

since. So I'm having to do it with an unbraided beard. I hope you'll forgive me. So we've got I didn't I didn't count

the questions, but I think we've got quite a few.

We've got many. We got many questions this time. So, I should probably just wade right into this. And the first question was asked for the previous Q&A. And for some reason, I didn't notice it when I was compiling questions. So, it's it's the first on the list, and it's by someone calling himself, who it's really just Troas is, who keeps changing his name. Um, I'm not exactly sure why.

Maybe in the comments you can ask or

chases why he keeps changing his name,

but he's not the only one. It happens. So anyways, Trasazis says, "Metallica, Fade to Black is a song about a person who is in a process of awakening, isn't it? Listen to it with the lyrics, please." So, I've uh examined the lyrics of the song Fade to Black by Metallica. And it's not about someone who's awakening. It's about someone who is about to selfdelete. For example, consider this verse. Deathly lost. This can't be real. Cannot stand this hell I feel. Emptiness is filling me to the point of agony. So, that's not an enlightened point of view. That's someone who can't stand being alive no more.

So before I move on to the next question, I wouldn't like to point out that I was never much impressed by Metallica. Some people will criticize the lead guitar player for being lacking in creativity and so forth, but it's for me it's the the vocalist, the singer. He just I mean I'm sure he's a really nice guy and all. He just does not have a musical voice. just it's like he's just like speaking in tune and it just doesn't work for me. So anyways, Triscas is the second question is please tell us who are not members of your Discord server what is this drama with Tig. So on the Discord

server we had um a member who went by the name of Tig who was kind of a trolling smartass. Sometimes he would contribute positively to a conversation. Other times he'd be like bragging about how drunk he got the night before, taking pictures of his favorite like alcoholic beverages and posting them. This sort of thing. And uh finally got to the point where I warned him if he keeps it up. I think it was New Year's Eve. I warned him if he keeps it up, he's going to be out. And possibly he was already drunk on New Year's Eve. he just upped the ante and so he got booted. And then shortly after that, a person who presumably is

Ethiopian joined the server, but when his voice was heard, he spoke with like just like a perfect American accent.

I mean, those of you who aren't Americans might scoff at the idea that any American accent can be perfect, but he had sort of similar attitudes with regard to certain things. So, that a majority of the members of the Discord server thought that it was Tig who was trolling us and pretending to be an Ethiopian. And so, he was pretty much uh voted out of the server. Um, and you can you can see him in the comments occasionally.

So there started being like this TIG witch hunt mentality like how can you prove that you're not TIG kind of a thing. But uh I guess that's that's enough about TIG. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, "How can I cope with the fact that my father is an incompetent fool? I can't move out for the next two to three years at least. So, I'm stuck with him and I just can't keep up with his [__] that made him lose 75% of his property. And that means I also lost that much of my inheritance and he just doesn't listen to me or my mother and sister because he's the traditional head of the house. And I

believe uh Mr. Panov and his father, his entire family in fact are of Indian ethnicity. So the father being the traditional head of the house is probably taken more seriously than in some place like Ohio. Not that I think people from Ohio are in any way inferior. It's just uh I just I it just came up at random as an example. So this is kind of a tough question. So how can I cope with the fact that your father is an incompetent fool? I mean you really don't have any choice. I mean you just have to accept

the fact it's obvious that you are I mean judging from this statement it's obvious that Mr. Pronov is just stuck in this situation and so the best you can do is just make peace with the situation. I mean it is your karma from a Buddhist point of view. You have landed yourself in that situation apparently because there's certain things you need to learn from that situation. So just being opposed to the situation and just not accepting it is a guarantee of not only of suffering but of just the same stuff coming up over and over again until you finally work out some way of making peace with the situation. It's kind of like Groundhog

Day. You have to you get the same stuff thrown at you over and over again until you finally learn how to deal with it with an open heart and acceptance which doesn't mean I mean acceptance doesn't mean that you have to be in favor of anything that anybody else does but still you have to be able to experience it without aversion, hatred, anger, frustration, this sort of thing. So, I mean, he says he can't keep up with his [_] but I mean, at the same time, he's saying that he has to stay with him for another two to three years at least. So, that's just it's like self-contradictory or it's just

like condemning oneself to two to three years of misery. And even more than that, if after the 2 to 3 years, he still hasn't learned to make peace with this kind of situation. Cuz the the two main things that you get thrown at you over and over again are the things that you love and the things that you hate. That's karma. It's like if if you can't just have equanimity when something comes your way, you are making more karma when you react to that, which causes it to keep coming.

So kind of bear in mind that I mean from his perspective he's doing the best he knows

how and uh have some compassion
maybe. Um I mean from the sound of it
he's not like really abusive or
anything. He's just sort of mismanaging
household funds and so forth. Um, kind
of like it it reminds me of there was a
a French female writer of memoirs like a
hundred or more years ago named Colette
whose father was kind of like this. He
just his he he married a wealthy woman
and then trying to enrich her even more,
he just like blew the money and lost it
and they lived in poverty. That kind of
thing. And I mean she didn't really hold
it against him. I mean, she acknowledged
that that's what he did, but I

mean, getting upset about it really
doesn't help. It just makes things
worse. So, just consider it a kind of
aesthetic practice. just learning to
accept
um uh like I don't know what what you
call it like an
unpleasant uncomfortable
situation and just add as much
positivity as possible. Send meta to
them and that can also change a person's
heart that sort of thing. But grumbling
and being upset for the next two to
three years, it's going to be more than
two to three years because you're making
karma which is going to cause it to keep
happening. If not in this life, then in

the next life, if not in this form, then in some similar form. So I guess I've said enough about that possibly without providing a satisfactory answer in which case I apologize and I'm just moving on to Mr. Pronov's next question which is what do you think of the using of subliminals and those meditative waves videos on YouTube which supposedly help you get into deeper states of mind easily. I personally think those are for normies who don't know anything about spirituality and a serious practitioner should stay away from it. Well, I mean, I've never had never really had anything

to do with subliminals and meditative waves videos. My woman went through a phase when we lived at the other house of just listening to some kind of white noise background, like ocean waves or like frogs croaking in a pond, things like that, which weren't necessarily meditative. I mean, she did listen to a couple of meditative ones that were just funny to me. It's like it was like a guided meditation where you're flying to the pyramids and some sage comes up to you and this kind of thing, which I mean that would probably keep me awake just just being amused by it. Um, but really whether it's good or not depends on whether it works in your

case. Like if you have any interest at all just to see if it works, you can listen to one of them. try to meditate with one of them and if it helps you to meditate then it can't be all bad. If it doesn't help you to meditate then it's a waste of time or at least if you keep doing it it's a waste of time. It wasn't a waste of time the first time because you learned something valuable which is it doesn't

work. Excuse me. I'm having nostril problems possibly due to all the pollen I inhaled when I was outside working this earlier today.

[Music]

Let's see if we're recording. Yep, says we're recording. And I'll I'll just go with that. So, I mean, guided meditations. I've never liked guided meditations either. I mean, if you're going to try guided meditation, maybe something like Echart Tollah leading a guided meditation, that could possibly be helpful. But with regard to the subliminals and the meditative waves videos and so forth, um the best advice I could give is just try it. If it helps, you can keep going with it. If it doesn't help, you're better off not keeping going with it. But it might help some people and not help other people.

It depends.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lam, occasionally still known as Libra Lamb, and occasionally still known by a multitude of other names. And he says, "Have you considered setting up an outdoor pond ecosystem in your yard like a koi pond?" And yeah, that has been the plan since I moved here. We had a fish pond at the other house. I liked it very much and I would like a bigger version at least a deeper version for this one. And I've been telling my my woman that I mean the next

major

project now that we have spread the gravel my next major project of interest for the backyard after planting the peach tree and doing the gravel dig a fish pond. So, I keep kind of urging her to call 811 because in America, you call 811 and they'll send somebody for free to come and scope out your yard and put little flags where underground like electrical cables and water pipes and gas mains and that sort of thing are so that you won't dig into them and destroy something when you're trying to dig a hole. So, yeah, I've I've got it kind of planned out. Uh, it's going to be sort of kidney shaped and at least a foot and

a half deep, preferably 2 feet deep. And it's going to there's not going to be any koi. I considered like medaka rice fish, but they're too tiny. I'm just we're just going to go like last last pond that we had with like comet goldfish, shoein goldfish, and dojo loaches. Anyone who has a fish pond, who lives in a relatively warm area, dojo loaches are the way to go. They're really cool and plants. We're going to get plants. So, yeah. Next question is from Stellar Supreme Furthermore also as well. And he says, "If monks make doodles, do they destroy them after or

is collecting them okay?" Well, there's no rule against monks making doodles and no rule against monks keeping doodles that they have made. So, I mean, I drew pictures occasionally as a monk. So, I mean, I didn't throw all of them away. I still have a few. So, yeah, I don't think that there's any rule against it. I mean, if you're a monk and you're seriously try trying to like cure yourself of all attachments, then collecting doodles that you have attachment for would be counterproductive. You know, if you've got this attachment for your doodle collection, then yeah, that would not be

uh very appropriate for a beu.

But I wouldn't I don't know why you would collect them otherwise unless you're got some kind of idea like you're having a study going or you want to like see how your doodles evolve over the years or some such then maybe I'm not sure. So I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Do the Burmese, Thai, Sri Lankans, and greater Buddhist world at large have cultural equivalence to humanoid monsters such as vampires and werewolves." Well, I haven't heard anything about the equivalence of

vampires and werewolves when I was in Burma. In fact, um there's a a theory that's becoming more popular recently that the whole idea of werewolves came from a phenomenon called the Corios, which was like the early Indo-Uropeans, the so-called Arian race when they um were spreading from like the Pontic steps in prehistoric times. Um, it was this uh tradition, I guess you could call it, of kicking out teenage boys. Like adolescent boys would be thrown out of the community and they would become feral and they would have to live through making raids on like other tribes at least, you know, stealing

their cattle or raiding their their
fields. sometimes even just making
allout attacks on on the villages of of
other tribes, sometimes even taking over
those tribes. So on the outskirts of the
Indo-Urope protoindo-uropean

um

territory there probably were like small
communities of like non-indo-uropeans
who were ruled by like aggressive like
sociopathic teenage boys from the Indo-
protoindo-uropean tribes and it was part
of like their totem

that, you know, they they became
wolflike. You know, they identified with
wolves, which could have brought about

the the European belief in werewolves.

Sort of like a theory that I brought up possibly in the previous Q&A about centaurs, how in ancient Greek mythology they believed in these creatures that were half man and half horse when really that idea may also have come from the first Indo-European invaders who were marauding on horseback. And the natives there, the Pelasians as they were called, had never seen anyone riding a horse before. Just like the the Aztecs or the the natives in in Mexico had never seen a man riding a horse before. They thought the conquistadors were monsters that were part quadruped and part man. Scared the [__] out of them.

That's one reason why a handful of of Spanish conquistadors could conquer Mexico.

So vampires, I mean, I assume the original vampire was Vlad the Impaler, although they had sort of a similar idea of like succubi and incubi in like ancient Rome where that was more of like a spectral figure that would like suck the life force out of you while you were sleeping. So they wouldn't be biting you on the neck and drinking your blood, that kind of thing.

But the Burmese I really can't speak well I really can't speak for the ties and Sri Lankans and so forth but the

Burmese do believe in in a more or less equivalent of Bigfoot. It's big, hairy, smells bad, lives in the forest, abducts people, does mean things sometimes, but they can they call it a theay and they consider it to be a kind of ghost that can appear and disappear at will, which may explain why we've never actually caught one.

Like my woman sometimes watches these Bigfoot hunter shows, and I'm telling her, they're not they're never going to catch one. you know, before you see the show, they're not going to catch one.

They're going to see some red blip on an infrared screen or something that looks like it's kind of vertical, but they're

never going to catch one. Otherwise,
it'd be in all the papers. You you would
have seen the news of it long
ago. And also, the Burmese believe in
witches. So a belief in witches may be
just universal to the human
race, but vampires and werewolves, I
think that may be predominantly
um a European thing. Unless by vampires
you also include just sort of other like
ghosts or some kind of spirit creatures
that that just kind of drain the life
force out of you. not drinking your
blood like a like a a real vampire but
just sort of draining you of your life
force drain draining you of your energy

that kind of belief can also be universal in the human race and they might really exist but that's uh anticipating the second question here so I'm just going to move on to the second question from xenithoid do you believe in the existence of such beings well the blood sucking vampires not so much werewolves lyanthropes humans, you know, that that go back and forth between human shape and wolf shape.

Um, it'd be very rare. I don't think it would be

um necessarily associated with the original belief in werewolves so much as you'd have like shamans that were highly

adept that maybe could like project some sort of creature like um I was watching some show

Uh, it was like a paranormal show near Skinwalker Ranch. It wasn't at

Skinwalker Ranch in Utah where there were like Navajo shamans that could

shapeshift into like a big dog, that

kind of thing. And whether they're like

projecting some like an apparition of a

dog that goes out and does things or at

least, you know, has eyes and ears that

that the shaman can

access or whether the shaman himself can

change

shape. I guess grandpa and the monsters

could do that too. That might be
uh before the time of most of the people
who watch these Q&A videos. But I mean,
anything is possible. So, I'm not going
to just say that there's never been any
kind of shape-shifting human that could
adopt animal
forms. Anyone who's read the oldest
extent novel in Western literature,
which is The Golden by what's his name?
Apulus, shape-shifting witches. She
would take the she would rub herself
down with some sort of ointment and
adopt the form of like an eagle or
something and go off and do her business
and then come back. And then this guy,
this Apulius guy, he wants to try it

himself. He's he's messing around with the the slave girl of this witch and she gets him some of this ointment and she spreads it on. It turns him into a donkey instead of the eagle because she she messed up and gave him the wrong ointment.

So, there's been a belief in humans shapeshifting into animals and maybe vice versa. I mean, since ancient times, but whether it's actually happened or not, I don't know. I really can't say. I've never actually met one of these people. Um, but it wouldn't surprise me. I do think that I mean the the so-called laws of physics can be

broken and just anything is possible. But with vampires, I'd be a little more skeptical. And with regard to something like Bigfoot, universal throughout the world, there's people believing in something like a Sasquatch. So, I don't think that a Sasquatch would be some sort of primate mammal. I do think that it would be a paranormal phenomenon, but belief in them is just around the world and it's not one culture like American culture just sort of promulgating this belief. The Burmese have believed in the since before they ever heard of America, I'm sure. So, some of some beings I think

are more likely than others. I' I'd be
extremely surprised if there were any
wild

centaurs now or in the

past, but some maybe some like like

Bigfoot that are just sort of like a

coming from a bleeding through into our

version of reality from some other

version of reality, that kind of thing.

I'm open-minded on the subject, although

I've never actually met a Sasquatch.

So, I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's

third question, which is a surprisingly

difficult

question. His question is, "What was

your greatest encounter with evil in

this lifetime?" And I'm just drawing a blank. I mean, I've met like sociopathic people, but whether a sociopath, just a completely ruthless person who doesn't give a [_] about anybody except himself, would be considered really evil or not, you know, it wasn't like cruelty, you know, like enjoying messing people up. It's just that person has something I want, so I'm taking it. That person's in my way, so I'm going to knock them out of my way. That sort of thing. Schopenhauer wouldn't consider that kind of person to be evil. They're just selfish and ruthless and amoral. So evil, I mean like cruelty. If

I think of cruel people that I've met in my life, it's

like girlfriends that I like when a woman gets pissed off, she'll just say the the most hurtful, cruel stuff she can think of just to get back at you.

But I mean, a pissed-off girlfriend isn't necessarily evil

either. So, I I'm really I I don't know.

I mean, I've I've met like Burmese secret military police that probably have arrested people in the middle of the night. They didn't know what they'd done. They didn't care. They might be totally innocent. They might know that they're totally innocent. They just

snatch them and they disappear them.

They wind up possibly in some torture chamber. That kind of stuff happens in Burma, or at least it used to within relatively recent

times. Probably possibly happens in America,

too. Not very often, I

hope, but it can

happen. So, my greatest encounter with evil, I mean, I'm just drawing a blank.

I

mean, I'm not sure. I think maybe I've just loved live lived a blessed life and I've been protected from just the really this is most vicious evil

stuff. I mean, I met like a Burmese

general who was the governor of of
Mandalay Division, but he was he looked
like grandpa. He's just all smiles, you
know? He's just this very very nice guy.
At least to me. He might have like the
torture chambers going somewhere, but to
me he was
nice. So, I really can't say that's it's
weird. You'd think that anybody would be
able to come up with something, but what
was my greatest encounter with evil in
this lifetime? For some reason, I'm just
can't think of
anything.

So, I guess I'll just move on to the
next question. This is from RP A. I

don't know if his name is pronounced
Arpad or what. It's just RP A. I don't
know what that means. It's French
apparently. And Arpad says, "Is it a
requirement for monks to teach the
dharma?" It's not an
absolute

requirement. Although, I mean, there are
some sutas that say if a monk talks to
lay people, it should not go beyond the
monk just politely requesting that they
go away and leave him alone. Although
other sutas will say that if a lay
person in good faith comes and asks you
a question about
dharma, you should answer. If you
can, if you consider yourself qualified

to answer, then you may as well go ahead and answer. especially like on upata days, full moon, half moon, um, new moon days that are considered sort of like the Buddhist equivalent of the Sabbath, you know, they're partic they're their holier days where people take their their Buddhism a little more seriously and somebody might come and ask you to administer the five precepts. They want to take the three refugees and the five precepts from you. Or once today, they might be the three refugees and the eight precepts. I used to do that almost every day when I was living in Burma in certain places. People would

come on up day, ask me to give them the
the the three refugees and the eight
precepts and I would do
it. But I mean, you're not absolutely
required to do
it. So, some monks really enjoy teaching
lay people and some monks would just I
mean, they avoid lay people like the
plague. So, it's it's uh kind of an
optional thing that you can choose to
do, although in some cases you might as
well. So, I'm just going to move on to
Arpad's next question. Who decides if or
when a monk is ready to do so? Or that
is to teach dharma or to speak to lay
people about Buddhism. Um, if you are in
dependence upon a teacher, I assume your

teacher would be qualified to decide whether you are ready to deliver sermons to lay people or to administer the refugees and precepts to lay people. Um, but if you're past your five rainy seasons as a junior monk, you're no longer independent upon a teacher then or a preceptor, then you can decide for yourself whether you are qualified. And for me, when I lived in Burma, I really had not mastered the Burmese language. I could sort of hold up my end of a conversation, but I really didn't have a mastery of the language. And that gave me a a pretty good excuse to keep my dharma talks when

the when I delivered them very simple,
very pathy, you know, not not a real
long one, you know, just teach them
basics and it is good karma. I mean, you
teach others dhamma at some point
someone will teach you dharma
presumably. It may be that you learned
about dharma in the first place in this
life because you are helping other
people to learn it in a previous life.
At least Buddhism might agree with
something like
that.

So yeah, I think I answered that
question. So I'm just going to move on
to our pads or RP AD's third question
which is which is as follows. Are monks

allowed to use and own a nail clipper?

And yeah, monks can own a nail clipper.

I knew this one monk who was he was so decent though that he had two different nail clippers, one for his fingernails and one for his toenails. But I don't think there's any rule against that. I think in the Buddhist time when the vineia rules were composed that monks generally just used a small knife that most monks had some small knife for whatever reason. You know sometimes you just need a small knife. So they would use their knife to cut their fingernails and toenails.

Maybe a straight razor, you know, if

you're very careful. You don't want to cut off the entire fingertip. But uh yeah it is allowable. I had I had nail clipper when I was when I was a M. So I'm just gonna move on.

Next question which is from Sina and Sina says I understand that sharing dharma to others is wholesome or kusala and one gains merit but does it actually have any benefit for that person who is sharing it in gaining anything in a spiritual path

sense? Does this karma help him or make him get closer to the enlightenment? If this person is not enlightened yet, he doesn't even know what he is sharing to others, isn't it? Well, I mean, if there

is the sutta in the sutinipā, the nava
sutta, the boat, the the the sermon about
the boat, the boat sermon,
um, in which the Buddha
says, I mean, a monk can't help people
to or a person, you can't help somebody
to cross a river if you yourself are
just being washed downstream by it. Now
if you can't cross the river yourself,
you can't really teach other people to
cross the river either. But on the other
hand, you can teach them basics. You can
teach them, you know, the basics of
keeping five precepts. You know, the
importance of telling the truth, this
kind of thing.

So you don't have to be fully enlightened in order to help a lay person, you know, some simplehearted villager or some westerner who's very sincere, very curious, really wants to know and comes to you. And I mean, you can teach them just the basics because that's essentially what they're they came there for in the first place.

So does it help in gaining anything in a spiritual past sense? Does this comma help him make him get closer to enlightenment? Well, I mean enlightenment is not going to be caused by karma, but karma can sort of clear the path of obstacles in a sense. So by helping

others, you help yourself. By helping yourself, you help others. That was something we had to chant in Pali every morning or every evening I should say at the first monastery I lived at where I was ordained in the Tom Pulu tradition. Um by helping others you help yourself. By helping yourself you help others. So, um, yeah, it is a wholesome thing to do and it is going to help sort of smooth your spiritual path if you're helping others, not just like going completely overboard and spending your whole day like teaching English to to foreign monks, you know, Asian monks, this kind

of thing. I mean, that's going to detract from your practice, but just a little bit every now and then. I mean, the best way of teaching is through example.

So there is that

too. Well, let's see. I understand sharing dhamma to others is wholesome and one gains merit. That is true. But does it actually have any benefit for that person who is sharing it gaining anything in a spiritual path sense?

Well, I mean having somebody teach you can be fundamental to your spiritual path. Usually if someone enters upon the spiritual path, it's because some teacher has enlightened them in a

relative sense with regard to the need or even the option of living a spiritual life. That's what happened with me when I was a teenager. You know, it's you you don't even really have it as an option if you've never heard of that sort of thing before. And then I was a troubled teenager. Got sent to this youth counselor. The youth counselor was a wise man and he started giving me books by Rahm Doss to read. He also gave me illusions by Richard Bach which I read and it was it just like opened up a whole new world to me. So it can definitely be helpful in a spiritual sense and I mean it might be

varying levels of advancement you know
it might be like at a basic level but
even that like when you're first
starting out that's
important. So I would say yeah that's my
answer is yeah. And so I'm going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Master Poe. And Master Poe says, "Was
the now infamous Ivormectin a medical
staple in Burma?" Three question marks.
And actually, I'm unaware of Ivormectin
being a medical staple in Burma. But a
medical staple in Burma is chloricquin,
which is another one of these like
unorthodox medicines used in treating
the woo flu.

And chloricquin was like a

state-of-the-art malaria medication like
back in the

1970s. But the thing is the transome or
the

malaria

protozoan. It's kind of an interesting

fact that malaria is not caused by a

virus or a bacterium. It's caused by a

protozoan that is like parasitic on

your blood cells. And they have like a

2% mutation rate. It's just built right

into them these this this organism that

they mutate really fast and so they they

can they get to the point where they can

tolerate malaria medication fairly

quickly. So chloroquin is almost

obsolete. It's almost useless as a malaria medication now because there are so many strains of malaria that can tolerate chloricquin.

But still like the medical village medical officers might still be handing out you know cheap free chloricquin just because you know it's cheap and there's lots of it and so you know there might be a 50/50 chance that it'll actually help with the malaria but a 50/50 chance is better than a 0% chance. So what the hell? I never heard of ivermectin but I came across chloricquin a lot which is kind of the same level of controversial in the west because both of them were

medications that were mainly used for other things that just happened to have beneficial effects with regard to dealing with like uh the Wuhan flu.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Sedarta

Lohachita. Um, who previously was known as La Infamia and Loachita. I'm not exactly sure why this

person calls himself or herself copper mind because loa means copper. Sometimes

it can just mean metal in general

because I guess copper was one of the first useful

metals that people used and so they came up with the word for that and then it

just sort of like became used for any
kind of metal but technically in
poly lowa mainly means copper and
cheetah of course means mine. So,
Sedarta

Coppermind says, "Don't you think that
some Asians who are of Buddhist
origin or at least from older traditions
than us westerners sometimes look down
on us or treat us like converts?" And
then um Sedarta, I'm guessing he's a
guy. He uh has like some some commentary
here says for example I remember
attending pujas or Tibetan vajraana
retreats with my mother when I was a
teenager and the llamas would constantly
put up a kind of barrier between them

and the westerners they were always
saying things like you westerners
westerners who don't understand Buddhism
it's like they refused to believe that
someone else could truly understand the
dharma especially new Buddhists so to
speak. Yeah, I I encountered a lot of
that in Burma and it was mainly like
people of high social status and people
with like university
educations that were kind of hotty and
they just assumed that all foreigners
were just like ignorant with regard to
dharma. And so I could be like a senior
monk and I'd have well-intentioned
Burmese people like from the city with

like college educations, maybe they're like a high school teacher or whatever. They'd be trying to teach me the like the absolute basics of Buddhism. You know, they'd be trying to tell me how to meditate. They'd be trying to explain to me who Mahasi Seattle was, who at the time was the most famous monk in all of Burma. I mean, he had passed away by then. He passed away around 1980, I think. But, you know, they're trying to explain to me this stuff that was just like just really basic level ABC level, you know, Buddhism 101 stuff. And, you know, it wasn't like they were being deliberately insulting, but they just assumed that

all foreigners are ignorant. In fact, they didn't even apply it just to Westerners. They would they even thought that like the ties were were just ignorant. In fact, a lot of Burmese people don't even know that the ties are terra Buddhist too. They just think that they're Mahayana Buddhists that the Burmese are very chauvinistic um with regard to their own ethnicity and they think, you know, the Burmese are essentially the only people who can really correctly understand Dharma. I once told uh a Burmese high school teacher this that the Burmese think that, you know, only Burmese people can

understand Dhamma. And she just hardly
agreed. you that's right and like P
Seattle also he used to say all
foreigners have wrong
view so it's a kind of uh ethnic pride
thing I think that the Burmese think
that they've got a monopoly on true
dharma and they don't even know that the
ties right next door are terara Buddhist
at least a lot of them but that's like
the the higher social status and higher
education Burmese like the upper classes
are like that the humble villagers, they
a lot of them just thought I was just a
fully enlightened being. You know,
they're very humble, very sincere, very
non-judgmental with regard to anybody

really, unless maybe they think they're
a witch or
something. So, yeah, it's mainly among
the upper classes in Burma where they
think that foreigners just can't
understand dharma. They've all got wrong
view. Sometimes it was kind of funny.
Sometimes it was just sort of I don't
know, maybe a little bit
irritating, you know, sort of like just
people talking down to you. You're like
a senior monk and they just assume. Even
my own, not my preceptors, my my
sponsors, they were very upper class. In
fact, the brother of one of my sponsors,
they were husband and wife. The brother

of one of the male went to Yale medical school. He was a Burmese person born and raised in Burma, still living in Burma. He came to America to Yale because I mean they were just like astronomically wealthy, you know, troop of servants, you know, they the the wife told me that she was having to learn how to drive because when when she was living in Burma, she never had to drive anywhere. The chauffeur just took her wherever she wanted to go.

And they were just continually just assuming because I'm a westerner, I couldn't possibly know Dhamma. And also the Burmese are very dogmatic. So to the extent that you deviate from orthodoxy,

like to the extent that you deviate from
abidama and the commentarial tradition,
to that extent, you're ignorant and
wrong. And so there's continually you
need a teacher, you ought to find a
teacher, you need a teacher, you ought
to find a teacher. That was like the
common refrain. And even when I had a
teacher, you know, they had their
favorite. They were followers of the
mahasi tradition. So they were like
urging me to find a different teacher
who was in this tradition that they in
their wisdom considered to be, you know,
better. Eventually, I think they just
got fed up with me and washed their

hands of me in disgust because I just wasn't playing along.

So yeah, my answer to that question is yeah, next question is from Thoughtfog.

And Thoughtfog really just totally crossed the line and asked five

questions. And the fifth question I didn't even bother to record because really the limit is

three. And I really haven't even come up with a special list for people to ask

that many questions. And I'm going to have to blow my nose for a second. Just just a minute here. Bear with me. I'm

not going to edit this out. Like a lot of these fancy YouTubers, you know, they cough or they sneeze or they immediately

start scratching their behind on camera or something. They'll just edit it out.

Not

me.

Okay. Make sure the the the mustache is safe.

So anyways, getting back to Thought Fog and his totally excessive number of questions. The limit is three. Um,

but I don't know how I'm feeling here.

I'm kind of am ambivalent, but some of the questions are interesting and easily answered. So, what the hell this time?

We'll just we'll just make this a 4-hour long one. Break a new record.

So thoughtfog says, "What types of

meditation were you up to when you were living alone in a cave? What year was this? I am so very interested." Well, my years of living in caves started like in 1993 and extended up until around 2018, I

guess, 2017 or 2018. I was living in caves like most of the time that I was in Burma during that time.

There were several of them. One cave I lived in for

gosh, several years. I can't remember exactly how many years it was, but it's the one place I've lived longer than any other place in my life was this cave in central

Burma. So, let's see here. What types of

meditation were you up to when you were living alone in a cave? What year was that? I am so very interested. Well, mainly the main meditation I did in as a junior monk was an upana mindfulness of breathing and I would try to do it just mindfulness of the touch of of air at the

nostrils

because according to orthodox terraada feeling way like the touch of air at the nostrils is an ultimate reality. Whereas breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out is not an ultimate reality. So even if you don't accept abidama in the commentarial tradition,

still by being aware of the touch at the nostrils, you're closer to reality than just coming up with a a concept of breathing in, breathing out, breathing in, breathing out.

And I tried to note as little as possible. But then as I got better at meditation, I was able to get into deeper and deeper levels of meditation.

I started having what I called four gears. Like in my cave journal, I would talk about, you know, started off in second gear, moved up to third, you know, tried fourth a little bit, wasn't working, went back to third, that kind of stuff. And so first gear was just like desperation mode, like when your

your concentration is shot, you know,
you you can't keep your mind focused
very well. It was concentration on it
was like touching and I'd be sitting
there with my thumbs together. Let's see
how I make it look good. There we go.
It's balanced out that way. Just I I'd
be noting the the touching of of my
thumbs together. And it's it's kind of a
good meditation because you know if it's
if it becomes too subtle you can just
press harder and if it starts to become
uncomfortable you can just you know
relax the pressure you get the pressure
just right and I'd be it's it's been a
while since I did this but I would be

just noting touching touching touching
and then any kind of um distraction that
would come up then I would I would label
that and then go back to labeling
touching, touching, touching. That's
like kindergarten level meditation. Um,
at least from my point of
view. So,

um, there were certain things that I
wouldn't label like like the touch
sensation at the nostrils. That was
we're getting into second gear and, uh,
like swallowing my own slobber, that
sort of thing, or just hearing in
general. I wouldn't necessarily label
that. But as a beginning like a
elementary meditation technique, you do

lots of labeling because it it's giving your mind busy work that keeps it meditating instead of just wandering away. So second gear was usually like where I would start and that would be on upon a mindfulness of of breath. Um I'd be I wouldn't label the breath, you know, I' I'd be watching it, noting it silently. I wouldn't be giving labels to that. I wouldn't give labels to swallowing my slobber. I wouldn't give labels to hearing necessarily, but anything else that came up, I'd still label it. You know, it's like you're you start remembering something, you just know remembering and then you go back to

the touch sensation of the nostrils. You know, you you hear a noise and you start wondering what the noise was. It's like wondering, go back. You know, your your knee itches, you're just itching, go back to the the primary object. So, that was second gear. Third gear was I learned third gear accidentally although it's I mean it's it's an established meditation technique um even in

terraota that third gear is like you imagine that you're in a library with a scary librarian lady who's like really big with the flowery dress and the cat eye glasses on the chain and like the beehive hair the stereotypical ical

scary librarian lady and you've got like a loudspeaker hooked up to your mind so that anytime you start thinking it just blasts through this library and the scary librarian lady is starting to get pissed

off. So essentially what you're doing in third gear is you're just watching your mind intently waiting for the next thought to arise. And you can try this in the the privacy of your own home.

Just do that. Just watch your mind. Just first you kind of calm down, settle down and then you just watch your mind intently waiting for the next thought to arise so that you can catch it as it

arises. And you may find that nothing arises for quite a while. Like watching for the thought to arise going with materialism, it's it's like it uses the same part of the brain as the actual thinking. So just watching, waiting for a thought to arise, it like suppresses thoughts. And so if you get good at it, you're just watching intently. It's you're just sitting there in silence without thinking. So that's third gear, but it it's it's only third gear because it still requires deliberate effort. Fourth gear would be like what the Catholic priests, the contemplative like monks of like the the

Carmelite order would call contemplation where you're just sitting there empty.

You know, it's it's you're not even making an effort anymore other than if a thought starts to arise, you just note it. You know, you're just aware of it.

Your attention goes to that. um not even necessarily focusing on it, but just you're aware of it and then it just fades back out

again. That's just sitting there like in silence and

emptiness. But I wasn't always able to do that and not even when I was like going for it full blast as a monk.

So that was the long
answer. Um, the next three questions,
including the transgressive fourth one,
will be a lot shorter to answer. Would
you recommend any meditation techniques
to a daily zazen practitioner? Well, if
you're doing daily
zazen, I assume you'd either be working
on a [__] especially if you're into
rena, or you'd be doing shikant taza,
which would be like third
gear from the like from what I was
doing. Shikantaza again you're just kind
of silently observing the mind and that
power of observation just kind of keeps
the mind still and quiet at least
relatively speaking based on my kind of

shaky understanding of shik

taza. So yeah I mean if you're doing

daily zazen I assume you'd be doing some

kind of zen meditation which I would

guess would be working on a m working on

a a [—] Did I say a mantra the first

time? Or working on coan

or doing shicant

taza. So I'm just going to move on to

thoughtf's third question. What are some

good similes from the polycanon? Some of

the best simileies come from the same

suta which is the alagadup suta of the

majimminaya. That's where the simile of

the raft is where you know you got

someone who wants to cross this flooded

river and there's no bridge there's no
ferry boat. So they just grab a bunch of
sticks and vines and grass and this kind
of thing just just tie it all together
and then they just get on the thing and
they just paddle it across the stream
across the flood and once they get to
the other side they just ditch it. They
don't need it anymore. They wouldn't
it'd be foolish for them to just take
this thing which is made up out of like
rubbish debris anyway and then just like
put it on their head and continue on
their way. It'd be foolish. You don't
need it anymore. So you leave it behind.
And the Buddha compared that raft or
that float to dharma that you don't need

dharma anymore after you have become enlightened. So that's that's an interesting simile. Another simile from the very same sutta is the the water snake. It's a presumably a kind of poisonous snake. Um I'm not sure if anyone knows for sure what kind of snake it is. I'm not aware of poisonous water snakes in Burma. There might be one like in in America, you've got the cotton mouth moccasin which lives in the water and is very poisonous, but I'm not sure in Burma. But anyway, excuse me. Um, the Buddha says that becoming a monk or being a monk is like holding this poisonous snake. And if you're I

mean a bad monk would pick it up by the tail or pick it up by the middle, you know, it's like the snake is dama. And if you grasp dharma wrong, it can it can come back and get you. I mean, it's it's it reminds me of a saying in among Roman Catholics that it's easier for a monk to go to hell than for a lay person to go to hell because a monk is held to a higher standard. And that's kind of what this simile is getting at where if you're a good monk, you're going to be holding that snake right behind the right behind the head so it can't just turn around and bite you. And that's like being a good, conscientious, careful monk and not just this careless

monk who's just going to, you know, take up dharma in this careless sort of way, be a sloppy monk, be a a bad in like a a bad example, you know, bring the the song into disrepute and all that that you're you're better off um just not being a monk than than to be a bad one or like a an unconscientious one, a lax one, a shameless one. And I might have to blow my nose here. It's weird. This happens when I talk for prolonged periods of time after like inhaling large quantities of pollen or whatever.

Golly, check the mustache again.

So yeah, those are two of my favorites.

I mean, another simile is the thorn, the

salah, or it's it's like the spike. I

think I usually translate it as the

spike. Any kind of sharp pointy

implement can be called a salah. Like a

a surgeon's probe in ancient India was a

salah. The quills of a porcupine were a

salah. And the salah is like this thorn

that sticks in your heart. And it's it's

it's symbolic of

unenlightenment where it's this thorn in

your heart that makes people just run in

all directions. You know, they just

can't be comfortable and relaxed and

satisfied. They're just this restless

dissatisfaction that just keeps driving

them through samsara. And so the enlightened person is plucking this spike out of their heart and that they become at ease.

And one more of my favorite similes is found in the

atakawaga more than once. It's found throughout the sutras, found in the dharmapala, for example, is of the lotus flower that I mean it grows in like a muddy ditch. You know, you've got this lotus flower coming up out of the mud and muck. And lotuses have like it's like a sort of like teflon, you know, some natural teflon on their leaves and their flowers. It's like a non-stick

surface. So water and mud just do not stick to this thing. Even though it's growing up out of the mud, it's just pristine. It's pure, especially if it's a white

lotus. So that's a simile of how the sage lives in the muck of this world.

You know, he's surrounded by

muck, surrounded by the mud of some sort, but it just doesn't stick to him.

It just falls right off. I mean, you can like splash a lotus with water, the water just beads up and just drips right off and it's perfect

again. So, fourth transgressive question from Thought Fog. Do Terra monks talk much of Zen patriarchs?

Maybe a few western monks do. Burmese monks are absolutely clueless with regard to much of anything beyond terra. You know, they wouldn't know. I mean, most Burmese Buddhists wouldn't even know who Ajan Man was or Ajan Cha. Some of some of the the monks would know, but you know, the Burmese villager who's just been born and raised into Buddhism, just listens to the sermons of the village village Seattle.

um they wouldn't know anything about Zen Buddhism or Zen patriarchs or any such thing. So considering that was the fourth transgressive question, I just answer it very briefly and move on to

PSA.

And PSA says if you were to hierarchically stratify your daily operations of industrial lifting apparatuses under OSHA regulations would you use a multivariable polomial regression model or a tachionic destabilization diagram with pellet positioning pallet positioning I should say on the xaxis. Well, I mean, obviously anyone would go with the tachionic destabilization diagram, although pro it may be that some conservatives wouldn't like the tachionic destabilization diagram simply because tachons are a hypothetical subatomic particle that moves faster

than the speed of
light. But they're stupid. So, I'm just
going to move on to PSA's next question.
If you had to live in any of these
places, which one would you pick? Mount
Pleasant, Bridgeport, Connecticut, Death
Valley, the Vatican, or Rock Hill? Well,
Rock Hill is the closest to here. It's
in kind of upstate South Carolina,
northern South Carolina. Um, and I've
always been interested in that part of
of South Carolina. So, I'm going with
Rock Hill. I wouldn't want to live in
Death Valley. I came close to that in
some areas of central Burma. Just a
blazing furnace. Uh the Vatican's really

not my bag of tea. Bridgeport,
Connecticut. I don't know. Um my my
sweetheart says that she's been there
before and it was nice. So that was kind
of an option. I guess Mount Pleasant is
like a suburb of Charleston, South
Carolina. So at least that's in the
state. But he doesn't say that it's
Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. I think
there's more than one Mount Pleasant,
but it's on the coast. It's really muggy
and humid there. Um, I'd rather be up in
the hills. Let's go with Rock Hill. So,
PSA's third question, which is actually
a Buddhist question. Which Buddhist suta
or nikaya or text would you recommend to
a person who's totally new to Buddhism

and they're asking about it? And my nostrils are still acting up.

Maybe I should have had my adenoids taken out when I was a kid. Just a

[Applause]

second. I don't know if this is even helping. Like the nose blowing stuff. It just seems like it's the only thing I can think of doing to get me to be able to make certain sounds without like something up high up in my nostrils just kind of like closing like a valve and causing me to be unable to make that sound.

So getting back to PSA's

question, which Buddhist sūta or Nikaya text would you recommend to a person who's totally new to Buddhism and they're asking about it? It would kind of depend on like what they wanted to know. But if it was like what if they want to know what Buddhism was originally intended to be like sūtin pata, I'd have them read the sūtin pata because that is like primordial Buddhism or as close to primordial Buddhism as you're going to find in the texts. It's like what early Buddhism was like. It comes closest to what the philosopher Gotama of the Shakyas clan was teaching. Although on the other hand, if they want to know more of, you know, what are like

the the the basic
doctrines of Theravada Buddhism, the
Majimminaya would probably be more their
speed. I think more people would
recommend the Majimminaya as an intro to
Buddhism than the Suttini Pa. Also just
with regard to wisdom and like
interesting reading, the the Udana also
is good reading. There's a lot of famous
sutras in there that most people didn't
even know most people don't even know
are famous Buddhist sutras like the
blind men and the elephant. That's in
the Udana. I mean, most people wouldn't
even know that that was like an early
Buddhist teaching, but it's in

there. including some of my favorite
sutras, some very profound
ones. So, I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Fred and Fred says, "In your opinion,
does the mind stream have log jams?" And
that's kind of a interesting question
and I'm I'm not exactly sure what he has
in mind,
but I was thinking about it and it would
seem that like your karma would have
like cataracts, you know, there'd be
like bottlenecks like I guess it'd be
like a a log jam where for example,
you're you're a complicated person, got
all these interests and and so forth,
different aptitudes and talents and all

these things going on in your mind. And then suddenly after you you die, you take rebirth as a fertilized egg, as this embryo in which you're not going to be thinking at all for quite a while until your nervous system redevelops. Not at at least not at the level of this embryo. So that from an orthodox terravada Buddhist point of view that would be a kind of log jam to like the momentum of your mental states your karma because you know it's going to have to wait. It's going to be waiting until you know you've got enough of a thinking apparatus going that you can actually start thinking again. Start

having complexity of mind and start
working out karma again because a zygote
some little clump of cells in a woman's
uterus isn't going to have much karma
going

on. Also, just being unconscious would
be similar to that. just assuming that
you don't have mentality and karma and
stuff working out at some other level
other than this physical

level. So I mean at the the level of the
human individual it would seem that
there are certain log jams so to speak
although at a higher level maybe

not. So, I think I'm just going to move
on to the next question, which is from
Phil. And Phil says, "Do you think a

humble zen-like skepticism of all human
systems of knowledge like that of
Michelle de

Montaine, I don't know how to pronounce
French names, is a wise way to live."

Yeah. I mean, humble skepticism. Yeah. I
mean, you don't want to just reject
everything, reject any idea because you
can't prove it. because you got to go
with something. But still like a humble
skepticism of just not being sure just
accepting something as a working
hypothesis like like a really good
scientist. Not the scientists who are
just sold on scientism and think that
science is really explaining reality but

someone a follower of science in the in
the sense of scientific method where you
go with a theory. First you have a
hypothesis then you know if it seems to
um you know it's like passes the tests
of these experiments that you design it
may you know advance to the level of a
theory but that's it I mean there is no
settled fact in
science it's hypothesis theories data
that itself is sort of I mean you can't
just assume that the data is ultimately
real either A lot of scientists do
because they're followers of scientism,
but still it's just kind of a
hypothetical model like a theoretical
model for explaining certain things that

you don't you can't really insist that it's gospel truth. Once you start insisting on something being gospel truth, you are from a Buddhist point of view a fool. The stereotypical fool in the polytext is the person who says only this is true, anything else is wrong. Referring of course to their own preferred philosophy or religion. So yeah, my answer to that question is yeah. And I'm going to move on to Phil Lee's next question, which is, do you like Buddhist art and what's your favorite style or work? Well, Burmese Buddhist art is not very good. There are some really beautiful like

Buddha images, but there's probably even more that are ugly. And the Burmese are not a particularly artistic people. It's like the only aesthetics that the Buddha that the Burmese Buddhists really have developed is one that they have really innovative creative ways of signing their name. You know, it's not just writing out your name. It's like this weird doodle or squiggle or something that I mean sometimes it looks fascinating. You wonder how they ever came up with that. And uh also the girls know how to look pretty and that's about it. I mean most Buddhist artists I wouldn't even call them an artist. They're more of an artisan. You know

they learn how to crank out some kind of painting, some kind of statue from from their teacher and then they just keep cranking them out and there's almost no creativity. Even the songwriters are like this. There's not much imagination or creativity

involved. But I mean, some Buddhist art I like. You know, I I couldn't name like an artist who specializes in Buddhist art.

But I think the one piece of Buddhist art that really stands out in my memory, possibly not for a very good reason, is there was a Thai monastery near the city of Seattle,

Washington. I stayed there for about a week and on the wall in the main like the parlor, I mean most monasteries, Buddhist monasteries in America or a great many of them anyway are just houses in the suburbs. They get bought and just converted into a monastery because monks live there. So you got like the living room of this monastery. And there's this picture on the wall of the Buddha in meditation. Actually, he's he's not the Buddha yet. He's it's like the eve of his meditation. He's sitting under the bodhic tree in meditation. I think his eyes are open. And Mara's three voluptuous daughters are trying to

distract him from his meditation. And I think it was good that the Buddha didn't have his eyes closed because then you could say, well, he doesn't even see them. You know, how are they going to distract him when he's not even looking? But when his eyes are open and you've got these this the painting, this is it was a Thai painting. I assume it was in a Thai monastery. These women are just like perfectly goddesslike in their voluptuousness. You know, they're just like dancing and stuff. And the Buddha is just sitting there, his eyes open, but he's just completely unmoved. You know, he's just in this state of utter

detachment and he doesn't give a damn. Or at least that's the impression that you get from the painting. And it was a very well executed painting, very well painted. I think the the ties are more aesthetic and more artistic than the Burmese, although Burmese women are prettier than Thai women. I was sorry to disappoint you you Thai ladies out there that probably aren't watching this anyway. But yeah, I mean it would be like on a object of art by object of art basis that I would judge Buddhist art and some of the I mean sometimes you can see paintings from the the like scenes from the life of the Buddha and it's kind of like a puzzle or a game where

you identify the scene, you know? So

that's I kind of like

that. But

uh yes, that's about as far as it goes.

I was never really an aficionado of

Buddhist art. I one time when I was like

when I graduated from I think it was

graduated from high school, my father

gave me a Gandara Buddha head which was

a sandstone Buddha head about this big

and it had Caucasian features. It was

carved in a Greek

style. And I mean that was nice. I mean,

Gandara art is beautiful because it's

like in a in a Greek style of sculpture,

which was in my opinion more

sophisticated than most Asian kinds of
of art. Not that I'm maybe I'm just
biased. I don't
know. And then uh I was telling somebody
about it later at the first monastery
where I ordained. And then a little
while after that, one of she was like
the secretary for the board of directors
came up to me kind of in a
confrontational manner says, "What's
this I hear about you saying that you
had a gun the Buddha had?" And I it took
me a while to figure it out. It's like,
"No, no. I said I had a Gandara Buddha
head, not a gun the Buddha had."
But I gave it to a a Zen center before I
renounced the world. And my father was

totally scandalized by
that. So, but I mean, I figured I was I
was kind of moving around. I didn't want
this priceless treasure made of
sandstone that would shatter if it ever
dropped and hit the floor, you I just
wanted to donate it to some place where
it would be, you know, revered and
honored and, you know, just kind of
sparing myself the responsibility of
this thing because I was moving around a
lot just kind of
transient. So anyways, I'm just going to
move on this question. This is from
Phily's again. He says, "You said your
dad was a lover of frontiers. Are there

still any frontiers left to be explored in the world?"

Well, I mean, the ocean is still largely unexplored. Um, there's still like mental frontiers. Well, I don't know.

I'm I'm not sure about mental frontiers.

There's still like technological frontiers, obviously. Like AI is crossing a frontier every day pretty much until it eventually gets to the singularity and then who knows what the hell's going to

happen. So, yeah. I mean like what's what's in the center of the earth? You know, they they guessed it's like a nickel iron core or something, but I don't think they know for sure. And I

got to blow my nose again cuz my

nostrils are shutting

down. Not even

funny. This wasn't even happening until

I I was talking for at least half an

hour

straight. So, yeah, I'm sure there are

still frontiers. In fact, probably most

of the frontiers are are just we're just

clueless with regard to them. You know,

like sort of psychic frontiers or

frontiers of, you know, bleeding through

the same sort of, you know,

semi-permeable barrier that that

Sasquatches are coming through into this

reality. You know, that would be a

frontier where the Sasquatches are coming from.

And it may be you had some adept stone age shaman who was able to go into that realm, but it's still kind of a frontier for modern

humans. So, I'm sure that there's plenty of frontiers left to be explored. Maybe not so much at the material level, but um you know, beyond the material level, I'm sure there's plenty. And even at the material level, you got the

technological frontiers that are being crossed every day and making new frontiers. So I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from

Romeo. And Romeo says, "Have you ever

read the decline of the West by Oswald Spangler? If so, what is your impression of it?" And then he continues in his book Spendler Spangler posits that all cultures are born, flourish, and die, and that western civilization is now in its final phase of eventual collapse. Do you agree with Spangler's thesis, or do you think the West's demise is preventable? Um, so I guess that's two questions. I better separate these. Don't want to be lumping my questions together.

Okay, so the first question is, have you ever read The Decline of the West by Spangler? If so, what is your impression

of it? I read the first half of it. I was in Burma at a monastery up in the ghoulish foothills of the Shan

Plateau and I was reading a digital version of it on my computer and for some reason there was this glitch in the computer where every time I would add a note or underline something it would duplicate the file somewhere where I couldn't find it until all of a sudden I noticed that the memory on my computer was maxed out from every time I would add a note or something this I mean books generally don't take up much memory in a computer but it's a big book and every time I would underline

something every time I'd add a note it would just there'd just be one more Spangler you know an entire tome it's you know two thick volumes this decline of the west by Spangler um so I just stopped after reading the first volume I finally had to find out how a search for these

phantom like copies of Decline of the West that weren't coming up in the the finder. You know, I have I if I'm if I recall correctly, I did eventually find out how to delete the extra files, but then I had moved on to something else. But I did read the first half of it and my impression of it is he he's way too

verbose for my tastes. You know, like I said, it's like two thick volumes, like Gibbons: Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. And I mean, he could have gotten the point across way more succinctly in a much smaller

book. And so, I didn't like his writing style very much. In fact, I would much prefer I mean, one much shorter work that's almost as famous, maybe even as famous, is Sir Jonathan Glo. his uh the fate of empires. It's just an essay, you know, it's like 10 pages

long. So, I mean, you can find it online. That would be a good starting point before you tackle Oswald Spangler is Sir Jonathan Glo, the fate of

empires. And it's a similar kind of idea. Sir Jonathan Gub points out that the great empires of the earth generally have a lifespan of like 200 to 250 years.

But I think I might be getting ahead of myself. So that's the first question.

The second question, see in his book, Spangler posits that all cultures are born, flourish, and die. All things are impermanent. Everything that has a beginning has an end. Neo. And that western civilization is now in its final phase of eventual collapse. Do you agree with Spangler's thesis, or do you think the West demise is preventable? And as

it turns out, I had written an essay on my blog entitled, let's see, is decadence

irreversible? So, I mean, that would be my full answer to this question is if you go to my blog and do a search for is decadence irreversible and read that.

But I do have an excerpt here towards the beginning of of my my blog post and I'll just as by by way of an answer I'll read this. Some historians, philosophers, and other academic types, two of the more famous being the historians Arnold Toynbee and Oswald Spangler, have theorized that great civilizations have a natural life cycle of birth, vigorous growth, glorious

maturity, degenerate scinessence and death, much as individual organisms do. And this is the natural way of things, and nothing much can be done to stop it. Furthermore, most of these thinkers have been of the opinion that our own great civilization, namely modern western civilization, is well into the stage of degenerate decline with collapse and extinction being our inevitable destiny in the in the not too distant future.

Sir John

Glo in his famous essay, the fate of empires, gave the natural lifespan of a great civilization at between 200 and 250 years, beginning with its rise to

greatness. Oswald Spangler, although prophesying our impending doom, nevertheless was optimistic to the extent that he considered 20th century European culture to be in late middle age, still somewhat vigorous, though losing the vitality, inspiration, and suppleness of youth. He thought we still have a few hundred good years left in us potentially, even though they would be years of decline. He considered the zenith of our culture to have been the baroque period of the 17th and 18th centuries with its magnificent achievements in science, music, architecture, and the kind of enlightenment political thought that

inspired the birth of the USA and with the turning point towards decline being marked by the French Revolution and the advent of socialistic ideologies.

Spangler considered his own time, the early 20th century, to be analogous to ancient Rome's transition stage from decadent republic to fascistic empire, which is a major reason why the fascists and German national socialists liked reading his books and endorsed his philosophy. It now appears that Spangler was premature in his predictions.

Mussolini Hitler at all may have come closer to Marius and Salah than to Caesar himself. That is forerunners of

the death throws of liberal democracy,
not the the deliverers of the fatal
thrust. So that's a quote from the essay
I wrote on the blog. I think it's still
I think it's still up there.

Um John Gub on the other hand in his
essay the fate of empires he points out
that even though a great civilization
has a lifespan of like 200 250 years
still it is possible to hit reset like
that happened with Rome. He has the
Roman Republic as this great
civilization that lasted 200 250 years
and then Julius Caesar, Augustus Caesar
came along and there was like this reset
so that you had like essentially a new
civilization that lasted another 200 250

years. Although I'm not exactly sure. I think he's being kind of subjective with regard to his timing because the Roman Empire, I mean, it it kept going for more than 250 years, although it was in decline. You know, by the time of Constantine, it was it was on the downhill slide. Um Gibbon in his decline and fall of the Roman Empire has the uh the reign of Commodus of from the movie Gladiator as the beginning of the decline. The fall didn't happen until the battle of Adrianople. The fall didn't begin anyway. So it's possible you could have a reset.

But whether that's going to happen in our case or not, I don't know because we're definitely in a state of decadence. And it's, you know, feminism and socialism and just this progressive ideology, you know, it's like everyone is the same and all the ethnicities are the same and men and women are the same. It's just yeah that is that is a decadent you know it's just a symptom of decadence in our civilization so what was the question though maybe I should go back to what the actual freaking question was is do you think the west's demise is preventable well it's like the Roman

Empire was close to collapse a number of times like during the the reign of the the emperor Aurelian

You had like barbarian invasions, the Goths especially running a muk. And then the the whole empire just started fragmenting into into different like mini empires. You had was there what was it? Zenobia in the east. You had Tetrakus in the west. You know, it's like Tetricus had like Gaul, Britannia, and I think Hispania all just broken off from the empire. There's a few little upstarts here and there like in Egypt, Egypt broke away until Zenobia in Syria conquered just absorbed that part. And I

mean the empire was in fragments but all it took was some charismatic and very skilled general and militarism to get the get things back together again. And uh I mean it's possible. I mean it may be that America, for example, will have its Julius Caesar. I'm kind of hoping that Trump isn't a Julius Caesar type. It's going to kind of overthrow the the declining system to replace it with a more vigorous one that will then just press reset for the gloriousness of our civilization. Although I mean the Roman Empire was pretty fascistic. It was like a totalitarian military state pretty much. But it was glorious, glorious

monuments and all

that. And I assume even that would be

preferable to just a collapse

into I don't know what I don't know what

we would collapse

into. I mean, Europe would collapse into

like an Islamist caliphate

probably because the castrated

Europeans, the feminized Europeans

wouldn't be able to put up much of a

fight to stop it.

So yeah, I do think that the west demise

is it can be averted that you can hit

reset that you can turn things around

temporarily although everything is

impermanent. So I mean western

civilization will eventually come to an end and I have no idea what's going to replace it. Maybe

AI. So let's just move on to the next question. This is from Extremely Rare Bird. An Extremely Rare Bird says, "Have you read Man's Search for Meaning by Victor Frankle, a Holocaust survivor recounting his experience in the concentration camps?" No, I haven't read any um any books written by Holocaust survivors that I'm aware of. The closest I ever came to that was reading Soljien's The Gulag Archipelago, which has I mean, the Gulags were concentration camps, too. They were like prison camps.

And there was some pretty gnarly stories in there, but we don't we don't need to get into that. But I haven't I have not read Victor Frankle. So, I'm going to move on to Extremely Rare Bird. Second question. On a similar note, what did you think about House of the Dead by Dostki if you read it? I think it's pretty great so far. Yeah, I did read I did read House of the Dead. I'm pretty sure that was his more or less autobiographical account of being in a Siberian prison camp that Dostki was. He started off when he was a very young man as a socialist. He was kind of a radical and

then he got arrested and sentenced to death and he was actually like like waiting his line waiting in line to be shot in front of a firing squad. you know, the first people were already blindfolded, standing in front, and he was, you know, he was he wasn't in the first wave of people to be shot, but he was standing in line, waiting his turn. And then at the last minute, probably theatrically, they get a like a like a pardon. Not necessarily a pardon, but uh the zar just commuted their sentence to x number of years in a Siberian prison camp. So he didn't get shot after all. He goes to the Siberian prison camp and he's dealing with like

murderers and child molesters just like
hardened hardened criminals beyond the
imagination of the average American city
dweller living in comfort that some of
these people were just utter
sociopaths. And in a
way it inspired

Dosioski's like his the themes of his
writing where I mean he knew that some
of these people were
just bloodthirsty ruthless murderers but
at the same time he could see this inner
strength that they had and that I mean
even like this brutal murderer you know
they still had a kind of divinity to
them or just just the indomitable human

spirit or something that really struck Dostki and just influenced his point of view for the rest of his life. And by the time he was back in like St.

Petersburg or Moscow writing, he was just rightwing all the way.

He I mean like one of his masterpieces, one of his great novels, probably the the least of his masterpieces was The Possessed or the Devils in which socialists are symbolic of devil worshippers. you know, it's it's it's sort of an apocalyptic book where the leader of this socialist group, you know, he's he's sort of like the antichrist that that Dosioski just did a 180 and it was largely caused by his

experience in the this Siberian prison camp just dealing with just the utter drags of society because he was a political criminal, but he was just thrown in with with like the violent criminals, you know, they didn't really discriminate. They didn't have special special prisons or special goologs just for the political guys. They just get thrown in with the murderers and the thieves and so

forth. And uh he just saw something like admirable through all the the sociopathy sociopathy I guess it's pronounced. So yeah, I mean it's it's largely autobiographical. He doesn't

really write it as an autobiography. He writes it as a novel, but it's based on his own experiences. And probably most of what happened in the in the story really happened uh with

Dosti. It's not my favorite book that he wrote, but it's it's uh it's definitely worth reading. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Extremely Rare

Bird's third question, which is, do you see any likeness of our worldly conflicts today and those that led up to World War II?

Well, I mean, the conflicts that led up to World War II were mainly like Germany liberating the Germanspeaking ethnicities of neighboring countries in

the West and Japan just trying to imitate European colonialists by carving out its own empire in the east. And I don't think either one of those is really happening now. I mean, Russia kind of is expansionist in in trying to gain back its losses, so to speak, when the Soviet Union collapsed. So, there is that. Um, but on a kind of a in America, there is something that's happening that was similar to what was happening in the Weimar Republic of Germany. In fact, it's it's happening in Europe also. It's like the Weimar Republic on a larger scale where the Weimar Republic was kind of liberal and

Weimar Germany was decent and anyone who watched Cabaret with Liza Minnelli that I mean that was that's it's really a good movie. It's it's worth seeing. It's it's about Weimar Germany, how it's just sort of like a lot of like moral degeneracy going on.

And what was happening in Germany at the time was the center was collapsing. It was Germany was polarizing. you had Marxists and you had Nazis or I mean you had other groups too but still it was it became like this polarized political scene of the far left versus whatever the the national socialists were. I mean they weren't really far right you know they were they had socialist elements

hence they were called national socialists but you know there's I guess some people have called Adolf Hitler or Adolf Hitler um like a radical centrist because being a centrist isn't necessarily you know it's just like in the Buddhist middle path necessarily. So that's kind of happening in the west. It's just like America is just being polarized by you've got the Trump supporters and the people who hate the guts of the Trump supporters or I mean the the Trump supporters hate the guts of the far leftists too. So I'm mistakenly calling them liberals, but I mean they're they're

more socialists than liberals. So the center is hollowing out and it's becoming more polarized and you're going to have some radical group that could take over. Although I really don't think that Trump and the MAGA people are all that radical. You know, they're just returning to what worked pretty well like in the 1980s and 90s. Like most of the positions of Trump and his administration are not all that different from what was just accepted common sense just a few decades ago. So yeah, I'm uh I mean one of the main things that caused World War II was just the Germans were smarting after World War I. The humiliation and betrayal of

like the Treaty of Versailles and all that, which I mean I really don't see any parallels to that nowadays. And uh Japan isn't really setting up an expansionist empire, although China might be.

But yeah, I don't really I don't really see a whole lot of parallels. I mean, if you look hard enough, you're going to find parallels. You know, you're going to find coincidences and all this stuff that I mean, if you build your case carefully, you might be able to persuade a number of people that, you know, it's all happening again. But yeah, I think the the current situation is is fairly

unique.

So, I guess I guess that's enough on that one and I'm just going to I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

Ruie and we've been going for an hour over an hour and a half already. Man, I hope I hope I don't break any records because I started this one fairly late.

It was after 9:00 in the evening when I started. It's going to be after midnight probably by the time I'm

done. So, anyways, Ruie says, "Do you think Dhamma permits adoration?" And he's got adoration hyphenated. It's ad hyphen oration. I don't know if that was on purpose, in which case I do not

understand the significance of ad hyphen
oration, but adoration in general, just
to make sure, I looked up adoration in
the dictionary. And there's two
meanings. One is deep love and respect,
and the other is worship or veneration.
And I don't think that Dhamma would have
anything bad to say about deep love and
respect so long as it's not a lot of
clinging and attachment involved. But
just deep love and respect is fine. It's
the attachment that is often
accompanying deep love especially that
Dharma would hold a dim view of. And
with regard to worship and
veneration, the more devotional type of

Buddhists, I mean, it's it's all the way in the sut. I mean it's in the sutas
poly texts there's already like the the
c personality call to the Buddha and
adoration of the Buddha. Um so dharma as
it exists today certainly permits like
worship of the Buddha veneration of the
sa and so forth. um the earliest
Buddhism maybe not so much maybe not so
much worship there still be veneration
of monks veneration of senior monks by
junior monks that kind of thing but I
think veneration here means something a
little stronger than just deep
respect so I mean deep love respect even
worship and veneration are fine so long
as you don't have clinging and

attachment contaminating

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Count Nine.

And Count Nine says, "What happens if someone is practicing mindful mindlessness listening to a Dhamma video while cleaning the bookshelves? Is that when animal talk begins? Or is it simply when we start to hear it?" I guess I already know the answer.

Thoughts? Well, what happens if someone is practicing mindful mindlessness, listening to a dharma video while cleaning the bookshelves? I mean, which one is the mindfulness and which one is the mindlessness? I mean, you can be

cleaning the bookshelves mindfully and just sort of the dharma talk is just background noise and you're just thinking about something else. In which case, the listening to the dharma video would be the mindlessness and cleaning the bookcase, the bookshelves would be the mindfulness.

So mindful mindlessness, it's like multitasking. I don't think you're going to be able to do multiple tasks mindfully. You know, maybe some kind of alien race might be able to manage it, but we mere humans. I don't think we can multitask mindfully. That you can be mindful of one thing at a time, but you can't be doing two things at a time and

being mindful of both of them simultaneously. Unless maybe you can get into this expansive state that is like choiceless awareness like Krishna Murdy talked about but I don't think count nine is referring to Krishna Mie's choiceless awareness here.

So I I don't think that's when animal talk begins just when you start talking about worldly stuff that is of no benefit

spiritually. So yeah, I think animal talk beginning really doesn't have much to do with multitasking necessarily or listening to dhamma videos while cleaning bookshelves. You know, just

having dhamma videos in the back as background noise that I mean you're better off with that than with like death metal or something. I suppose that uh Nim Karoli Baba up on the bookshelf back there. He used to hire people to chant like Hari Krishna stuff you know Hari Krishna Hari Krishna Krishna Krishna Hari Harama Harama Rama Hari just for like hours and hours every day just in a way I mean it was just sort of like this background carrier wave to all the the villagers the people living around there who could hear it just it was just like going on in the back of their mind it's like this spiritual adoration of odd that's just sort of

like in their subconscious mind all the time because of this that I mean that's not necessarily a bad thing no matter you know they might be telling runchy jokes or committing adultery or whatever while this you know this chanting is going on in the background but I I really don't see the connection here that if someone is practicing mindful mindlessness is that when animal talk begins I really don't see any kind of like statistically significant correlation there. Unless it's just mindlessness in general. It doesn't have to be mindful mindlessness. It's just unmindfulness in

general. So, I guess I should just move on. Next question. I'm not sure how well I answered that question, but it was kind of a hard question for me to really understand very well. So, I'm just going to move on to this question. This is from the protose pseudom monk who used to be known as cool whip and the protose pseudo monk says did you ask your parents for permission to ordain? How did they react to the idea of you becoming a Buddhist monk? Also, how should one explain to their family and friends why ordaining is not a stupid idea and one is not throwing their life away? That's like two questions already. My granddad said such a waste. Others

have said you have so much to offer to the world. What about having a family, etc.? Every single thing monks do, they say, is the opposite of a meaningful life. Not one person I know celebrates this idea. Well, getting to the actual first question here. Did you ask your parents for permission to ordain? I just informed them that I was going to do it, and they didn't say not to. Um, I'd already been temporarily a novice monk for five weeks, like a year or two before, so I'd already done it. And I think both my parents just assumed that it would be temporary and not lasting until long after both of them

had passed

away. And my father was proud of me. He

thought I was kind of an extremist. He

thought I'd gone

overboard, but he was proud of me. But

my mother, I mean, she, bless her heart,

she did not have a religious or

spiritual bone in her body. She just

completely did not get it. She would

infinitely have preferred to have

grandkids that she could spoil rather

than have a son who is a monk living in

Burma with almost no

communication. So I didn't really ask

for permission to ordain, but I just

told them that I was going to do it and

they didn't tell me not to. Although I

did know a monk whose parents were like devout Christians and they just refused to give permission for him to ordain but he got ordained anyway. Tom Pulu Seattle ordained him and said the SA is willing to make the sacrifice which means the SA is willing to break a minor rule by ordaining somebody whose parents did not give permission. It's still a valid ordination. It's just that the monks who ordain somebody whose parents didn't give him permission commit a minor transgression, a dooka offense, and then they have to make confession and they're cleared of the offense.

So there is that. So this the second question, and I think he's asked four questions here because he's got a compound question with more than one question mark. How should one explain to their family and friends why ordaining is not a stupid idea and one is not throwing their life away? Well, I mean one way I used to think about it is I mean you read in these ancient books that I mean if you do this and that you can you can realize ultimate reality. You can know the highest truth. And so it's like it's like a a spiritual duty to at least give it a shot. You know, it's like, you know, putting it in Christian terms, it's like

seeing God face to face, that it's actually possible to do that. You know, it might not might be that your odds are not all that good statistically, but at least it's possible to do that. And if it's possible to do that, I mean, why why would anybody not even give it a try?

I mean, it just it just makes perfect sense to me that if you got these this ancient text, venerable scriptures saying that if you live your life in this way, you can realize ultimate reality. You can know the highest truth. You can liberate yourself from all suffering and delusion. I mean, why

would anybody think that's a stupid idea unless they're just locked into samsara and don't know any better? you know, they just think anything that isn't like worldliness is [—] And there's lots and lots of people like that. But I mean, you shouldn't like shackle yourself to their very limited point of view. But even my father who was proud of me, I he thought I had really gone over I was like some kind of radical extremist by becoming a monk. So I mean you have so much to offer to the world but I mean you can offer more as an enlightened being or a very wise one than you you will from being a a

normie who makes a lot of money as a doctor or a lawyer or something. But a normie a like a worldly minded normie probably would not agree with that statement.

So yeah, I mean trying to persuade them that it's a good idea. I mean just liberating yourself from suffering and delusion. I mean anyone who thinks that is unworthy of a goal is someone that you're probably better off not spending a lot of time having conversations with anyway. So I'm just going to move on to the protoseudong second question or actually technically third which is as

follows. If I can get my nostrils to cooperate. As a general rule, would you advise to not cultivate relationships that have no respect for or even follow the Buddhist path? Explaining it is pointless. The Buddha said something like, "What can I say for them to go away?" Right? Old friends want to meet up and chat, even drink, but they live in delusional ways. I see it as a trap because I've known such persons for a long time. I feel an obligation to meet with them because they are still nice people. No harm in chatting. But from Buddhist perspective, very unethical, hedonistic lifestyle, etc. However, experience shows that due

to my weakness or old habits, I always compromise my practice. One step in the direction of sensuality is like 10 steps backwards spiritually. The robes feels like the only way to protect myself from this unh wholesome behavior and subsequent muddled mental states. Um yeah, one thing I did was I just deliberately moved to a town where I didn't know anybody. Although sometimes my old friends would would make the drive to come visit me and we'd go out and get drunk or something.

But yeah, I

mean if it I mean you got to like feel out what works best for you. And I mean

as a lay person I mean you're just going to have to deal with lay people. I mean that's just unavoidable. I mean you can choose your friends, try to choose wise friends and avoid foolish ones. That kind of thing. Yeah. Yeah, I mean I went through the same kind of thing, but I was still hanging out with my my buddies up until shortly before I went to the monastery. Um, for for quite a while, I wouldn't drink. So, you know, I'd go out, I'd be like designated driver. And it's it's really not much fun to be the only sober person when everyone else is acting like drunks and, you know, you're you're you're sober. It it wasn't it wasn't

really all that enjoyable for me.

Let's

see. Yeah. Well, I mean, it's just your own choice that you have to make. I mean, you can I mean, there's a tradeoff by just sort of injecting some higher consciousness into the interaction with your friends. You're actually benefiting your friends. I mean, you may be taking somewhat of a hit, but they are benefiting. And then so you're at the same time that you might be getting bad karma or making bad karma, you're also making good karma by helping to uplift these these other people that you're interacting

with. So it's kind of a trade-off and you have to decide for yourself what works best for you. But like I did, I mean, you can partly deal with the the situation by just avoiding people and becoming pretty much of a hermit.

I mean, I wasn't a total hermit, but like I said, I moved to a town where I didn't know anybody. Although, an old friend of mine that'll be mentioned a little later on in this Q&A moved to town just a matter of months after I did through some kind of coincidence. Let's see.

So yeah, I mean this is a hard one to advise on because I really don't know the the

precise circumstances. I mean I went through something similar. I survived. I mean I did get drunk with my old buddies. I mean shortly before my ordination even but we don't need to get into the lurid details of that.

So yeah, I mean you can avoid people or not really. Just follow your heart and and do what you think is best. So and then I'm just going to move on to the protose pseudo monk's next and last question. Third or fourth depending on how you look at it. Oh, this is kind of a continuation of the the previous question. Anyhow,

how did you handle social situations,
non-darmic friendships right before
ordaining? Socializing seems useless,
harmful. You no longer share the same
difficulties in life. You aren't chasing
the same happiness. And it's ironic
because the challenges I or a Buddhist
faces is actually amplified in these
situations. You are trying to purify
your mind and they indulge in impurity.
It's strange. Buddhism has made me
despise humans as fools a lot more than
previously. I used to take drugs like
shrooms, ecstasy, weed, listen to the
Beatles, Bob Marley, and feel infinite
love for humanity. Now it's like, what
wretched, selfish, stupid creatures is

this true? Well, it it didn't really work that way for me. I mean, I I always had kind of a low I a low opinion of the human race. And it's only after I'd been a monk for many years, and I've explained this before that I started acquiring more compassion, more sympathy for fellow humans because I tried as hard as I could to be a saint. I realized how difficult that is. And so, how is a normie who I mean, that's not even on their radar. I mean, it's not even really an option because it just hasn't even really occurred to them. How are they going to to live up to some exalted

ideal? I mean, they are what they are.

It's in a way it's like dealing with animals, you know, dealing with dogs, for example. I mean, they're way stupider than

humans, at least in certain ways. You know, they just are animalistic. They are animals. And I mean, you don't

despise them as fools. They can't help it. They're born that way. And I

mean, it's like we're more likely to

despise humans because humans are closer to us, I suppose, because we're human,

too. But still, I mean, you can adopt a similar situation where you have a kind

of sympathy and compassion. And certain things you don't have to compromise.

Like, you can always tell the truth. You don't have to start telling lies when you hang around with your old buddies. you know, just start stealing. So, I mean, you can still remain relatively moral. Um, but again, like I said on to the first half of this question, it's really it's you're just going to have to feel it out for yourself and decide for yourself what is the best route to take. And and to some degree, I think being very social is probably not the best route to take. But I mean, dealing with your old friends for old times sake out of genuine brotherly love, that kind of

stuff, that's that's actually can be a good thing. You might take somewhat of a hit, but you're also helping to uplift them and then you get good karma for that. So, it's it's sort of a trade-off, but living where you don't have lots of friends is probably a good idea, especially if you're planning on renouncing the world. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we are getting down towards the bottom here, which is kind of good. Yeah. Yeah. We're we're going to be way less than three hours. So, that's that's that's kind of

nice. So, I mean, those of you who like the really long ones, just play it. Just you can you can slow it down so it all have a like a deeper more resonant voice or you can just keep watching the same one or you can just watch old ones. I doubt there's very many people. There are a few I'm sure but there's probably not very many people who have watched all 141 Q&A videos extending all the way back to when I was a shavenheaded monk. The first few of them I'm still a monk. So anyways, next question is from Yugu and Yugu says in the atakawaga, the

Buddha speaks against taking up morality and observances. Can you explain what he meant by that? Well, he didn't really say that you shouldn't take up morality and observances. There's one sutta, the Magandhiya Sutta, where the Buddha says, "You're not going to become enlightened. You're not going to be purified by morality and observances. But on the one hand, you're not going to be purified by an absence of morality and observances. And he does warn monks not to cling to morality observances. And that's really the main point. Like in the Antagatthasutta, it talks about how there are some like philosophers and

priests who will cling to a moral code, you know, and if they fall away, you know, they transgress the moral code. They they consider themselves to be lost. They're in despair and they just like they think that only by clinging to this moral code are they going to have any hope of liberation. And the Buddha warned against that. He warned monks to to like refrain from like enslaving themselves to moral codes.

So in a way it's it's sort of like an aspect of Christianity like what the teachings of Paul that I used to really have no use for at all. And that was like I mean so long

as you know it's like so long as you accept Christ as your savior then you can do all kinds of stuff and you're forgiven. And I had no use for that at all. But still there is a certain glimmer of wisdom in that in that clinging to a moral code is still clinging and it's like a mental prison and if you fall away from that you break a rule or something you've just screwed yourself.

Whereas really just do the best you can, be as wise and and as conscious as you can manage and then just go through life spontaneously without having to, you know, enslaving yourself to some artificial list of rules, which is kind

of ironic

because Buddhism eventually came up with the Vinaya rules, which is probably at least 2,000 rules that monks are supposed to follow. Although I am skeptical with regard to the idea that the Buddha actually set up this system that it was possibly set up after his party nirvana after his death just to stabilize the SA because the the leader wasn't there anymore. And if you read between the lines in the history of the first council that does seem to be the case that you can I mean it is implied that the first council which is also called the vinaya sanghi you know

the the convocation on on monastic discipline they were setting up rules to stabilize the sa to stabilize Buddhism after the Buddha is gone. So the Buddha I mean in the in the text the Buddha says I mean you really should not enslave yourself to a moral code. You should be moral but you shouldn't like be attached to that. That's the main point. And like the Magandia Suda says it's like morality observances isn't going to get you enlightened but amorality and non-observance isn't going to get you enlightened either. which is kind of hard to wrap your head around, I suppose, but it

really he wasn't speaking against taking up morality observances. He was more speaking against clinging to morality observances as some kind of road to liberation because it really doesn't work that

way. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "I've heard you say that you don't believe gender is fundamentally real." Following this logic, could a man become a woman? Well, I mean, if gender isn't fundamentally real, how could a man become a woman because there would be no men and no women? I mean, there's like two levels

of truth in Terra Buddhism. There's ultimate truth and then there's conventional truth. In ultimate truth, there's no men, no women, no people, no beings. That's all conventional truth. And even in conventional truth, I mean nowadays we've got the conventional truth of like scientific empiricism, which is a very very strong model of truth. Even though it's not ultimately true, it definitely stabilizes our reality and explains things fairly well, well enough to get us through life in a more or less predictable manner.

So a man and going with conventional truth like scientific empiricism then you definitely do have male and female

and in fact in

Abidama maleness and femaleness are

ultimate realities. So Orthodox

Terravada, I mean, you're either male or

you're female or possibly in a few

cases, you could be like a

hermaphrodite, but there's no way you

could switch from being male to female

or female to male or at least not

through natural means. There there's a

few cases like, oh, what was his name?

Sora the the story of Sora in the

Dhamapata commentary where there's this

merchant son a young man who's already

married and has kids and he watches this

Araant taking a bath in a river and this

Araant has just this beautiful golden complexion and this this young man is thinking man I wish my wife had a complexion like that and because of this profane thought about an arahant regarding this arroant, he just immediately turned into a woman just through paranormal like miraculous means. And then he was just overwhelmed with shame when he realized what happened. Took off, moved to Taxilla and got married and had two kids and and then finally an old friend of his happened to be in Tilla on business. This Sora recognized him, invited him into the house. She's like this, you know, matronly woman at this point and,

you know, she's she's asking him about,
you know, what happened to so- and so
back in whatever town they were
originally from, Sawati or something and
then finally she um she tells him that,
you know, I used to be your friend Sora
and because of this event when I had
this thought against this this monk that
I turned into a woman and here I am. So
then the monk said, "Well, did you ask
his per ask his forgiveness? Did you
apologize?" And and the woman says,
"No." And says, "Well, you should. I
mean, he's he's not far from here. Let's
go and and do it." So she apologizes and
then she immediately turns back into a

man again. So according to Terabata
Buddhism, maleness and femaleeness are
ultimately real in in Abidama, which
most Western Buddhists really don't take
very seriously, including me.

But um just

deciding that you're a woman if if
you're a biological male, just to decide
that you feel more like a woman than a
man, isn't going to make you a woman.

Not from a scientific empirical point of
view, even though a lot of the science
scientists have joined the cult of
progressivism or and then not according
to orthodox terra and then just going
with ultimate reality. There's no male,
no female, no change.

So I mean following a looser kind of conventional truth where conventional truth is just whatever any what whatever the majority believes is going to be conventional truth even if it isn't ultimate truth then presumably in some society or

population it could be conventional truth and then a man can become a woman or a woman can become a man. But even in like in

Burma, you've got a lot of transsexual people. Just out in remote villages, you're going to have transsexual people. And the Buddhists can accept this because it's just a matter of

reincarnation. And someone is transitioning from male to female and it's taking more than one life to make the full transition. And so they're like in an intermediate stage where you've got a woman who maybe recalls having been a man in her previous existence or maybe she doesn't recall it but still there's like you know a a a fairly plausible Buddhist argument that they were you know they were the opposite gender in their previous existence and you know they just kind of still have the like characteristics of that gender even though they're in the body of the opposite gender. But even they aren't saying that a woman who was born um and

believes that she's a man that like
physically she's a
man that you know it's just like kind of
spiritually she's still pretty much a
man. But I mean I've met some of them
and I remember asking a friend of mine
he employed one. There's this a woman
who went by a man's name, acted like a
man, and was a very uh active lesbian
or heterosexual
trans scoring with a lot of kind of
lesbian type women. And I asked him,
"What kind of bathroom does she use in
Burma?" You know, when she's at the bus
station, does she use the men's room or
the ladies room? And he didn't know. I I

asked him to ask her for me or ask this person for me, but he never got back to me on that one. So, I don't think that gender is ultimately real. It's conventionally real. And going with the strongest con like the strongest like model of conventional truth that we have, which is like scientific empiricism, that it just doesn't work that way. You can't just decide that you're a cat.

people are doing it nowadays. In fact, I've been told that in some schools there are actually litter boxes in the girls' room for the girls who identify as

cats. I've actually been told that by a school teacher.

So I mean people can believe all kinds of stuff and you know and in kind of Buddhist acceptance of illusion within the realm of illusion then you could say pretty much anything goes although it's definitely a step away from rationality and common sense to say that just because you think you feel like a woman that you are one and then you can just enter into women's sports and just completely dominate.

So yeah, following following my logic, a man couldn't become a woman unless it

was like just the conventional truth
which is failing in the west. There were
a number of leftist a lot I mean they're
mostly still trying this but it's
faltering. It's like this woke stuff is
going out of style fast. And I was like
avidly following up on the uh the
reviews of the new Snow White movie that
was just an absolute
bomb because they're trying I mean I
don't know if there's any transgender
stuff in there but it was just like
leftist propaganda and you know it's
like race swapping of the main some of
the main like Snow White herself you
know it's a brownskin
woman called Snow white and I don't know

it's just the attempt to make it
conventional truth for western
civilization that a man can become a
woman and a woman become a man is
failing at present it's faltering it
could make a comeback I hope it doesn't
but there was an attempt at making that
the established conventional truth of
our society and large numbers of people
accepted that and still accept it. But I
never did. I mean, even if a man had a
complete like a sex change
operation, I don't think that would
really make him a woman. I mean,
genetically, still still a man. I mean,
like physically, aside from some like

artificial changes, still a man, a lot of their even like their their psychology would still be male.

So it's it's kind of a vague question.

Ultimately, there are no men to become women, no women to become men.

Conventionally, I mean, it depends on what the majority believe,

but conventional truth is is pretty well locked down by modern

scientific, not necessarily even

realism, but just scientific

empiricism. So, I think I've I've spent

enough time on that. I'm gonna move on

to the next question which is from

Phix who uh I'm pretty sure used to go

by the name of Skooladine or Skooladin

Scoladin and uh he says would you kindly compare Rahm Doss to Jordan Peterson and then he's got the characteristic bullet points of of Scaladin which says Richard Alpert and Jordan Peterson led s so similar lives until Richard rejected the social engineering ing a cultural conditioning that drives the political economy because it made him neurotic. Well, I'm I'm I'm fairly well acquainted with Ron Doss and Jordan Peterson, you know, just I mean, not from personal acquaintance, but just from seeing them, hearing them, reading books, that kind of thing. And I never made any connection between the two.

Never did Rahm Doss remind me of Jordan Peterson or vice versa. That there are certain basic differences. Roms started off as Richard Albert. He was a professor in in

like it was like in the California like the University of California system.

Then he I think he went to Stanford and then he went to Harvard. He was a

Harvard professor and he got kicked out of Harvard with his friend Timothy Liry

because they were experimenting with

psychedelic drugs. And after he had this

kind of awakening experience like a

semi- awakening experiences with with

LSD he went to India looking for some

meditation master that could tell him

you know what is this LSD experience all about and can you cultivate it without the chemical just through like you know ancient Indian meditative techniques that kind of thing. Jordan Peterson and then and and Richard Albert who became Ram Doss. I mean he was I would consider him a saint. I don't think he was fully enlightened but he was a very wise and spiritual man. I had a lot of respect for him. He was like one of my first gurus in in my life after my father. He was one one of my first gurus. Jordan Peterson on the other hand he's still struggling. I mean Richard Alpert or Rahm Doss was kind of struggling too. I

mean, he wasn't fully enlightened. He had but he had like higher, more refined spiritual struggles. Jordan Peterson is struggling still at the worldly level, you know. He he messed his mind all up with with getting addicted to Valium or something when his when his wife was had cancer. And um I don't know, he's he can be very

angry. Um he cries a lot. And um Richard Alpert was I mean he was born Jewish but I think Jordan Peterson eventually became more pro-Jew than than Rahm Doss was just largely through his association with the Daily Wire and Ben Shapiro at all. So I think that Rahm Doss was more of a spiritual figure. Jordan Peterson

is not particularly spiritual as far as I can tell that he would greatly benefit from some acquaintance with Buddhism that I mean he's like struggling I I went to see Jordan Peterson speak once when he was in San Jose, California and he was struggling to try and come up with some morality or ethics that doesn't rely on God. And I mean, Buddhism has had that for 25 centuries. And and Jordan Peterson seems oblivious to that that he's kind of he's relying more on experiments on rats than he is on dharma. So yeah, I think Richard Albert was or Rahm Doss was much more saintly,

much more wise than Jordan Peterson.

So that would be my comparison. And so

I'm just going to move on to

Phix, which is kind of a cringy name in my opinion. Let's just go with Scaladin.

Scaladin's next question, which is, can marijuana cause existential dread or

anxiety? And the bullet point comment

here is, I've heard this theory a number

of times where people blame weed for

their anxiety, but I think it's probably

closer to a subconscious realization

that even normies who checked every

supposed to box are losing homes and

cutting back on meals. Even before the

COVID, I remember people living out of

cars who had full-time employment. Well,

let's just get back to the question here. Can marijuana cause existential dread or anxiety? And I can say from my own experience, yeah, it can. In fact, the only panic attack or the closest thing I've ever had to a full-blown panic attack was um it was caused by smoking too much weed. I was a monk at the time. I just came back from Burma to America to visit my family. my old buddy mucus man. He I mean, bless his heart, he's one of my dearest friends to this day, even though we haven't been communicating much because he's living on the other side of the continent. But I mean, he smokes weed

like like a Jamaican. I mean, he just smokes prodigious quantities. And I mean, I used to be able to keep up with him when I was a young man before I became a monk. But he took me camping and he's the camp master. He specializes in like foul weather camping. He can camp and build a fire in a in a downpour. It's It's all good. So anyways, after we went camping, I think it was after we went camping. I was staying at his place and he uh starts handing out the uh the cannabis and I'm trying to keep up with him. You know, for old times sake, I've I always I always liked marijuana. I I liked it better than alcohol. So, you know, I'm

smoking out with him

and he's he had like this little Mexican

devil mask on the wall and it was

starting to bug me. I was starting to

get like paranoid feelings and finally

at one point I asking, "Can you take

that down?" I didn't want to keep

looking at this this, you know, red

horned devil mask that's on the wall.

So, he, you know, he obliges me and

takes it down. And I was just I just got

hammered. I mean, I didn't drink any

alcohol, but I was just so high. I mean,

for him it was just like an average, you

know, for him it was nothing. But, I

mean, I was just completely out of it.

So, I finally it was bedtime. I went to my room

and he he went to bed on opposite sides of the place, you know, the other end.

And I kept hearing like footsteps in the dark in outside my bedroom. And I'd open the door and it'd be silence, nothing.

And then I'd close the door and I'd

start hearing footsteps again. And I'd

open the door, it just be pitch

blackness and stillness and silence out

there. And I started to panic. It's like

somebody's like sneaking around. They're

going to murder me or something. I had

like this paranoid panic attack.

Finally, it got to the point where I'm

just yelling for my for my buddy. And he

he gets up and he's like in this state of confusion, just woken up out of a sound sleep in his underwear, just, you know, what is it? and just just to kind of like ground myself. I asked him if I could give him a hug and he just kind of grinned, said, "All right." So, I gave him a hug and that kind of like in a in a way it just kind of settled everything, you know, I knew that he was I could just feel just from, you know, he was he was my brother, you know, and so, you know, there's not going to be any like satanic cults or anything. Nobody's sacrificing me, anything like that. So, it was it was all good after

that. But that was about as close to a panic attack as I've ever had. And it was induced by excess of marijuana. And marijuana can notoriously make people feel paranoid. You know, you just start worrying. What if this happens? That kind of thing. For me, it generally doesn't do that, but it can. It has in the past.

Um, with regard to like chronic anxiety, I I've never really heard of that, but like extreme cases, you can have acute anxiety just caused by being like way too high for your own good.

So, I guess I answer that question. So, I'm just going to move on

to Scaladin's third question, which is the very last question of the evening or of the the morning, the afternoon, whatever the hell time you are listening to

this. And he says, do people still think that the people molding social norms are benevolent? And then he's got the bullet point that says, just a minute, I got to blow my nose again. It's just that it's like some kind of valve up in my nostrils that keep closing off so that I can't breathe out through my nose to make certain

sounds. It's not even funny.

Anyways, the bullet point commentary

says, "I was listening to Yuri Bezmanov talk about how his nation function by throwing those who aren't 100% normie in the goolog. 30 million plus children." I can't say if the US will slide that low, but a similar persecution is happening to children. If they behave in a way that makes it difficult for a teacher, they are often misdiagnosed with mental illness or like ADHD or whatever and doped up on prescription medication, sometimes purely for academic achievement, not to mention castrated males is a thing now. Okay, let's just get back to the question. Do people still think that the people molding social norms are

benevolent? I think most people I mean that's not even on the radar. A lot of people just think social norms just arise organically spontaneously and some of them do. I mean every once in a while just something will go viral you know some fashion some trend will go viral and people will just start liking it without anybody really planning it. you know, other than maybe the person who made the the original YouTube video or whatever that, you know, it just happens spontaneously that there are however some social norms that are engineered, you know, by shady figures in the background, you know, by by

activists and lobbyists and all this that, you know, some of it's by the government. propaganda is really um I mean my my awareness of propaganda over the past several years is has caused me to be very skeptical of history in general because I doubt that the the blatant

propaganda just started when when Donald Trump first ran for president in 2015. It's probably been there for a long time. is just that something about Donald Trump makes people so hysterical and reckless that has just made it just painfully obvious to the point that Donald Trump even though condemned as literally Adolf Hitler is won the

popular vote in a in a
mandate.

So do people excuse me do people still
think that the people molding social
norms are benevolent? Some do. Some
think that they're all evil. Uh, and but
I I would guess that for most people,
it's just they don't even think about
it. You know, it's just social norms are
just something that you accept. You
know, it's just part of your
environment. It's like trying to
question, you know, what caused this
social norm to arise is sort of like
questioning what caused the weather to
arise. It's just what caused those

clouds up there to arise. People just don't think about it. they just accept it as just the environment that's just handed to them as a given. It's just, you know, it's just something that you just have to work into the equation without having to wonder about where it came

from. But I mean, some social norms I assume may be benevolent. I mean you got socialists who are trying to mold social norms in order to bring about some socialist utopia even though um like a century of stagnant and failed economies totalitarian totalitarianism and genocide is not sufficient evidence that socialism doesn't

work. At least Marxism
doesn't.

So, I

mean, I guess the socialists who are who
are coming up with the propaganda and
all that aren't necessarily benevolent.

They just kind of force socialism on
everyone for somebody's own good. Not
necessarily ours, but

somebody's. I mean, a lot of the the
like indoctrinated college educated

white women who who are going to vote

Democrat no matter what, you know, they
think that it's benevolent.

They just assume that it is. I mean,
they couldn't bring themselves to

question the benevolence of whoever is coming up with ideas that are they're they're guiding the left nowadays. But I think there's a lot more black pilling and red pilling going on nowadays. So I think the the percentage of people who think that propaganda is trustworthy and good are decreasing.

So yeah, but I I do think that people are just waking up to the fact that really most of what passes for news, for example, is just propaganda.

It may be that a lot of these news programs and like news channels, they'll take facts and then they will invariably twist it in favor of their own preferred narrative. And so, you know, anything to

do with Donald Trump, they're going to twist it into something negative. You know, the the the right can take the exact same data and twist it into something good.

So, it's it's caused me to be a lot more skeptical like like Trump's tariffs very controversial nowadays. You got authorities on one side saying, you know, it's it's about time that this has been long and coming. It's necessary and then the other then you got these other authorities, no less authoritative, saying it's going to destroy the American economy. And so, I mean, you just have to wait and see what's going

to happen. I mean, it's it's kind of
foolish to take a
position when I mean, you don't really
know. But I think I'm I'm wandering away
from the people molding social norms and
their supposed
benevolence. Yeah. I think benevolence
isn't
really I mean in reality it doesn't
really it's not like the main ingredient
in the in the motivation for molding
social norms that it's more like
political
convenience. So but I I think that
people are gradually waking up in the
west to this sort of thing. So, some
people still think that the people

molding social norms are benevolent, but I would guess like I've started off saying, most people I mean it's they don't even think about it. It doesn't even occur to them to think about it. And that's it. We are done. And like I should always say at the beginning and for some perverse reason almost never do. If you have any questions that you think I could probably answer or possibly answer, especially about Terravada Buddhism, early Buddhism, Indian spirituality, like Eastern philosophy, Western philosophy to some degree like classical literature. I haven't read a

whole lot of obscure fringe stuff, but classical stuff I have read. Me personally, Burma, etc. And my meta goes out to the people whose world was shattered by the earthquake in Burma. The one of my main supporters, I saw pictures of her school that just collapsed. The whole thing just caved in. A lot of buildings in in central Burma are just brick buildings that do not tolerate, you know, 7.7 earthquakes very well. And I would guess that probably some of the temples of the ancient city of Pagan have collapsed too, but I haven't really seen any news about that. So I do hope that uh they uh bounce back from this like they bounce

back from everything

else. And no more than three questions

per person per episode, please. And you

can count questions by counting question

marks. And uh aside from that, all I all

else that I have to say to you is be

happy.

Okay,

then is this

working? Hello and welcome to question
and answer number

142. I am your host Pony Bosel and it
should be fairly obvious to one and all
that 142 is not a prime number. It is 2
 $\times 71$. I think 71 is probably a prime
number

though and we don't have a whole heck of
a lot of questions today. I counted 27
which is not only not a prime number but
it is a perfect cube. 27 is $3 \times 3 \times$

3. And this is my

beverage. So I'll just remove the paper
umbrella. It signifies my taste and

style.

take a sip of said beverage, which is
coffee with milk in

it. And uh I must say I'm definitely a
coffee person. I just cannot comprehend
someone who prefers tea to

coffee. Although I have to admit for
years, even though I like coffee, I
could not drink coffee for many years
because every time I would drink coffee,
I'd get this jabbing pain in my eye.

So finally I just went to a doctor about
it cuz I do like coffee. I want to drink
coffee again. And he just cured me right
up. He knew exactly what the problem
was. I told him about this jabbing pain
in my eye every time I drink coffee. He

just told me, "Take the spoon out of the cup before I start drinking it." And it worked. He was really a good doctor. He only charged me \$350 for that, too. And now I drink coffee again. And I'm about ready to start answering questions. See here. So, let's just do it. Let's just wade into this. Even though I've got like stray hairs sticking out of this braided beard, it's just now getting long enough to braid. See? Yeah, I think it's just going to be futile trying to trying to do any arrangements there. So, first question is from

Jeffrey, and Jeffrey says, "Have you ever seen the Buddhist flat earth map? I think it was published in a Hawaiian newspaper in the 1950s. I've seen flat earth Dave show it." And the lands beyond the ice walls. Well, if there's ice walls, then it's not really a Buddhist flat earth map. It or I mean, it's not a Terravada Buddhist flat earth map. If you had a Terravada Buddhist flat earth map, first of all, you'd have Mount Meu in the center. It would be a disc. Mount Meu would be in the center, 10 million miles high. Then you'd have like concentric mountain ranges spreading out from the center. And then there would be four great continents,

one in the south, one in the north, one in the east, one in the west. And humans for the most part are living on the southern continent. And then there'd be some islands, too, surrounded by ocean. And then you'd have this, it's like a stone wall that goes around the outskirts of this ocean that holds the water

in. And I mean, that would be about it.

I mean India would be the southern continent south of the great mountain ranges which would be the Himalaya mountains and um the ancient Indian Buddhists were pretty much ignorant of anything extending beyond India plus

maybe like Persia kind of toward to the northwest maybe they'd know something about you know islands like you know Indonesia certainly they knew about Sri Lanka but um there probably would have been limited knowledge even of Southeast Asia and Europe. I mean they shortly after the Buddhist time within a couple hundred years of the Buddhist time they became aware of Greeks largely because of Alexander the Great conquering northwestern India. But any map of the earth that an early Indian Buddhist would have attempted to draw would have been just woefully inaccurate by modern standards. And uh it may be some kind of

Mahayana Buddhism that came up with a new Buddhist flat earth in like incorporating modern knowledge of all the continents and the the islands and so forth. Um, but it it would not be orthodox. So, I'm just going to move on to Jeffrey's second question. Can monks astral project to see these sort of things? So, seeing like what lies beyond the ice walls or or something.

Um, astral projection isn't so much of a thing. I mean you can in a way you can I mean like there's stories of like Mahammogalana and the Buddha himself who would project themselves up into heaven

realms and speak with the deities there that kind of thing. So you could project yourself in that manner. Um but for the most part I think they would just use the dbachaku or clairvoyance in order to see things that are far away without having to like project their body over there. Um there's not much talk about an astral body in in like Buddhism.

Certainly in the early terravada Buddhist texts, there's no mention or such little mention that I don't recall it of like an astral body. That thing's kind of bothering me there of you know like you have this body that is the the body that is like acting in dreams and so forth. you know the one that's sort

of doing the like um what do you call it
the transition from one body to the next
you know is it doesn't work that way in
in early Indian Buddhism especially in
theravada

Buddhism so yeah I mean I think I read
this really bizarre description of the
flat earth by I think his name was
venerable Odamathara or Odamas Sara in
Burma who was talking about you know the
continents and the beings that live on
the different continents and so forth
and he was saying that monks can use
their psychic powers to see this stuff
and then there I mean you don't have any
doubts because of course everyone can

differentiate between like vivid
imagination when in a hypnotic state and
actually seeing
something sarcasm

Um, so yeah, I mean monks have done the
theravada Buddhist equivalent of astral
projection or just remote viewing, you
know, like like clairvoyance to see this
sort of thing. Although how they can see
it is questionable because I mean you
can't get there with airplanes and so
forth. Um I remember when I was a young
monk I was ordained with an Argentinian
monk who I think is still in robes and
he was very very much into a very
Burmese point of view with regard to bur
with regard to Buddhism more so than me.

I was kind of more western in my approach than him more just like critical thinking and skepticism and so forth. And he was saying that the reason why we can't see Mount Mev, this 10 million mile high mountain, is because it is made of subtle matter, you know, like the bodies of Brahma beings and so forth.

So yeah, I mean that could be some kind of explanation, but like completely redrawing the map of the Earth to account for these invisible um geological formations. Um it's it's it seems like AAM's razor would really be applicable

here.

And I mean if you can't see it, there's no way of measuring it or anything. You know, you just learn about it in an ancient book with a lot of mythological elements to it, then probably you it would behoove you not to take it too seriously. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Phil.

And Phil says, "What is your advice for someone suffering from constant agony due to breaking up with his girlfriend of many years?" Well, my condolences on that. I would assume that most people have had their heart broken in this life. I've had my heart broken

before. Um, so I mean I mean it won't last. I mean that's that's one consolation I suppose that uh you know it won't last. it it will fade away.

You'll find some some other girl presumably, let's let us hope one more compatible with you that you won't break up with.

Um, so my advice for someone suffering from constant agony due to breaking up with his girlfriend of many years, well, I mean, it's like there it all has to balance out. All the pluses and minuses have to balance out. The pleasures and pains have to balance out. So, in a way, you're paying your dues for excess of

pleasure with this this biological mate,
this this girlfriend. Um, that's that's
a philosophical way of looking at it. I
mean, it's not going to help you not
suffer. I mean, the only time is going
to heal that, but it's like like I do
say sometimes it it all has to balance
out in the long run. So if you're going
to like wallow in sensual pleasure or
you're going to you know indulge in
sensual pleasure then you have to be
willing or you should be willing to
accept its opposite when it eventually
hits

you. So that's one reason one of the
main reasons why monks avoid pleasure is
just because you know they want sort of

an even playing field. They don't want the roller coaster ride of up and down, ecstasy, misery, ecstasy, misery. You know, everything adds up to zero. So, it's instead of the up and down roller coaster ride, they just have, you know, just flat flat calm. No stormy seas, just flat calm. Ideally, it doesn't work out that way in in real life very often, but relatively speaking, a monk who is meditating alone in a forest is going to have these he's going to have less of a roller coaster ride. He's going to have less stormy seas. They're still going to happen sometimes, but not to the extent of a

lay person indulging in sensual
pleasure. just enjoying the pleasures of
the
senses.

So your advice for someone suffering
from constant, I mean just be patient,
you know, try not to add to it through
like negative mental states. I was
talking about this in the in the
previous Q&A where if you're in a bad
situation, the the best thing you can do
is make peace with that situation. you
know, wish her well on her journey
through life and just, you know, the
pain that you experience, just, you
know, experience it
philosophically as much as you can and

just get on with your life. Continue with your life because any kind of aversion, any kind of like friction, resistance, struggling against the way things are, it just makes more karma, which increases the stuff that you want to struggle against.

So it's like friction putting up blocks is one of the main reasons why we're creating more karma and just getting stuck in this endless cycle. Krishna

Murdy Jay Krishna Murdy had a lot to say about that. Just friction is one of the main problems humans have just like resistance against the way things are.

So, I mean, you'll still suffer, but I

mean, it does fade

out. Anyone who's had their heart broken

can tell you that that it doesn't last

forever. And, uh, you know, good fortune

to you in the future. And,

uh, maybe things will work out better

next

time. But remember, I mean, if you

pursue pleasures and avoid pains, those

pains are going to build up and then

they're just going to overwhelm you with

this like a bursting dam sooner or

later.

So you're better off just

accepting pains as they come with a

certain aesthetic patience rather than

trying to avoid them, hold them at bay

because the pleasures you experience are going to have their equal and opposite reaction, so to speak sooner or later.

So you might as well just let it happen at a trickle instead of letting it build up and build up and build up until the dam bursts and you are inundated in a flood. So I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's next

question which is does sending or beaming meta to people seriously have real world effects in your opinion? Of course. Well, it turns out that that same venerable U Odamasara or Odmasara, I think it's Odamasara, um he he uh he taught the pebble method

of sending mats and it's it's in one of my dharma books. I think it's Buddhist ethics, Buddhist practice using the pebble method of sending matzah. And there were some testimonies of people who used this way of sending message to people that I mean it it really had an effect on the other person. If you are beaming love at somebody, I mean you're not letting them know that you're doing it at all. And it could be somebody who's just been really a bothersome person. You're just sending meta at them that it I mean it can change. There is a certain empathy and even sort of subliminal telepathy

that you humans
have and so sending meta I mean it
really can it really can have an effect
on other people. I remember my preceptor
didn't like me very much. I was like
this wild western barbarian and I was
just like a loose cannon. he didn't like
westerners very much and you know I was
sort of the reason why or I was like an
example of why he didn't like
westerners because we're we're just not
Burmese
enough. And then one day I just felt
like this warm glowy feeling in my heart
with sort of I mean it was sort of
associated with my preceptor and I

didn't know why it was because generally
he I mean he he pretty obviously didn't
like me but it turned out that at that
same time he was in the meditation hall
with a a group of of lay people I think
and they were all doing meta meditation
and so it just happened that while they
were sending meta meditation, I just got
like this warm, glowy, happy feeling in
my

chest. But I mean it it does have an
effect. It certainly

can. So I guess I'm just going to move
on to the next question also from
Phil. In the meditation you mentioned,
if someone is already capable of gear
three or is attempting gear three, then

are gear one and two even of any use?

Well, I mean, if you can

consistently meditate in third gear, and

I I covered I talked about this in the

previous Q&A, how when I was a monk

living in a cave doing intensive

practice, I had like four gears, like

four different kinds of meditation

depending on the state my mind happened

to be in. Like first gear was just

grinding away at the absolute basics.

That was like desperation. I didn't do

it very often. Second gear was

anapana meditation on the touch

sensation of the air going in and out

the nostrils. And third third gear was

it's essentially the kind of meditation taught by the enlightened child novice to pota in a story of the dhamapata commentary where I mean according to the the the simile that or the metaphor taught by this enlightened child novice you've got a termite mound with six holes in it and there's a lizard hiding inside that termite mound. You want to catch that lizard. So what you do, you block off five of the holes and then you watch that sixth hole very carefully so that when the lizard starts to come out, you can grab it. And that's essentially third gear meditation where you're sort of shut down the five senses, you know, the standard five senses, but the the

sixth sense, the mind, you watch that carefully. You know, you're sitting there motionless with your eyes closed in a quiet place, not a lot of sensory stimulation, and then you just watch your mind and try to catch any thought that arises. And you find that when you're watching your mind intently, wanting to catch any thought as it arises, it to some degree prohibits thought or at least it it retards thought, so to speak. you know it makes thoughts less likely to arise.

So if you're capable of doing that, I think in Zen that might be called

shikant taza. But if you're capable of doing that then you don't need to do like in breathing in breathing out you know the touch sensation of the nostrils or my my first gear the primary object was the the touching of my thumbs when I'd be sitting there. Um I mean it's it's a more advanced practice. You get more benefit from doing that. So yeah, there's no point of doing mindfulness of breathing or a mantra or anything like that if you're like proficient at just sitting there intently observing the mind in a state of silence because any thought that starts to arise you catch it and so it's just

mostly you are sitting there in a state of intense silence in a in a kind of mental state I mean it's not the highest stage there was there was another level of meditation above third gear. But, you know, it's sort of like you're walking through a forest and an arrow suddenly hits a tree trunk right next to your head. You know, it's like immediately, I mean, unless you're the type of person that just panics and freaks out, starts screaming or something, but a lot of people like me, immediately you're just like boom, just wide awake, just extremely alert. that kind of meditation and just silent, you know, you're not

thinking you I mean it's like you become as silent as you can just to be aware of the situation as clearly as possible.

So I mean it is a more advanced meditation practice even though some people can use meditation on the breath you know all the way up to fourth janna like traditionally in terraovvada manopanit mindfulness of breathing is good all the way up to I mean you can get all the way to fourth janna with it so that can take you all the way but still there are sort of shortcuts or you know ways of just getting into a a more advanced mental date without having to go through mindfulness and breathing the whole

way. And I just realized I forgot my
emergency backup
beverage.

Damn. So, I might as well make the most
of this

one. So, um I think I answered that
question and so I'm going to move on to
the next question which is from PSA. And
I I have no idea what PSA actually
stands for. So, I don't think it stands
for public service

announcement. Anyways, PSA says, "I
remember you mentioning your preference
towards javelin throwing. Does this mean
that you like throwing javelins around
randomly or that you're just a fan of

the sport?" None of the above. Is there was a list of sports that I would prefer to watch? You know, somebody gave me this

multiplechoice of various sports. you know, which one were I prefer to watch on television? And javelin throwing was like the most interesting of the ones. I mean, I think soccer was one, water polo was

one, and it was just I mean, I have no great love for javelin throwing, but uh I mean, that was just the one I picked.

So, I was never I've never been very good at throwing spears or or throwing balls either for that matter. I was fairly good at throwing a Frisbee, which

is an entirely different kind of motion
than than like an overhand
throw.

So, yeah. I mean, it was
just marginally higher interest in
javelin throwing than in something like
water polo. It's not like I'm an avid
fan of javelin throwers. So, I'm just
going to move on to PSA's next
question, which is kind of a strange
one.

Your aversion towards the non-tachionic
throng is recip reciprocated.

Consequently, would you characterize
your operational interfacing with
hydraulic powered counterbalanced load

transference mechanized dudads as a source of intrinsic occupational and flinching fulfillment? Or does the quotidian manipulation of palletized mass within a spatially constrained industrial ecosystem filled with furious girthy blobs of redundant protoplasm elicit a more sysophian effective response with your professional psych within your professional psyche? I mean it should be fairly obvious that uh I mean I have no great vocation for operating a forklift. It was not like something that I was born with this already moving in the direction of, you know, just I just want to drive a forklift. That really it's it's a way of

making a living. It's a way of paying
the bills. So it I guess Seephus is kind
of an

appropriate an appropriate metaphor I
guess or

simile for me going to work every day.

It's like Cisphus had to like roll this
boulder up a hill and I'd always just
roll back down on him and you just have
to keep starting over and over again.

It's the same way with work for me. It's
like you go to work and you you you load
these these trucks

with freight and then the next day
they're empty again. You got to just
keep doing it over and over again. It's

like sisphus, but you get paid for it
and that's why I do it.

So, I'm just exchanging my time for
money, which does cause me to have less
time for writing and and other pursuits
that might be more spiritually
uplifting. But that's just the way it
is. It's the it's the curse of Adam.

Adam and Eve ate the fruit. And so,
because of that, we all have to earn our
bread by the sweat of our

brow. And so, I'm just going to move on
to this question. This is from

Romeo. And Romeo says, "My aunt, a
lapsed Catholic, is in her 80s and
increasingly in failing health. While
she isn't totally on the way out as of

yet, she is rapidly trying to come to terms with end of life issues, regrets from looking back at her life, doubts that there is anything beyond this life, chronic illness and physical pain, etc. Any thoughts on facing old age and death in as mindful and skillful a way as possible? Well, it's going to depend a lot on the mental states of the person in question. Like if they're open-minded, then you know, having them read or listen to like the Tibetan book of the dead. I mean, that that could actually be very useful because it's going to like tell you what to expect after you die and like appropriate

actions. you know, you find yourself in the bright light, you should stay in the bright light as long as you can because it has a purifying effect. But most I mean, everybody, almost everybody eventually starts to panic because they feel like they're just dissolving into the light. And so they'll they'll they'll leave the light. And then, you know, when you see all these beings, you know, like in the near-death experience, almost always there's some kind of guide and you're seeing other beings in some kind of heaven realm that the Tibetan Book of the Dead teaches you to remind yourself this is all an illusion. This is all mindgenerated.

So, I mean, if she's not interested in the Tibetan Book of the Dead, just uh near-death experiences, if you could watch YouTube videos on near-death experiences. Um, but really, I'm not exactly sure what kind of an attitude she has. If she's a lapsed Catholic, it might mean that she's just not religious at all

anymore, which I mean, would make things more difficult. I mean, if she's not open-minded, then there's really not much you can say other than I mean, why be afraid of death when I mean, you don't look back at before you were born with with

horror. You know, it's

like

realistically like what happens to you after you die is going to be essentially the same as what happened to you before you were born. So, if what happened to you before you were born doesn't seem scary to you at all, then what happens to you after you die shouldn't be particularly scary

either. So, let's see. She's rapidly trying to come to terms with the end of life issues like regrets from looking back at her life. Well, I mean, that is one of the most important teachings of Buddhism is that regret is always bad. You're making bad karma. It's an

unskillful mental

state. No regrets. I mean, you can acknowledge you did something wrong, you know, determine you're going to try to do better in future. That's 100% fine.

You can try to make amends for any wrong that you did to somebody, fine. But like having a guilty conscience and regret and remorse, it just makes things worse. You know, it's more friction against the way things are. And wanting to change the past is just silly.

So, let's see. Another one is doubts that there is anything beyond this life. Well, I mean, studying up a little on near-death experiences might help with

that. Or like Ian Stevenson's books on
like empirical evidence suggestive of
reincarnation, that kind of thing. I
mean, that could be helpful. See,
chronic illness and physical pain,
that's that's something that uh is less
philosophical. That's something that
pretty much everybody has to experience
at some
point.

Um, yeah. And, uh, I mean, just
mindfulness meditation can help, but
again, I do not know how open-minded or
liberal in her views the the the little
old lady happens to
be. Um, I my grandmother was just a fire
and brimstone 7th day Adventist

Christian.

who eventually when she was like in her 80s or maybe even early 90s, she lived to be fairly old. She became angry at God

because she was this old lady, you know, it's like her f like her husband had was long gone. Most of her friends were already passed away and God would not take her. I mean, it's like she wanted, you know, she'd had enough of this world. she wanted to move on to the next and God just wouldn't do it for her until finally she just she in a way she lost her faith in her old age and in her 90s which is not good and um I mean I

wasn't around at the time. I think I was a monk or I mean she lived in Georgia. I I grew up in the Pacific Northwest and then moved to Burma and I hadn't seen her since I was a little kid. So I mean I couldn't really help her with regard to much of anything. So yeah, the chronic illness and physical pain I mean there are you know meditations mindfulness meditation that's I mean it's just taken right out of terra Buddhist texts like Saudi Patano Suta and it's con has been converted into meditation to teach like pe like terminally ill patients or people with like chronic pain because of like burns or that kind of thing. It's

taught in hospitals. So, I mean, that sort of thing could possibly be of help to her and it could also teach her some dharma indirectly from through through mindfulness.

Um, also, I mean, in if she was like really radical like like an old hippie chick, I mean, you might even suggest psychedelics.

I remember reading in an old Rahm Doss book that his stepmother, I think, was dying of cancer and and she was like in chronic pain. Sometimes she'd just be like literally on the hospital bed just writhing in agony from this this pain. And he slipped her some some acid once.

And at one point, I mean, she's still like writhing and gasping, but then she she just says something like, um, I know my body is like this, but it's it's it's such a miracle. It's all so beautiful.

This kind of thing. So, I mean, somebody who's receptive to that kind of approach, I mean, they can get some valuable insights that can be life-changing right at the end, which is I mean, certainly it's never too late to have a life-changing realization. Some people apparently allegedly get enlightened right at the moment of death.

I think it was Rahman Maharshi used to say that that is like a a golden

opportunity for a lot of people that they couldn't get enlightened while they were alive but just the last conscious moment some people they they just let go and they can become enlightened at the last minute that may not be a very Buddhist approach but Raman Maharshi was pretty much of a a spiritual heavy hitter and I wouldn't simply dismiss anything that he said unless maybe he's talking about Aruna Chal the sacred hill and that sort of thing.

So, that's like my two cents worth on this very nice little old lady, I am sure, who uh uh who's I really don't

know at all that I really don't know what her attitude is, how open-minded she is, whether she's still open-minded to any kind of like dharma or spiritual approach, or whether she's just anti-religion because of bad experiences she had in Roman Catholicism or whatever. I really can't say. So, I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question is, are there any sutas where the Buddha specifically addresses this? And unfortunately, I didn't do any research looking up any sutas like this, but there are sutas where somebody is on their deathbed. And I mean that would be about as close as where as I can think of with

regard to sutas where the Buddha might
come and visit somebody on their
deathbed or an enlightened monk may come
visit somebody on their deathbed and
there a little bit of a dialogue going
back and

forth. But I mean there's there's no
really good examples that spring to mind
at present.

But I mean there are also sutas
discussing you
know

h how how do

I I can't even I can't even say how do I
say

this? Yeah, I mean there are sutas that

that kind of address similar issues to
this like either you know somebody right
before they died the Buddha right before
he died although of course he was
already fully enlightened or else just
discussing how rebirth
happens you know it's like what your
mental states before death have as an
effect on you know like your
trajectory your vector after death that
kind of

But I can't think of any names. I
couldn't really point out any particular
suta. Some scholar Seattle in Burma
would probably be able to present you
with a list, but my mind doesn't work
that way. So I do apologize. Maybe you

could do a search on the internet or ask somebody who is like a scholar a Buddhist scholar who is very familiar with the sutras. they might be able to direct you to the kind of sutra that you're asking

about. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ketchup. And Ketchup says, "How was the monk who lit himself on fire able to withstand the pain?" Well, there have been lots of monks who have lit themselves on fire just a few years ago or maybe it was several years ago by now that there was like an epidemic of Tibetan monks setting themselves on just self-

emulating that there was like more than 100 in one year did that. But I assume he's referring to the famous one that uh I think is still on the the header of my my blog. Um also on my mind's page of you know the famous Vietnamese monk. I think the the photographer got a Pulitzer Prize for taking this picture. I it's also on the Rage Against the Machine their first album cover. And um and I can't tell you from personal experience, but I have read that these monks who light themselves on fire like that. I mean, at first it's just shock. You know, it's sort of like jumping into ice water. Although it's kind of the opposite, but still it's

like you it's like your your skin just kind of goes into this shock stage. And then within the next couple seconds, your nerve endings have burned off. And so it makes it a lot more bearable. There's going to be deeper down nerve endings, I suppose, that can still experience the pain and everything, but the ones on the surface, I mean, they're destroyed. And I mean, you're just in an altered state of consciousness. You're not going to be in some ordinary state of consciousness at this point. It's like, um, I didn't get into a lot of fights when I was young, but I do know

enough about being in a fight that you
you get punched in the face or
something, you don't even feel it. you
hit the other guy and I mean you don't
even feel it. It's like something comes
over your mind or your nervous system or
whatever and it's like you're in this
emergency situation where being
distracted by pain isn't helpful and so
it's like nature just like erases it for
the time

being. So I assume it's something like
that. I'm going to move on to the next
question now. This is from basketball
Jesus and basketball Jesus says it is my
understanding that way Seattle taught
anapana exclusively and endorsed the

technique as a valid path to liberation the goal enlightenment nibbana or whatever one wants to call it. He prescribed continuity of practice as the key aspect. He essentially said that one should stay focused on the spot constantly. I know that you do not currently practice sitting meditation, but do you have any kind of practice running in the background like that prescribed by way? The only kind of practice I've got running in the background is just as a monk, you're trying to be as mindful as you can until it finally just became like a habit.

So I'm more mindful than the average person just with regard to like observing my mental state. So a certain amount of detachment. Um I mean I can still get like frustrated and pissed off but then it's like another part of my mind is just observing the frustration and pissed-offness with a certain kind of detachment. So it's like you got two different levels at probably more than two different levels in your mind. I mean, I've mentioned before that I've once I was in Burma and just the the chronic hot weather, just the in my inability to ever feel comfortable during the full blast of the oven-like

hot season of central Burma just caused me to just snap one time and I'm just like cussing and and yelling and slamming things inside my cave with no witnesses. And it was just like there's like this sudden shift of consciousness where all of a sudden I'm like an actor playing the role of someone who's like cussing and and yelling and slamming things while there's this other part that is just sort of detached from that. And I I practice mindfulness enough as a monk that there is always a certain amount of mindfulness of what's going on. Um, and that's I mean that's that's the extent of the practice for the most

part. Sometimes I'll do spontaneous
coming as a meditation practice or and
sometimes when I'm walking it'll just
turn into walking meditation. But just
this whatever would be like continuous
the closest thing I've got to a
continuous practice is just this
habitual momentum of like practicing
mindfulness for 30 years as a monk and
so there's still some momentum going you
know there's still the habit of this
kind of detach detached observation even
though I may not remain calm all the
time still there's like this other part
of my mind that is just a silent
observer of of whatever is going on,
including like me getting pissed off,

that kind of thing, which is hard hard to explain, hard to understand for someone who's never experienced it themselves. And I'm just going to move on to basketball Jesus's second question, which is, I have some Burmese neighbors across the street. I am a white people enthusiast, but I like the Burmese and I am grateful for the preservation of Dhamma. Could you tell me a few phrases or greetings or wellwishes in Burmese? Well, the standard formal greeting in Burmese is mingalaba, which is um mingala is is the Burmese way of saying mangala, which just means blessing. And ba at the end

is just the politeness particle um in Burmese. Like if it's sort of like in English when you request something, it's more polite to say please than not to say please. That ba at the end is just politeness. Regardless of whether you're you're asking for something or anything else, it's just the politeness particle that gets thrown in to make a sentence more polite. So, mingalaba.

Um, let's see what else would it be. I mean a lot of the stuff I would say is stuff that mainly it's monks that say it you know like standard blessings would be like jama baz s chabaz kong baz but coming from a lay person it might sound

a little weird like jamaabaz is may you
be well s chabaz is may you have peace
of mind may you be

happy may may you have good karma or
good luck that kind of thing but

mingalaba is standard um for just about
any any situation, especially a rather
formal situation if you don't know
somebody very well, that kind of thing.

Like the students when the teacher walks
into the room, mingalaba syama, that
kind of

thing. So yeah, I guess that would be
about the best one. I really can't

think. I mean, there there really are no
there is no word for hello or goodbye in

Burmese. It's weird. Um, instead of saying hello, you you ask a dumb question, which is something it took me a long time to fully appreciate. You know, it's like you meet someone, you're walking down the street, you see somebody walking down the street to, a friend of yours, you don't say hello because there is no word for hello. You don't say mingalaba because that's kind of formal for, you know, it's it's not used for like good friends who just meet each other. It's like where are you going? Or, you know, if you meet somebody around like midday, have you had lunch yet? And it's this this some dumb more or less random question and

then instead of saying goodbye, you just
say, "Well, I'm going to go
now. I'm out of
here." So, I guess just try Mingalaba.
And I'm I'm sure they'll be surprised
that you know even that much
Burmese. And uh let's see here. Oh, wait
a minute. I gotta I gotta check something
here. Excuse me. I got to scroll down
here
because Yeah. Damn. There's questions
that I forgot to put on the list. So,
just bear with me. I got to do
this. All right. I think I'm
good. I
hope. Let's come back

here. All

right. Yeah. I don't know if if that recorded or not. It's about 45 minutes into it. Okay. Yeah. What happened was I forgot to cut and paste compile the questions from the Discord server or completely do it before I started doing this. I got distracted and it didn't fully happen and here I am not being fully prepared.

Okay, so let's see here.

We got to scroll all the way back

up. Okay, so now back to basketball

Jesus. His third question, and I do hope this is

working. Yeah, it says it's still

recording.

So, basketball Jesus says, "Did you have a favorite villager who gave you the best alms food while you were a monk?"

Well, I mean, I moved around when I was a monk and so there would be people giving the best alm food like different people giving the best alms food in different

places. Um, and then there was one place when I lived out on in the the uh the national park, Alando Kazaba National Park, nobody gave good food. It was I always got really skinny when I lived there. It was awful. There was just hillbillies who would just eat

anything. I got lots of frog eggs and lizard tails and stuff in my food that time when I was living there. Also, just during the rainy season, it was like wild mushroom, flavorless wild mushrooms and bamboo shoots. It's just like everybody was giving it to me and it was awful. That's I learned how to hate bamboo shoots living there.

So, did I have a favorite villager who gave the best alms food when I was a monk? Well, yeah, in different places.

Yeah. Like around the town of Wuin, there was my Pile Bad Deama lived there. And in the recent earthquake, her school, she was a school teacher. Her her school just completely collapsed. I

don't think anybody was inside the building at the time, which is good.

But we're going to my my woman and I were going to send money to try to help them. And it's it's so hard. It's there's it's so many difficulties trying to get money to the people who need it there because of course the government wants all the American dollars. And also it's like it's there's a civil war going on and people don't want to go there to to for any reason really.

So anyways, I in a moment of weakness, I I told her about peanut butter because peanut butter is unknown in much of Burma. She was very skeptical. She

thought if you grind up peanuts, you're just going to get peanut flour. And then she came back after, you know, commanding a servant to make peanut butter in a like a mortar and pestle. You know, she was wideeyed with wonder saying, "You were right. It's like that. It's not peanut flour at all."

And uh

also when I was living at WBO wildlife refuge monastery, I had a a picile bodigama there also. Her name was Tay E. And I uh in a moment of weakness, I explained grilled cheese sandwiches to her. And she was very keen on giving me the food that I like the best. So that towards the end I hardly even had to eat

rice when I went to that village for alms round because I'd get like grilled cheese sandwiches and um like there's a kind of noodle soup in Burma that's really good. It's called mohinga that there was this lady who would sell mohinga. She had like this little stand and and sold mohinga in the village. And uh so I'd get like a a big bag, a J8. It's called, you know, some kind of a polypropylene bag that's kind of makes a kind of a a crunchy sound when you when you're That's why it's called chut because that's the sound it makes. That's the kind of plastic bag they use. So now I finally realized that we've got

considerably more than 27 questions because I forgot to cut and paste all the questions from the Discord server. I went through the comment sections on YouTube, Bitshoot, and Rumble and spaced off the Discord server, which is not so good. But I didn't getting back to the question of basketball Jesus here. I did learn that it's rich fat ladies give the best food. I mean, they've got it down. They know exactly what is like maximum deliciousness and and then they want to offer that. So, but I mean out in the out in remote rural villages, there weren't a whole lot of rich fat ladies. So, mainly

I'd be in town somewhere when I'd come across those and their delicious food offerings.

But I tended to have like favorites wherever I would

live. And I think I'm just going to move on. Next

question. This is from Dama River. And

Dama River says, "What is the best way to ordain in 2025 without being harassed or affected by the current cult of

wokeism?" I have noticed that Western

Buddhists are first and foremost

brainwashed liberals and secondly they are Buddhists.

So instead of surrendering their liberal

indoctrination to the dhamma, they
surrender the dharma to their liberal
indoctrination.

Well, I think it's kind of a misnomer to
call them liberals. I don't think
they're really liberal anymore. That
liberal I mean politically I probably
come closest to a classical liberal, you
know, like along the lines of John
Stewart Mill and his essay on liberty. I
mean liberal comes from liberty. I
think, you know, it's like um personal
freedoms, freedom of speech, that kind
of stuff. That's liberal. And the new
left is just moving into like
Marxism, neo-Marxism, a kind of like
feminized Marxism that really is not

liberal at all. In fact, in Europe, liberal still has more of the old-fashioned denotation, whereas it's more conservative people are called liberal because it's the conservative people who are more interested in personal freedoms and rights and so forth. And the left now is, you know, the the progressives, they're moving more towards, you know, socialism, you know, interchangeable everybody, you know, everyone the same. And you got to keep the everybody under control. People have to be nonviolent, you know, they have to be incapable of being violent. You know, it's not just that you uh have

people be strong but encouraged to practice self-restraint largely because a lot of the people being imported by the millions just lack the capacity for that.

So, let's see here.

I think I got sidetracked by quibbling on the meaning of the word liberal. What is the best way to ordain in 2025 without being harassed or affected by the current cult of wokeism? Well, I mean

most I mean Asian

monks, first of all, go you can go to Asia. Go to I mean Burma might be difficult for the reasons I was talking about earlier, but Thailand go out into

rural Thailand and you're not going to find woke monks. You're not going to find woke lay people. They're all going to be

traditionalists. Monks tend to be more conservative in their Buddhism than Western lay people.

Especially, even Western monks, as a general rule, are much more conservative than Western lay people with regard to their Buddhism.

So I mean certainly wouldn't want to ordain at some place like Spirit Rock or not Spirit Rock but u the Ajan Cha place that's in Northern California um Abaya Giri even though even though a lot of

the monks might be conservative the like
the the European ancestorred ley who
support the place are going to be very
left-wing and um I mean you're going to
have to be very careful about what you
say. Pacific Northwest is the same way
like Seattle, Vancouver, BC, Portland,
Oregon, that kind of area. Just the
cities of California or like
Massachusetts, places like that. You're
going to be inter if you're a monk
there, you're going to be interacting
with very left-wing lay people. So, I
mean, you're better off dealing with
Asians and and a lot of Asians, like
Asian immigrants. you know, it's I
wouldn't be surprised if it's well over

50% of them vote Democrat mainly. I mean, their main issue is they want their relatives to be able to come to America. So, you know, if if any party generally the the Republican party is like

anti-immigration, anti-mass immigration, you know, they see that as you know, against them, you know, almost personally. And so, see, my the computer all of a sudden turned off. Not my computer, but my sweetheart's computer that acts as sort of a backlight. Oh well, it doesn't matter. There we

go. So, I mean, I was ordained in California and there were a lot of lefties there, but I was kind of a lefty at first. And really I mean there wasn't a whole lot of politics being spoken and um I mean the monks I mean they hardly spoke English some of them and I mean my preceptor spoke almost no English. So I mean there wasn't a lot of politics going on. I mean I was at this monastery in California for months and then I was talking to this this lay supporter who said you know something about ever since the second Russian revolution. And I was like, "What? What? Second Russian Revolution?" He goes, "You you never heard the Soviet Union doesn't exist

anymore." And it was like news to me because I was just completely isolated from news or anything like that. But it may be different now in 2025 than it was in like 1991.

But the best way to ordain in 2025 without being harassed or affected by the current cult of wokeism, be ordained among

Asians, Asian

traditionalists, either in the West or in the East or if you're going to be ordained in the West. I mean, just meet up with the like the abbot of the monastery and just kind of sound him out, you know, ask him what what kind of

politics, if any, is discussed that there's a monastery. that kind of thing. You know, what is the the attitude towards political discussion and so forth? You know, what are the lay people like? I mean, you you can inquire about that sort of thing. But I mean I mean Burma may not be much of an option, but I mean almost everybody in Burma outside of the big cities is conservative, very traditionalist. The Burmese are governed by tradition more than they're governed by their government.

So yeah, but it is true that western woke Buddhists are first and foremost not so much brainwashed liberals but

indoctrinated

leftists with some you know like

indoctrinated globalistic leftists and

secondly they are Buddhists. Yeah, I I

have to agree with that.

So yeah, just do what do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do do do do

do do do do do do do do do do do what I

suggested and you should be okay. And

I'm just going to move on to Dar's

second question which is is there

anything you miss about being a monk?

Well I miss like being lazy. I can't be

lazy nearly as much now as I did when I

was a monk just at leisure. That is kind

of nice. Um, and I'm not going to be able to retire until I'm probably like in my 70s just because, you know, I I already had my retirement for 30 years as a young man. And so just to make sure I have enough money in a 401k, enough hours in even to get social security, that sort of thing, I got to work hard as an older man, which uh is what it is. I'm not complaining. It keeps me like active and and relatively healthy.

Anyway, and another thing I miss about being a monk is in me, which are the little wall geckos. I really miss the wall geckos in Burma. Something I miss about being in Burma more than I miss about being a monk, though, even though

the whole time I was in Burma, I was a monk.

so kind of

miss having the time

to write a lot and

um I have I'm just uh kind of at an

impasse with regard to my

writing which is involved in a question

coming up about my upcoming book but

I'll get to that

later and for now I'm just going to move

on to the next question this is from

Ruiz and Ruiz says do Do you think the

mind abhors infinite regression like the

infinite regression implied in a moment

of consciousness can only come from

another moment of consciousness and thus is naturally drawn toward more alpha and omega type explanations of existence. Um I'm not so sure if the mind abores infinite regression. It's just that the mind cannot deal with it. The mind cannot, the conceptual thinking mind cannot grasp infinity. It just can't. It won't, it never will. I mean, you can sort of turn infinity into a finite concept like some mathematicians do for various reasons, but still it's not really infinity. I mean, you can't deal with something that is formless or endless. Now infinity you cannot grasp it conceptually and I mean the a thinking

mind cannot contain infinity except you know to say that you know it's like even an orange you know theoretically it could be divided up into an infinitely high number of parts or some such you know it's just something like that is that even a infinity in a grain of sand kind of a thing but as a general rule infinity is I mean it's what's the word a paradox you know it's the mind cannot grasp infinity and people don't like people feel uncomfortable if they can't grasp something you know if they can't understand it it just makes them kind of feel vaguely uncomfortable if not

terrified and so they prefer as an in
rule it's human nature you prefer some
simple explanation to some ungraspable
infinite

explanation. So hence alpha and omega
type explanations of existence that
there's like this beginning and there's
going to be an end because once you get
endless I mean it's just the mind cannot
grasp

it and I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from

Alex and Alex says, "I would like to ask
you some questions about the so-called
synchronicities. It is been years that
something very strange is happening to
me." Quite often I see a number with the

same three digits. It is always the same number on page numbers, house numbers, length of videos or messages, hours, prices, number of comments on videos or posts, etc. During some periods, it happens every day and many times a day. In the last 22 hours, I saw it 11 times. I asked a friend, he is a rabbi, and the answer was kind of predictable. It is the universe trying to establish a connection. Then he gave me an advice. Every time I see this number, I must thank for the message and re retribute with some money. Doesn't matter the amount and I should donate it to anyone. Finally, I must choose some numerology

system to interpret the message. Any legit system. He gave me an interpretation based on the geatria. I don't know what that is. So his first question is what are your thoughts about synchronicities? Um synchronicities it's in a way it's a a byproduct a side effect of the fact that your mind is creating your reality that this is not a material world in the sense that material objects are not ultimately real. So I mean everything that you experience um like positive or negative it's going to be the fruition of your own karma

which is a mental state sort of like
Schopenhauer's will the world as will and
representation so for some reason your
karma has got
this you know it's got some kind of
fixation on this threedigit number uh to
some degree I mean you're just
sensitized so you're more likely to
single it out if you see it. And so it
may seem like you're seeing it more
often, but I'm willing to to give the
benefit of the doubt and let's say that
you really are. You just in your life
you're continually seeing the same
three-digit number at a rate much higher
than would be expected through random

chance. Then it would be your mind is conditioning this for whatever reason. You may have just some irrational attachment to that number. It may have some significance from some something that you don't remember, possibly even a previous life. So I I mean it's it's mindmade. You're it's like you're you're having a dream in which this theme keeps coming up and this life that we are living now is just a higher level dream. So let's see here two second question. Is there a Buddhist view on these kinds of issues? Yeah. Karma. That's that is the view. And so I mean it's it's kind of ironic, maybe not

too surprising that the rabbi would take like a numerological point of view and just suggest that you contribute money every time it happens. I mean my my approach would be practically the opposite that if like stuff that is like paranormal in a sense like a synchronicity is verging on the paranormal or the miraculous even you know it's sort of like very lowlevel miracle stuff you know maybe not fully into the the realm of miracles so maybe to a statistician or something but in order for the miraculous to become like an ordinary part of your life. You have to just view it as an ordinary part of

your life. Don't make much of it. Don't make a big deal of it. Just let it happen. So that when weird things happen, you just accept it as a matter of course and just, you know, continue with whatever you were doing. And it in a way it just sort of like mainstreams it. It normalizes the miraculous because if you make a big deal of it then it makes it in a way you're you're putting up barriers without realizing it without trying

to you know you're you're like emphasizing the fact that this is rare which helps it to be rare instead of happening

regularly. So whether I mean what's the

the rabbi says the universe is trying to establish a connection. I think it's just

maybe that your own subconscious mind is trying to communicate something to you.

Maybe it's just some important number from a previous existence or some such that has just made a deep impression on you so that maybe it's not even really trying to communicate anything. It's just that you're just having like these aftershocks, you know, just for whatever reason.

So, I think I hope I kind of answered those questions because I'm moving on to the next one. And this is from

Rybalder. And Ryalder says, "Was Wah a drug manufacturing breakaway communist state when you were in Burma?" Well, whether it was communistic or not, I don't know. But the Wah are a kind of tribe and ethnicity living in the Golden Triangle which is on the border of Burma, Thailand and I think what Cambodia or Laos is the third country but there's where those three countries come together is called the Golden Triangle and a lot of opium poppies are grown there. the the economy there is largely based on black market opium sales and this ethnicity called the Wah which I think also live in Thailand. Um you know there it's like an insurgent

zone that I could never go to that area in Burma when I was in Burma cuz that is a black zone. It's not under control of the government and there are quite a few of those in Burma. There are insurgent zones all over Burma, especially in the non Burmese fringes of the country, like the frontiers, you know, the the heartland, the Burmese heartland where the people are ethnic Burmese mostly, it's not so bad. You could pretty much travel freely through those areas, or at least when I was living there, you could. But when you get into like the the ethnic states, Kachin state or Shan state or Karen state or Caya state, it's

you get like insurgent zones where the government is not in complete control. It might not be in control at all. And it's you got like these hontas or cartels that are running it and those are off limits. I went to a few brown zones in Burma. You had when I was there, you had like three different kind of zones. You had the white zones where people can go freely. You know, tourists, foreigners can go there. Brown zones, you'd have to have a permit. Like southern Monstate at the time was a brown zone. I went there once. I had to get a permit from the government. And then you got the black zones that are just off limits because, you know, a

foreigner can just get kidnapped and held for ransom or just shot dead as a political statement or whatever.

So yeah, the W was it was an insurgent zone uh in the Golden Triangle when I was there and apparently it's still there. And I'm going to move on. Next question. This is from Ror and Ror says, "Do you have any Buddhist movie or TV recommendations, preferably non-English? I really enjoyed The Believers. I would also take Southeast Asian movie recommendations in general. Well, I I don't think you'd want to watch Burmese movies. Burmese movies are pretty bad. I watched my fair share of

Burmese movies while riding on Burmese buses that usually have a TV set above where the driver is driving and monks sit way up front. So, it's like the the TV screen is right there. And yeah, Burmese movies were pretty awful. I mean, mostly they're like these sappy tearjerker romance movies where you've got the young man fall like you've got a poor young man falls in love with a rich young woman and the rich young woman's parents, her father especially, are just vehemently opposed to her loving this low status male that he's already got her set up with this of a rich kid. And so the the young guy and the know the low status young man and the

high status young woman elope together. They run off together. They're deliriously happy for a few weeks until hired thugs or her elder brothers come find them and just beat the out of the guy and take the girl back. And so then what happens is the young man of low status drinks himself into oblivion. Usually drinking Johnny Walker Red Label. I have no idea why. And then the young woman, she boohoos for a few weeks and then marries the the rich guy. And um I mean that's half of Burmese movies it seems like or at least back when I was watching them. And the comedies are even

worse.

So do I have any Buddhist TV or I mean the only Buddhist TV show I can even think of would be the old kung fu. The old kung fu show with David Keredine.

That's the only one I can even think of.

I can't in Buddhist movies I like explicitly Buddhist movies. I mean there's Little Buddha, but I didn't I was not impressed by that movie at all.

So I mean the best Buddhist movies would be like crypto Buddhist movies where most of the people that watch the movie don't even realize that it has Buddhist themes.

So, I mean, with regard to that kind of Buddhist movie, Avalon, which is

technically non-English, it was directed by a Japanese person and it was filmed in Poland with Polish actors, spoken in Polish. So, Avalon, that's that's it is a Buddhist movie. It's it's kind of about the 31 planes of existence and the nature of reality and that sort of thing. Also, it's a science fiction movie which makes it even better. Or Tarovsky's stalker. I mean, that has Buddhist themes to it. I mean, the director Tarovsky himself said that, you know, for with regard to its message, it looks to the east. You know, it's about how your mind is creating your reality. I mean, that's like the the deep

philosophical theme of the movie

Stalker, which is in Russian.

um pilot episode of Kung Fu maybe.

Although it has some outrageously bad

acting, it's still a good movie. Um I

mean even like The Matrix, although

that's in English, but I mean you got

the little bald monk kid saying there is

no spoon. That's Buddhist.

um maybe even Ingmar Bergman's persona

which is originally in Swedish which is

also kind of about the relativity of

reality and has this woman who goes into

this she just goes mute after seeing the

the the Vietnamese monk burning like

emulating himself after she sees that on

the TV news she just goes mute and then

she has this nurse who's taking care of her who is like sort of like an alter ego kind of a thing it becomes very hard to understand till when you get to the end of the movie uh you're thinking what the hell did I just watch what did that mean but um yeah I really can't think of very many specifically Buddhist movies um Buddhist books on the other hand like almost anything by JD Salinger or a lot of the stuff written by JD Salinger I think JD Salinger must have been like a Mahayana Buddhist the catcher in the rye Most people who read the catcher in the rye with holding Klefield and all that had no clue that it's a Buddhist a

Buddhist story. In fact, first time I read *The Catcher in the Rye*, I had no clue until I read the unofficial sequel to *The Catcher and the Rye*, which is a book called *Franny and Zooie*. And *Franny and Zooie* makes it clear that *The Catcher and the Rye* and *Franny and Zooie* are both Buddhist books.

I mean it's in *Franny and Zooie* it's obvious like Zooie he's a Mahayana Buddhist and uh he he tried to eat a meal once without taking without like reciting the bodhicattva vows first verse and almost choked to death on a clam in their apartment where they live in New York they've got Max Muller's sacred books of the east and like a poly

grammar on the bookshelf that's that's mentioned this kind of thing so yeah with regard to books maybe I'd be in a better position. But um with regard to Buddhist TV shows and Buddhist movies, like I said, the only Buddhist specifically Buddhist TV show I ever saw is the old Kung Fu show. So I think I'm just going to move on to Ror's second question, which is kind of similar. Do you have any obscure movie recommendations? So obscure would be movies that most people have never heard of, I guess.

And one of my favorite cyberpunk

dystopia movies is a movie I' I'd like to watch again and I just cannot find it. It is too obscure. It's called Paranoia

1.0 and it's like a cyberpunk future, not in not in the distant future, but in the near future within a decade or two. And there's like some people living in an apartment building that are being experimented upon where they're getting like an empty box in the mail. They open it up and there's nothing in the box. And so they're like, you know, what the heck? But it turns out that there's like these micro micro robot kind of things that are like dust in this box. They're inhaling them and then it gets into

their mind and then it's like whoever it is who is doing the experiment is trying to use these like micro computer things that are in their head to to like influence what they want to buy. You know, it's sort of like a marketing strategy like really hard ball marketing strategy. And it's just it was an interesting interesting movie. The movie Avalon again, I mean, that's that's an obscure movie. I think most people have never heard of it, even though I consider it to be an excellent movie. It's one of my favorite movies. So, it's it's like the the wellworn science fiction trope or theme of like a virtual

reality that gets confused with what we consider to be reality so that you start questioning even what we consider to be reality. You know, that becomes another just a different level of virtual reality. That kind of thing. The Matrix is like this, too. Although The Matrix is not an obscure movie. Uh, one of my favorite science fiction movies is The Hidden, which is got this space alien who when you see his body, he looks he looks sort of like this black slimy squid thing, but you don't see the squid thing very often because he he parasitizes humans. He gets inside of a human and like controls their mind and their body. And this

particular alien is a criminal who's
being chased through various star
systems by some sort of intergalactic
police. And he very much loves loud rock
and roll and black what is it? It's not
Ferraris. Maybe it's
Ferraris. Black Ferraris. I think it is.
Maybe it's like a ma Maserati or
something like black fast foreign sports
cars and and loud rock and roll music.
and he's just he's like a total
sociopath. But the intergalactic space
alien cop finally gets to him in the
end. Another kind of obscure movie that
has some definite dharma to it is
Fearless about this man who has a

near-death experience and it just like kicks him up into a higher level of consciousness. It's like he's on an airplane that crashes and he thinks he's going to die and so like in what he considers to be his last moments, he just makes peace with the world, you know, he just accepts whatever happens and then he somehow survives. A few other people survive and he's just like in this higher level of consciousness after that and he goes back into this life that he had been in and he's getting in all kinds of trouble because he won't tell lies anymore. you know, his his motivations are completely different now, this kind of stuff. And,

you know, he's got like these lawyers trying to get him to say that he was scared to death that so that he can get a bigger settlement that he was terrified. He thought, you know, and he just it's like he won't even do it for the sake of somebody else, you know? He just doesn't want to do that. It's just this this like this tension between him and just

worldliness has this kind of climactic effect at the end. So that's a good movie. Uh 444, Last Day on Earth is kind of a leftist movie, but it's it's kind of a profound movie in that um somehow scientists have worked out that the

world is going to come to an end at 4:44 a.m. on a certain day. And it just it's sort of like showing what is happening to this this guy played by it's William Defoe and his girlfriend who's an artist. you know, how they spend their last day on Earth. And it's not controversial. It's not like you have these deniers. There's a few deniers, but it's like the mainstream has accepted 4:44 a.m. is it? And if it was better science fiction, it would have been like a like a comet impact or an asteroid impact or something. But they wanted to politicize it and say it was like humans have destroyed the the the atmosphere so that

like the the entire ozone layer is just going to collapse at 444 and then all of a sudden we're all going to be dead. You know it they they kind of mess that part up. But it is it does have some profundity to it. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Scoladdin or Scooladine. And I'm checking to see how many how much time has gone by. Yeah, that was kind of it was kind of traumatic for me to realize that I hadn't even gotten all the questions together before I started this. I don't know if if that pause that I attempted really worked or not or if you just I'm

still like on the screen frantically
collecting questions that I hadn't
collected yet. So anyways, Scoladin or
Scooladine says, "Are there any books or
essays on propaganda you would
recommend?" And the the only book about
propaganda, I mean, I don't think it was
mainly about propaganda, but it was
addressed

um was by Aldis Huxley. And I'm not sure
exactly what book it was. It was the
Devils of Ludon maybe or it could be
Brave New World

Revisited where oldest Huxley realized
that with the advent of like television
and radio mass media which didn't really
exist in preodern times like with the

advent of technology that you could have like a monopoly on the narrative and you know he was sort of um like Brave New World was larly based on this just this monopolistic narrative of you I mean the government is just telling you what to believe. So I mean Brave New World itself has got a lot to say about propaganda. That's like a major element of of how the government was controlling the populace was through propaganda. Um I guess Adolf Hitler had much to say about propaganda.

Um, Gustav Leong, the what is it? The crowd. Uh, I can't remember the title of the book. It's a it's a classic book.

Um, you know, it's like a study on the
some the like group hysteria, but there
there is some talk about propaganda in
that. Um, also another book I read
that's kind of a classic. I think it was
called The Hidden Persuaders. It was
written back in like the 1950s or early
60s about advertising
agencies, how advertising agencies were
like some of the first sophisticated
propagandists of the West. How, you
know, they're trying to essentially just
trick people into buying stuff that they
don't
need. And so that's kind of a propaganda
book, but I haven't really read I can't
recall reading any book in particular

that was just about propaganda. I have read books that had a lot to say about propaganda, but I've never just sat down and read a whole book about propaganda. So I'm just going to move on to Scoladin's second question here, which is as follows. Were there any philosophers that wrote on the phenomena that France Kofka was describing in derroccess or in English the trial? And then he's got the characteristic bullet point saying the closest I found so far was the technological society by Elul.

Um any philosophers that wrote on the phenomena that France Kofko is describing in the process? Um well I mean the existentialist philosophers were talking about sort of the problem that Kay was having in questioning the validity of his culture. I mean that was like the crime that he was under investigation for that he was being tried for in my opinion is you know he was just starting to question the validity of it all. all this essentially like propaganda driven and cultured driven assumptions that everybody has. You know, once you start questioning that, then in a way it's like like the the ocean rejects a corpse by throwing

it onto the shore kind of a thing.

So yeah, I think the existentialists would be talking about the first aspect of it, not so much the aspect of society getting back at anyone who questions the validity of society.

Um so yeah I can't really think of I mean a lot of philosophers you know have things to say about this sort of like Schopenhauer was um sufficiently cynical that he could talk a lot about um just sort of society as kind of a pernicious force that kind of thing.

But um I think it was who was it Albert Camus who wrote the myth of Sisyphus. I think he tried to

interpret Kofka's the trial in that book
and I think he did a poor job of it. I
was not impressed or maybe he was maybe
I'm just remembering it
wrong. But yeah, I think your best bet
would be
existentialists. And I'm just going to
move on to uh Scaladin's third
question, which is did Arthur C. Clark
come off as a Marxist or misanthrope in
his novels? And then he's got the bullet
points here. I was reading a book on his
essays that he published in
chronological order. The topics were
mainly science, science fiction, and his
career. But from the very first essay to
where I dropped the book midway, he

seems like a sociopath. and his social narrative is very similar, if not more extreme, to what the cringe fringe and globalists push. And then another bullet point says is a quote, "No, the population battle must be fought and won here on Earth. And the longer we postpone the inevitable conflict, the more horrifying the weapons that will be needed for victory, compulsory abortion and infanticide and anti-heterosexual legislation with its reverse may be some of the milder expedience. So I mean I was kind of a leftist and I was like a social eco libertarian as a young man with eco in

there. I mean, I would, if I hadn't become a monk, I probably would have gone to grad school and and studied ecology. I would have become some kind of ecologist probably. Not because of any kind of political leanings, but I'm fascinated by the big picture of like a natural like interaction of, you know, all these different forces, all these species of organisms sort of interacting and and seeking a kind of balance or just finding one without trying, you know, like carbon cycles and and and water cycles and everything. It was all really interesting to me. And I mean, I did not have a high opinion of the human race. I agreed at the time that the

human race should be way smaller than it was. And it was it was partly a cultural thing. Like back in the 70s and and the 80s, everyone was thinking there's the population bomb, the population explosion, that we're going just going to hit this S-shaped curve and the population was just going to shoot straight up, which hasn't actually happened that it is kind of leveling off a little bit, especially in the more developed countries where the population in some countries is crashing.

But at the time is is it just seemed to me like I consider it just to be common sense that anybody who could not feed

himself should not have the right to have children. You know, if somebody's living off care packages or food stamps or something, you know, they can't afford to support themselves, why should they be allowed to have children that they also can't support? So, I mean, that sort of thing as a young man and even to some degree today, I can I can endorse that. I can I can go along with that. That like these like uh care packages that are they're sent to third world countries, you know, we got the the people in the the famine victims all standing in line with the dented tin cup waiting for their their scoop of milk powder or whatever that there should be

some sort of like uh birth control drug mixed in with that milk powder to keep them from having more kids that they cannot feed. They can't even feed themselves. So I assume Arthur C. Clark was just sort of like extrapolating to the logical extreme when when that he thought was happening that a lot of people thought was going to happen where the the human the human race is just going to become so I mean the the earth is going to become so overpop populated that something has something radical and drastic has to be done. And it turned out that it didn't really happen. Um, with regard to the

actual question though, which I shouldn't entirely forget, did Arthur C. Clark come off as a Marxist or missentrophe in his novels? No, not really. I mean, he kind of downplayed the glory of humanity that, you know, he would have alien races that were just like incomprehensibly more advanced than we are to just kind of put humans in our place, you know, that we're kind of, you know, upgraded ape kind of a thing. So, I mean, some people would consider that to be misanthropy that he doesn't he's not a humanist that puts humans in the center of the universe.

But

uh now with regard to his politics, I'm not sure what his politics would be. He didn't throw a lot of politics in uh into his books. I mean, Larry Nán, I remember Larry Nán when I was in high school, he was my favorite science fiction

author. And you know, he also predicted, you know, in 100 years from now, we're going to have a population of like 20 or 30 billion. And you know the whole world is just going to be you know there's still going to be wild areas but you know like all of the whole coast of California is just going to be one huge

city that kind of stuff and everyone's going to be kind of a light brown mongrel from all the interbreeding and you know money is going to be just kind of yeah it's just going to be kind of phased

out that kind of thing that you know he he perceived or predicted a kind of socialistic future which I mean he was pretty much just extrapolating trying to predict what was going to happen. It wasn't necessarily that he wanted that to

happen. So Arthur C. Clark again, I'm not sure even if he did have some kind of Marxist predictions or something in his novels. Um, that I

mean, you can just be predicting that that's the direction we're headed. You know, a good science fiction author shouldn't be too wildly wrong in his predictions of what the future is going to be like. It doesn't necessarily mean that he would want it that way. And uh yeah, I never really Arthur C. Clark never really struck me as a sociopath. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Huch also known as Trzasquez is. And he says, "Happy birthday for sweetheart." And my my woman's birthday was yesterday at the time of recording this. And he says, "What did you get her?" Well, I

got her three things in particular. And the main thing, I'm not going to say what it was. It was it's rather personal and nobody would guess what it was. She she was completely at a loss of guessing what it was going to be before she opened

it. And uh yeah, it's just it's just a personal thing. I'm not going to say what it is. But with regard to the other two things I got, I got her also got her two pairs of shoes. I got her a pair of like nice high heels that I wasn't sure if she liked them or not. So, I got her another pair of more sensible shoes just in case she hated the the high heel ones, which was convenient for me

because there was a sale at the the book
at the shoe store where you buy one pair
of shoes, you get another another pair
at half price. So, it's a way I was kind
of covering my bases just in case she
hated one pair of shoes, she she'd at
least fold back and wear the other
pair. And so

Hash

hash also known as Trzasquez is has as
his second

question, where is your new book? And I
have realized that in order to write
that introduction that still has to be
written, I'm going to have to take a day
off from work, at least one day off from

work, and just lock myself in a room and just sit down and dedicate that whole day to writing this introduction. I mean, all the the uh the essays are done. They're edited. They're formatted. is mainly all I got to do is just a few little finishing touches plus write the intro and my woman has to make a few illustrations including the the cover illustration which she also is is not being completely on the ball at the present time with regard to this. So it may be that I'm going to have to have a day off from work before I can write that introduction. And so it didn't happen in March.

Obviously, I think uh my next day off from work, my next paid holiday is going to be the 4th of July, Independence Day, but I probably not going to be writing an introduction on the 4th of July.

Okay. So, yeah, it's it's still it's it's mostly done, but I have to have like a a relatively prolonged period of time to just sit down and write this introduction. Because I mean, you have to sort of get into a a like get into the groove of it. You can't just work on it five minutes and and then set it down and then two days later work on it for 15 minutes and that kind of stuff. It's

it's just not going to work. So, finally, we're getting to the stuff that I forgot to include. And I think when I was cutting and pasting, I was doing it in such haste, such haste that I didn't even include the name of the person who asked this question. Although I think it is Xenithoid, which I'm typing now, Xenithoid.

Okay, so I'm just going to do to uh just go through this a little bit.

Okay, I think we're good. is hastily paste cut and pasted. But I think I I rectified the situation well enough that we can just we can just continue with this. So Xenithoid says, "Which

philosophers do you believe need to be read before one can jump around philosophical texts at will and expect to be able to understand what's going on?" I was going to read the world as will and representation but in the introduction Schopenhauer says you need to read Kant first in order to understand the book. Presumably Kant would say you should you should though read the philosophers that influenced him. Then they would say you need to read what came before them. This process could go all the way back to Thales and the rest of all the earliest major thinkers we know of. However, I doubt that even a

very small portion of the most engaged philosophical thinkers have read the entire corpus of Western philosophy, let alone all of Eastern philosophy. On top of that, this is made even more impossible by the fact that the lines between philosophy, poetry, literature, and scripture are not black and white. You've mentioned that somewhere in the sutras, it says that it's good to be well read, but everyone can only read so much. Okay. Well, I read Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* without having read Kant first. And um it is true that as a kind of appendix to the world as Will and Representation, Schopenhauer includes a kind of critique

of Kant that presumably can compensate for not reading Kant because Kant is notoriously very difficult to read. He's very dry. A lot of people, even if they try to read Kant, can't read Kant. I've never read an entire book written by Kant, but I did read Schopenhauer. But getting back to the main question here, which philosophers do you believe need to be read before one can jump around philosophical texts at will? Well, I mean, I was going to major in philosophy when I was in college, and it took two or three philosophy classes to cure me of that ambition because Western philosophy is

much more confusing and disorienting than eastern philosophy. Eastern philosophy for the most part is pretty much an agreement on the main points whereas western philosophy in order to make a name for yourself as a western philosopher you have to disagree with with everybody else. So it's like you got all these different conflicting points of view in western philosophy. So for me it helped me to sort of get grounded to start with eastern philosophy, start with like Buddhism, Hinduism, Daoism, that kind of thing, Mahayana Buddhism. And then after I got some maturity and had kind of a good grounding, had kind of my own idea of,

you know, what reality was all about, then I started, you know, sort of dipping my foot into some western philosophy. And of western philosophy, I think David Hume would be a good start. I mean, he was influenced by previous philosophers. He was he was one of the main people who influenced Kant, but I mean he kind of lays it down in a kind of an elementary way where I mean you don't really need to read his predecessors which would include like Barkley and a French cartesian named Malibbron were two of his two of his main influences I think but just read like don't even bother with his his

magnum opus that he wrote when he was
20s read like an inquiry into human
understanding which is a short book and
that's another important thing. I mean,
you don't want to just like as one of
your first readings in Western
philosophy just plunge into some
thousandpage long tome that um Hume's
inquiry concerning human understanding.
I think that's the title of it is it's
not a very thick book. It's like maybe
70 pages, something like that. And it's
it's it's well worth reading. Also, like
Spinoza's Ethics is also a relatively
short book. It's a classic and after you
read that, you know, Schopenhauer is fine
is his uh the world as will and

representation.

Um but it's it's good to have some kind of grounding. It's good to have sort of your own personal philosophy going before you start reading too much Western philosophy because they're going to be just going in all different directions. It can be very disorienting and confusing. So get some grounding first. For me that was largely through studying Eastern philosophy and also just through you know gradually getting older and getting a little bit more based in that way before you know starting to read like like Hume is just a radical. I

mean it's it's really refreshing to read Hume even though he wrote in the 1700s because he just lays waste. I mean, he was, you know, he would just take philosophical ideas that were just considered to be obviously true and just undermine them and point out that they're not obviously true at all. Like cause and effect, you know, it's like cause and effect was just assumed to be this obvious truth. Along comes David Hume and and really points out that we really don't know cause and effect. It's just a kind of logical inference. But yeah, I'd read like one of the first western philosophers I would read would be like David

Hume, maybe

Spinoza, then you know get into like

Schopenhauer or something. I'd avoid Hegel

like the plague Kant I mean if if you've

got the brain for it but he's very very

dry reading very abstract complicated in

his style.

uh maybe some of the

existentialists. I don't

know. So, I think I'm just going to move

on to the xenoid. Second

question, which is kind of a followup on

the first one. Is there any way to know

when reading philosophy gets to be too

much? Ideally, an enlightened sage

wouldn't read any philosophy because

they would no longer need it. The only philosophizing they would engage in would be listening to and then correcting the philosophical takes of their unenlightened questioners. Going with the atakawaga, they wouldn't even really be attached to any view, suspending judgment on everything. But as unenlightened worldlings, we all need some kind of world view in order to get through our lives. I would suspect that at a certain point reading the philosophy of others would provide diminishing returns because certain philosophical truths are already so useful that they can put you on the path to enlightenment such as the four noble

truths. Also, constantly filling your head with the thoughts of others may serve to choke out, bury or corrupt certain insights you may come to on your own. Something the Buddha and Nietzsche would agree on is that you need to act and that addiction to thought as smart as it may make you feel isn't a good thing. Okay. So again, we just it's the very first line that is the actual question. Is there any way to know when reading philosophy gets to be too much? Well, I mean, if it's it's not helping you anymore, then I think that would be a pretty good indication, like I mean, it's good to

continue exposing yourself to other points of view, even if you think you've got it figured out, because really, you don't. I mean, there's no like intellectual philosophy that is just going to contain ultimate truth.

So, anyone who thinks they know the truth, and as general rule, they don't. I mean, it might be good enough for you, but then it can just turn you into a kind of a like a a smug

dogmatist. And as the Atakawaga says, a dogmatist is very hard to guide because they think they've already got it.

So, is there any way to know when

reading philosophy gets to be too much?
I mean, if you're making progress
without it, I mean, it's not even really
necessary. I'm sure there have been
fully enlightened beings who haven't
read any philosophy, especially not any
western philosophy. They might have
heard some sutra being
recited, but I think it was who was it?
Huang. somebody got enlightened just
from they were just walking along and
they heard some monk reciting I think it
was the Diamond Sutra and just some some
verse that was being recited just was
exactly what they needed to hear and it
just caused this

click. But Zen especially would say, you know, it's probably the less philosophy you know the better. The less clutter you've got in your mind.

So I mean there have been enlightened beings though and this is kind of an important thing to realize and I think I might get to this a little later is that there have been very advanced beings who had very different philosophies. You know there have been very advanced beings who were like St. John of the Cross was a Roman Catholic who revered the Virgin Mary. His favorite book in the Bible was the Song of Songs. And then you've got, you know, very wise Buddhists, very wise Hindus,

you know, you name it. Just about any kind of spiritual system has had very advanced adepts in it. And they just believe all this other stuff and and it's really not that important. It's just superficial stuff. I mean, if it just helps to guide you in your practice, that's the important thing. It's never going to explain ultimate reality because ultimate reality cannot be put into words. The name that can be named is not the eternal name. The way that can be shown is not the eternal way. So yeah, philosophy in a way it's just mental exercise, a way of

strengthening the intellect. Um it like
some proficiency in logic is a good
detector. I mean, one of the
main advantages of it is not to help you
find the truth, but to help you weed out
obvious

So, something like David Hume,
who is just like a radical skeptic, I
mean, that's that's one reason I guess
why I think David Hume would be a good
intro to Western
philosophy, just because he's just sort
of like laying waste to the
philosophical landscape.

So yeah, I mean, let's see. Is there any
way to know when a reading philosophy
gets to be too much? Yeah, I mean, if

it's not helping you, then it's too much. And you should be able to judge whether you're getting more peace of mind or less peace of mind, whether you're getting closer, you whether you're becoming wiser or less wise.

Maybe becoming less wise might be harder to to gauge because you don't have the wisdom to realize that you're becoming less wise or some such. But if you have some sensitivity, some insight, you probably can get a feel as to whether reading this or that philosopher is like helping you to find like clarity and peace of mind. I mean, that's that's what it should be. I mean, philosophy

literally is love of wisdom. And if it's not helping you to be wiser, then it's a waste of your time at best. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is, can you give some examples of philosophers, Western or Eastern, that you think are underrated and deserve to be read by more people?

Man, yeah, I this is the first time I've really read this question.

It's not like I I I like work out some answer before I do the videos. Like a lot of time I'm just cutting and pasting blocks of text and then I then I get to reading sometimes for the first time

like now. Can you give some examples of philosophers western or eastern that you think are underrated and deserve to be read by more people? Well, like the Dign Naga, the Digg Naga school, I think Dharmmudarat was one of the main philosophers of the Daga school. It was uh a medieval Indian school of Buddhism that emphasized logic. That yeah, that that'd be well worth reading. I think uh I think an underrated western philosopher would be FH Bradley. I think FH Bradley was good. He he went with the um coherence theory of truth rather than the correspondence

theory of truth like most people do.

Like science scientism especially is based on the correspondence theory of truth that a statement is true if and only if it corresponds to some external matter of fact to some objective matter of fact. Whereas FH Bradley going with the coherence theory of truth says that a statement is true if and only if it is in harmony with every other statement that you have decided is true. If it just fits in with this free floating system of statements that are all considered to be true then it can be considered true also.

Um, I don't know. Leibniz's Monadology is another really short um a short

philosophical text that is is just kind of

mindblowing. It's just sort of like a mental exercise in getting your mind blown reading Leibniz's Monadology. I don't know how underrated he is though.

I mean, most people don't read Leibniz anymore, so I guess he's almost any philosopher is underrated nowadays.

Uh I can't really think of any other good examples

though Malab Branch maybe if you can find Malabbar somewhere. He was he had this idea that there's no such thing as force that you know it's all God. God is omnipotent. Sort of the way that the

Muslims see God as just he's all power belongs to God. All power is God's power because he is omnipotent. He's got all the power. And so when we see a car crashing into a wall, for example, it has no more momentum than just like the image of a car crashing into the image of a wall on a movie screen. And that the the seeming reality of the inertia and the the momentum and the force and all that is just God is just like imbuing that. But really it's it's only God that has that force that nothing else has any power at all. So it's stuff like that. I mean you it's good to have like a grounding in your own philosophy that you already have a kind of world

view that you feel comfortable with. You shouldn't be completely satisfied with it because it's not going to be perfect, but still you should get some kind of grounding in a kind of maturity or just, you know, accepting some philosophy that that makes good sense to you like like Buddhism for example before you start reading some of these weird western theories. Um Barkley is another is another good example. George Barkley who came up with the idea of immaterialism that I mean he's spent like most of his his philosophical genius pounding away at this one idea that you can't really know physical matter. All you can know

is

mind.

So I guess I I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to the next one. This is from Sedarta or Lohachita, copper mind. And Loha says, "Do you think the term dity

uh or ditika which is often translated as heretic carries the same connotations as the term heretic in Christianity or kafir in Islam? Many ancient Buddhist texts speak of the heretics. Is it simply referring to non

Buddhists or in a Buddhist country so to speak should they have fewer rights at least to participate in politics than Buddhists? Well, let's see the Yeah, in

in Burmese it's just called
dati. It's uh dia. Yeah, it's it's
generally a non Buddhist philosopher or
someone who teaches something that is
considered to be like pernicious wrong
view. It's it wouldn't be applied to
like a heretical Buddhist. So I don't
heresy is generally
like like somebody who belongs to a
religion who is teaching something
contrary to the orthodox teachings of
that religion. I think that would mainly
be a heretic. Anyone else like a non
someone who isn't even a member of that
religion would just be like an an
unbeliever. Maybe they could also be

called a heretic within the context of
you know the the other person's religion
the person who's judging him
but in generally in Buddhism dia is
applied to you know like a jiva like non
non Buddhist
philosophers I'm not even sure if it's
applied to like the vadic
philosophers is it be more like the
janes and a j because it's so forth. But
I'm not entirely sure about that one.
So, does it carry the same connotations
as the term heretic in Christianity or
kafir? I think it just means like a
teacher of another tradition. You know,
it's not quite as judgmental. It's it
can be interpreted as as judgmental like

heretic. But I think ultimately it just means like somebody who's belongs to a different tradition who's teaching something that is contrary or different from our tradition which is Buddhism. So is it simply referring to non Buddhists? Yeah, I think that term DT is pretty much exclusively used for non Buddhists.

So in a in a Buddhist country, should they have fewer rights at least to participate in politics? And well, it would depend on like the the constitution of the the country, I guess. Um, in a Buddhist country, should non Buddhists have the same rights? Um,

ideally, like from a liberal point of view, Yeah. I mean, like I don't know. It depends. it. I mean, it just depends on what the culture says, what the what the, you know, what the constitution is like.

Um, it's it's hard to say. Like in ancient Rome, you know, could someone who did not accept the the like the state religion, could they be involved in politics, you know, they refused to make offerings to to Capitoline Jove or that sort of thing? I mean, you you could have it worked out. I mean, if you're a very religiousbased nation that has like a state religion, that kind of thing, then

refusing to participate in the state religion, I mean, it could prohibit you from being involved in politics, involved in certain functions, I suppose. I don't think that um it's it would be wise to go to the extreme of like medieval Europe where if you did not belong to the state religion of Catholic Christianity that you should be just killed. I mean there are still people that believe in that sort of thing. But I mean it's really not for me to decide. I I do think it's good to have a diversity of cultures and a diversity of like government systems

just so that Darwin is still participating. You're you're still having like competition of these different systems so that the most effective system will come out on top. I mean, you should always have a certain diversity because you have a monopoly. Then, you know, you just have like a a monoculture, then I mean, you can wind up with like a really shitty system and and nothing to compete with it.

So, yeah, it just depends on on the culture, I guess. It's really not for me to decide. Although in a Buddhist country certainly you wouldn't be

putting to death people who are considered heretics or anything like that cuz that just goes against Buddhism. I mean the Buddha himself said that you shouldn't honor the teachers of other religions, you should like if you convert from Janism to Buddhism, for example, that you should still honor your Jane teach your previous Jane teachers that sort of thing. And like Ashoka, you know, the the uh the Buddhist emperor par excellence, you know, he was saying you just have respect for religious teachers and religious people. I mean, they're trying to do good. I mean, that's that's good.

It's better to have a religious person who believes something different from you than just to have some atheistic, materialistic, sociopathic kind of person who doesn't give a about right or wrong.

But I mean like the finer points like how the constitution is going to be worked out and you know how much you know how much you can deviate from you know the established religious point of view before you know you start having some kind of penalty that kind of thing. I mean it's not for me to say that different cultures are going to have different ideas about that sort of

thing. So let's

see. I think I answered that question

from Sedarta

Lohachita. It's actually more than one

question. In fact, there's like three

question marks in one question, which is

kind of a way of getting around the

three the limit of three questions,

which is not good. I mean, you should

count question marks. One question has

one question mark at the end of it. one

question does not have three or four

question marks unless you're being very

emphatic and have them all in a row then

it might be

okay. So anyways, Sedara Lohachita's

second

question is and do you think that

throughout history there have been

Buddhist rulers who have converted

people to the dharma through violence as

happened with Christianity or Islam?

Um maybe like in medieval Japan there

may have been persecutions against

Christians that kind of thing. Or like

in ancient and medieval Sri Lanka, maybe

even modern Sri Lanka, you may have had

Buddhist leaders who were like trying to

stamp out the Tamil, you know, the the

shyite Hindu Tamils once and for all,

that kind of thing.

I don't know if they're really trying to

convert them as just sort of eliminate

them from

society. Um, but I've never heard of

Buddhism being promagated by the sword.

I mean, in Islam that was fairly common

and in Christianity also that happened

quite a lot, especially earlier on. And

then also to some degree in the the

colonized sort of third world countries,

you know, like Sri Lanka under the

Portuguese. I mean the Portuguese were

just trying to stamp out Buddhism and

just force the people to convert to

Christianity. And then uh I guess

fortunately for Sri Lanka, the British

kind of took Sri Lanka away from the

Portuguese and were more

tolerant. Partly I suppose because the English are just less religious and didn't give much of a as to what religion the colonized people followed. sort of like the the Roman Empire was kind of like that too. You know, they were sort of masters of the world. And so, you know, they they gave unto Mammon instead of unto God. And so, they really didn't care all that much about what what religion people followed.

But I can't think of any Buddhist rulers who converted people to Dhama through violence other than maybe some some intolerant Buddhist king maybe in India or Sri Lanka or Japan or something. I

guess it wouldn't be kings in Japan. It would be more like damos in in like feudal Japan that would maybe persecute non Buddhists and then in a way desire not to get persecuted might persuade them to convert to Buddhism.

But I don't think there was any just wholesale promulgation of the religion by the sword as has happened with other religions.

So I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's third question which is I'm curious to know if you're aware of the destruction of the Buddhas of Bameyan by the Taliban a few months before 9/11 and the NATO invasion

of the country. Was there any kind of reaction in Burma or any other Buddhist country? And what do you think about that event? So I assume this is referring to, you know, back around 2020 where some of the largest Buddha images in the world carved into the sides of cliffs were dynamited by like Islamist fundamentalists because it's like idolatry and so forth. And I mean Islam, you're not even supposed to portray the human form in art. you're not supposed to have like a like a a sculpture or a painting of Muhammad definitely. So the some Burmese people heard about it and they were just sort of indignant, you know, clicking their

tongues and frowning, but I mean there's not much else you can do about it. So let's see. Is that the question? Did I answer the question already? Was there any kind of reaction in Burma or any other Buddhist country? And what do I think about that event? Yeah, I mean it's just intolerant fanatics just I mean some of the stuff that the Taliban and also ISIS other other like Muslim fundamentalist groups have done just destroying like priceless archaeological sites, you know, like ISIS destroyed the like the ruins of a number of ancient cities like the ancient city of

Palmyra that was a great capital at one time. you know, they just destroy it because it's it's pagan and idolatrous and all

that. So, I mean, it's just narrow-minded. It's just foolish in my opinion. But, um, I mean, with regard to the reaction to the Taliban blowing up the giant standing Buddhas in Afghanistan, I mean, again, it was just sort of indignant muttering and disapproval, but I mean, what the hell are Burmese people going to do about the Taliban?

just muttering disapproval and that's about

it. So I'm just going to move on to the

next question which is from seio of
action sepat

zeda and seio of action sepa's first
question is if we create our own

suffering and shouldn't blame others as
our karma made the conditions around us

then why do you blame leftists for

messing things up I don't see how it is

different than blaming any other group

and this question has just a wealth of

circumstance behind it with regard

to what has been going on on the Discord

server recently that there are a few

people on our Discord server that just

became like con

compulsive like Jew

bashers and I agree with a statement by Dave Chappelle who was a comedian but he said something that I think is true and wise. He says nothing ever nothing good ever came of any sentence that contains the phrase the

Jews. And there are some people on the Discord server that there's one in particular. He I mean I'm I'm saying I mean the purpose of this Discord server is not bashing

Jews. And he he he was just indignant at this. He's he's saying well I can't even talk about politics. I can't talk about politics without without blaming the Jews. And so it's like he's getting all like sniffy about it because it's like

I've just banned him from discussing politics or current events. And really, I mean, if people were just like making fun of Jews sometimes, I mean, I can appreciate that as much as any guy, you know, just making fun of anybody, making fun of Germans, making fun of Americans, even making making fun of anybody. I mean, that that should be fair game. I mean, there's there's no one ethnicity that you're not allowed to criticize unless it just becomes like this obsession where it becomes one of the predominant themes on a Buddhist server on Discord is just bashing Jews over and over and over and just just about any

room. You can go like the personal pictures room bashing Jews, the memes room of course, bashing Jews, like the lobby bashing Jews. And my woman was getting more irritated by this than I was. But still, it's like I mean there's a point I mean just like pointing out things in in like current affairs is one thing, but just compulsively bashing with obvious dosa some ethnicity or in in in a few cases women. I mean, it's it's just it's not healthy. It's not dharmic. It's not good. I mean, to be pointing out like how the left is driving the country in a certain direction, that sort of thing, or how it's like undermining Buddhism in

the West, you know, corrupting it almost beyond recognition, that sort of thing.

I mean, that's fine. I mean, that's one of the reasons why I started my second blog with politically incorrect dharma was just putting forth things that leftists don't like very much, but but are nevertheless true and important. I mean, that was one of the main themes of my second blog, which is still still on the internet for whatever reasons.

So I mean it's it's not so much just making observations or making fun of somebody or criticizing somebody. It's just when it becomes tinged with hatred just over just pounding away at it again

and again just on a daily basis then no that is dysfunctional that is pathological.

So I mean blaming others I mean it is true that we are creating the world we live in. We are creating a world that has Islamist terrorism. We are creating a world that has neoarxists trying to undermine western civilization. And a lot of those western leftists are Jewish. But instead of just discussing, you know, like an ideology, it's like you got to drag this ethnicity into it and just blame the ethnicity. In fact, this guy who said he couldn't discuss politics without without blaming the Jews, he actually said like a month or

two ago

that he would without hesitation

genocide the entire Hebrew race without

hesitation on a Buddhist server. He kind

of backed away from that. But still I

mean and I am I am happy to to say that

he was not a Buddhist and he was not

American. So maggotards cannot be blamed

for

this. He was a European. I won't say

what

country and uh he seems to have been uh

more a Christian than anything else.

In fact, he already quit the group once

because people were pushing back on his

assertions that Jesus of Nazareth was a

fully enlightened being. And just people being skeptical of that caused him to rage quit or just quit in indignation. And he quit again after I really just said, "Look, the purpose of this server is not bashing Hebrews."

So I guess getting back to the question here, if we create our own suffering and shouldn't blame others as our karma made the conditions around us. I mean you can still make observations on the conditions around us. Then why do you blame leftists for messing things up? Well, I'm just I mean in a way it's not even blaming. It's just like making observations.

And you can make observations if I mean

when it the thing is that when the
observations are tinged with
hatred or any kind of
dosa then to that extent it is unhealthy
and

unharmic. I mean even the Buddha could
make observations about a political
scene and how it's healthy or unhealthy
that that's really not the issue. The
issue is just like obsessive compulsive
bashing of an entire ethnicity or an
entire
demographic.

So, so even the word blame in a way is
kind of a loaded term.

But I have pointed

out before elsewhere I guess that a lot of the arguments that are used by people blaming the Jews for all the badness in society, I mean it's it's not so different from feminists blaming men. I mean obviously it's men who created Western civilization. So most of the bad stuff in Western civilization is the fault of men. And all you have to do is just emphasize the the bad stuff. There you go. Men are responsible for all this bad stuff. You know, it's the same kind of argumentation or brown people just blaming whitey for all the bad stuff in society.

Again, society, Western civilization was

created by white people. Therefore, white people are largely responsible for the negative aspects of Western civilization. and then you just conveniently ignore everything else. So blaming the Jews is similar to that. I mean, you could come up with all these valid arguments just like a feminist can come up with all these valid arguments about how men are the the main instigators of wars and and there mass deaths of violence and so forth. Yeah. It ignores the good stuff that that the men have done creating the entire civilization for the most part. So it's not so much a matter of

what you talk about. It's just like I mean is it just dripping with venom or not? I mean is it just like this compulsive bashing at one group or another group?

So, I mean, occasional jokes about Jewish people, occasional memes. I mean, that has been fair game from the beginning up until very recently where there's starting to be push back where I'm saying, you know, this is just going to have to stop. This is not the main purpose. This is not a predominant theme of this server. It was never intended to be. And then people just start increasing the amount of of this kind of stuff just as a way of pushing back.

I mean you just got to draw the line somewhere. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is Siovakan Sipad Zidna's second question which is what do you make of Nagarjuna talking about Amitaba Buddha in his letter to a friend and Vazu Bandu following his brother Asanga to become Mahayana after confirming the truth of Amitaba's pure land despite writing probably the most famous commentary along with his brother's commentary in the Buddhist tradition about the Abid Dharmmas.

is

well okay this is kind of a complicated

question.

first is uh I mean how do you explain some of the like higher profile wiser Mahayana philosophers endorsing pure land Buddhism and the existence of essentially a mythological space Buddha called Amitaba who was never mentioned in the early texts that pure land Buddhism arose hundreds of years after the time of the Buddha. It rose strangely relatively early on in the development of Mahayana. But still it was hundreds of years after the time of the Buddha. And so Nagarjuna allegedly endorsed the the veneration of Amitaba Buddha. Again never mentioned in the earliest texts. and then a bazu bondu and a sanga

according to sea of action sepa they uh
converted to mahayana after confirming
the truth of Amitaba's pure
land so I guess the main question is how
can a wise Buddhist adopt pure land
Buddhism that seems to be the
question

and I I was sort of hinted at this
earlier on and I've I've made numerous
statements along these lines in various
videos. You got St. John of the Cross
who may have been an
arant if Christians can become arants. I
mean he obviously was a master of Janna.
He was a meditation master this hands
down just without question St. John of

the Cross, San Juan de la Cruz, and he
venerated the Virgin Mary who was a
devout Roman Catholic. The Song of Songs
was his favorite part of the entire
Bible, which if you read it, it's it's
runchy erotic love poetry that has been
sort of retconed into some sort of
spiritual
allegory, but in all likelihood,
originally it was just sort of sexy love
poetry.

So he was like an arant but yet he
believed like all this Christian dogma
and the Virgin Mary and he thought the
Virgin Mary was an arant. He thought
King David was an arant despite Beth
Sheeba

gate. He thought probably thought St.

Paul was an

Araant or at least had reached the level
of

perfection in which they no longer have
any self-will. They are just vehicles of
God.

So then let's set aside Christianity and
go to Hinduism where you've got two of
the the greatest Hindu saints of the
20th century. Nim Kuroli Baba up there
on the altar who was a devotee of Hanuman
the monkey god and then you had Ramana
Maharshi living in southern India who
was a devotee of a hill called
Arunachala. His best friend was a cow.

So I mean the point is I mean you can be fully enlightened and then the external belief system imposed upon you by your culture can be just utterly absurd and it doesn't matter. I am not the sort of person who thinks that an enlightened being can't have wrong view that the view at the intellectual level at a certain stage just becomes irrelevant that that's just cultural stuff just nature taking its course and you have transcended that it's not like you have found the right view within a samsaric context because within a samsaric context there is no perfectly right view and so all these different sages and saints, they can be very highly advanced

and at the same time still believe in some of the most absurd nonsense or at least they'll give lip service to it. You know, they'll just outwardly they will appear to believe it even though like inwardly they have transcended all these beliefs. They're no longer identified with the meat puppet who is professing this or that.

So I do consider pure land Buddhism to be one of the most egregious corruptions of dharma to ever to appear in Buddhism. In to some to some extent pure land Buddhism teaches the exact opposite of what the original founder of Buddhism God Buddha was teaching.

But still, you can have wise philosophers, even possibly enlightened ones, great sages, who are just sort of, you know, they're they're sort of like cultural chameleons or whatever. They are just enlightened within the context of whatever kind of unenlightenment their culture is following. St. John of the cross in Spain, Nim Krolli Baba and Ramana Maharshi in 20th century India and get lots of examples although those are three of my favorites and I mean they were like very highly advanced spiritually while at the same time they would

endorse positions or ideas that I mean
uh like a an American or a Westerner
capable of critical thought would just
dismiss as absurd just
immediately. But religion is strange in
that I mean religion is is almost like a
kind of insanity where you can believe
anything. Politics is becoming that way
too in the west. It's becoming like the
new religion.

It's just there's something about the
human mind that can believe
anything. It's
weird. So

anyways, I hope I answered Sioat Zena's
second question there because I'm moving

on to number

three and that is what is the difference between Vajraana Buddhism, Third Wheel Buddhism and Tantric Buddhism? They all seem somewhat related, but I want to know what nuances exactly differentiates these. Well, you might as well throw in mantraana. Like some people distinguish vajraana from mantraana, too. But I mean, I'm no authority on this. I'm not I mean, I'm not exactly sure what third wheel Buddhism is. I'm not sure that I've really ever like looked into third wheel Buddhism. I don't even know what that is.

Tandric Buddhism and Vajriana that there's a lot of overlap. Some people

would lump them together and then some
like

specialists would say, "Oh, no. They're
they're quite quite

distinct." But I mean, I personally

would lump them together because I'm not

a Vajriana Buddhist. I'm not a Tibetan

Buddhist. I've never really taken it

very seriously. Have read some Tibetan

texts. Some Tibetan texts like the

Tibetan book of the great liberation are

extremely profound, but still I mean I'm

too much of a modern westerner, too

capable of critical thought and and just

too skeptical in general to just reject

Western Christianity and then adopt

something else that is equally devoid of any kind of grounding in like rational objectivity.

So, if I'm going to be a Buddhist, I'm going to be an out the founder of Buddhism originally taught. Get as close to that as I can and accept that that stuff that's obviously cooked up in later centuries. I

just just don't have any use for it. I mean it might be interesting to study as like an anthropological study or just I mean sure there can be wisdom arising from some wise teacher even though he's not like strictly adhering to what the Buddha taught or strictly adhering to what Jesus of Nazareth taught or

strictly adhering to what the the
reishes who composed or who channeled
the vadas

taught. But anyways, getting back to
this question, I really am not an
authority on Tibetan Buddhism. And I
would consider Vajriana and Tric
Buddhism to be essentially the same.

Tantric Buddhism began in India. It may
be Vajriana is more of a like a Tibetan
version of Tantric Buddhism, but I I'm
really not sure even of that. And third
wheel Buddhism, I have no

idea. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. And this is the last
question. Boom. It just it just hit me.

So this this is the last question. It's from Fred. And Fred says, "Would Aurans be continually immersed in a neutral feeling?" And um because Fred is from New Zealand and um maybe doesn't have a complete mastery of the English language,

um it it wouldn't be immersed. It would be

immersed. Like a plant that is immersed is sticking up out of the water or on dry land whereas a plant that is immersed is in the water. I know that because I've been studying aquarium plants

lately. So would be continually immersed in a neutral feeling? I don't think so.

I mean, even an arant would still be able to feel pleasure and pain. It's just that they wouldn't identify with it anymore. I mean, they just it would just be

like an an image in front of a mirror or light going through a a clear pane of glass, you know? It's just there and then it's not there anymore. And they have no attachment to it at all. No preferences. And so they're not making new karma through like trying to modify it, like putting up barriers against it, pushing back against it, or trying to pull in more of it through through attraction, anything like that. It's

just whatever goes through goes through.
They're not making any more karma. So
pleasure goes through that's fine. Pain
goes through that's fine. Um so in a way
kind of you could call it like
up a kind of neutral feeling but really
it's there is pleasure and pain. It's
just that they have transcended any kind
of attraction or aversion for
it in theory.

So you could say that Aurhan still feel
are still capable of feeling pleasure
and pain, but the fact that they have
transcended it and make no preferences
and no distinctions with regard to it
kind of turns it into a neutral feeling
from an enlightened point of view,

whatever that

is. And so that's it. And I really hope that that one part towards the middle where I'm trying to cut and paste the the questions that I forgot to cut and paste before starting the video. Um, it's going to be interesting to see how that works out because I really don't like editing these videos. I just do it all in one take. I'm like the Ed Wood of Dhamma video makers.

So, I guess that's it. And so if you have any questions about stuff that you think I can answer, I'm really no authority on Tibetan Buddhism by the

way. But if you think I can answer a question about philosophy, you know, Buddhism, especially early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, you know, I know quite a lot about Terravada Buddhism, even though like I pointed out earlier, u I don't have like a a catalog of all the different sutas and their their topics that I can just bring up at will. like a lot of phenomenal Burmese scholar seats can do. It is just amazing to see a Burmese scholar Seattle giving a talk where he is just like reciting from this suta, reciting from that suda, giving entire blocks of the original poly and so forth. He's not looking at any notes at all. It's just

he's just memorized all this stuff. Very scholarly are Burmese seats. partly because the Burmese are very dogmatic. But I'm not even answering questions anymore. I'm just I'm just doing the spiel at the end where if you think I can answer a question, feel free to ask no more than three questions per person, please. And count the question marks. Just because you've got like one paragraph doesn't mean that that one paragraph is one question. There might be three or four question marks in that one question, which makes it three or four questions.

And aside from that, I mean, like and

subscribe if you haven't done so
already, and be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

143. I am your host Ponyo Basa. I'm trying to get in the middle of the camera here. And this is my beverage. Get that in the middle. Right. Right. Kind of right in there.

So, we've got quite a few questions.

And those of you who are not mathematicians may have jumped to the conclusion that 143 is a prime number, but it is not a prime number because it is in fact $11 \times$

13. So it may be a while before we get

to another prime number

Q&A. And I should just dive right into

this because we got lots of questions.

And I'm a little bit tired today. Partly

because I got up this early afternoon,

late morning. I don't remember exactly

when I got up. Rested a little bit. Had

a couple cups of coffee and then

immediately went out and started like

mowing lawns and digging holes. We

planted a paper birch tree in the

backyard today and just started doing

chores before I even ate anything. And

now I am somewhat fatigued. Also, when I

finally did eat something, it included

bacon, which may have lowered my

vibrational rate somewhat. So, please

bear that in mind. If if I answer a question incorrectly or some such, blame the

bacon. And now, let's just commence to uh answering questions here. And the first question is from

Michael. And I we got a lot of long questions this time. We got numerous essay questions in this Q&A for some for some reason. Probably random

chance. At least statistically we can we can just call it random chance. Anyway,

Michael says, "I've been listening to your excellent Q&As's for some time. As a Buddhist, there's an interesting dichotomy that no one I have asked can

resolve. So perhaps you would like to.

In the sutas, there is frequent

reference to incalculable

eons. And I really need to wipe these

glasses. When I was weed eating today,

it was like all kinds of derbases flying

up. It's like pieces of like mutilated

dandelions and like soil. This kind of

stuff is flying up and hitting me in the

just pretty much all over my body.

I'm I apologize to Michael for

interrupting myself in the middle of

reading his question. I'll just start

again. Michael says, "I've been

listening to your excellent Q&As for

some time. As a Buddhist, there's an

interesting dichotomy that no one I have

asked can resolve. So perhaps you would like to. In the sutas, there is frequent reference to incalculable eons." in regard to the time that sentient beings have been wandering in samsara. The Buddha is careful to say incalculable and not to say that previous lives are infinite. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have pointed out that we all would have had to achieve liberation already since we could not have lived infinite lives and not have achieved liberation. The only way that past lives could be infinite and yet to explain why we still remain in bondage is that

liberation is reversible. That somehow we attain liberation and are enticed back into samsara over and over again. This would be a sort of Buddhist heresy as one of the qualities of liberation is that it is taught to be nonreversible. So to avoid these logical snares, the Buddha did not say that past lives are infinite. However, by not saying that previous lives are infinite, then this implies that there is a beginning point even if Buddha's omniscience was unable to pinpoint it. This in turn implies one of two possibilities.

One, our personal experience of samsara may have started when the conscious

element separated from the godhead as taught in vanta. And two, the conscious element was created by some sort of creator divinity. In either case, whether past lives are infinite or finite, there are serious difficulties that I'm unable to reconcile with Buddhist doctrine because the dichotomy seems a little prickly. I didn't wish to post it on a public forum and perhaps cast doubt into the minds of practicing Buddhists. But you are clearly steady and well seasoned, so to speak. So, by asking this question directly, I sincerely hope that it doesn't pose any problems for you. Personally, I know

that rebirth is as natural as apple pie and supported by a lot of evidence. Dr. Ian Stevenson's, for example. In any case, I'd be very grateful if you could give me your thoughts when your time allows. Best wishes and thank you for your insightful videos. Okay. Actually, while reading this, I recall that this is uh may not have been intended for a Q&A video. I think he was asking me personally because he thought it was kind of an embarrassing question like for devout Buddhists or something. Um, so this was like a personal message, but it's fair game. You know, I'm I'm not particularly squeamish with regard to questions that are questioning

uh like basic Buddhism. And there's a lot to unpack here. He Michael does make some assumptions that I consider to be unwarranted. For example, let's see a dicho interesting dichotomy. A dichotomy means a choice between two possibilities. And I I I don't really see the dichotomy here other than let's see here in the sutas is frequent reference to incalculable eons in regard to the time that sentient beings have been wandering. You see the Buddha is careful to say incalculable and not say previous lives are infinite. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have

pointed out they all would have had to achieve liberation already. Well, he Michael here is secondguing the psychology of a sama Buddha. Michael is assuming that he knows why the Buddha said incalculable eons. But I doubt that his explanation is is the correct one. Let's see. This is because he knew that by saying infinite his detractors at the time would have pointed out that we all would have had to achieve liberation already. But I mean most of his detractors went along with pretty much the same idea. Like the brahinss they were pretty much getting on board the reincarnation train by the time of the Buddha. The James also the Aivacas

thought that you had a limited number of
lives. So there would have to be a
first one. So I'm not exactly sure where
the Aivacas

um thought that the first life came
from. I'm not sure about that. It would
have been a very crude primitive kind of
life

possibly arising organically as a kind
of crystal or plant some some primitive
like algae or something. I'm not sure
about

that. But let's continue picking through
this. Let's see. The only way that past
lives could be infinite and yet to
explain why we Yeah. Well, getting back

to this part, his detractors would say we would have all to achieve liberation already. Not really. Because in ancient India, there wasn't really advanced logic or mathematics, that kind of thing. And a lot of the people were going with the same assumptions that that Samsara is a beginningless. And it may be that the Buddha just said incalculable eons just incalculable just because he wasn't going to make an assertion one way or the other. Like in the atikawaga I mean the Buddha says you know you're do not make assertions you're better off not making assertions like the origin of the world he just

refuse to answer it. That sort of thing.
So incalculable eon just means if there
is a beginning it is unknown. It's
just it's just way out there.
It is beyond
reckoning. So the only way that past
lives could be infinite and yet to
explain
um why we still remain in bondage is
that liberation is reversible. That is
not the only possible explanation. For
example, you could also have a first
life like I just mentioned. The Aivas
believed that you have a limited number
of lives when you get to I can't
remember what it is. It's

like und 184,000 or something like that.

I can't remember

now. Um, you know, it's like there had to be a first one. And it could be that Buddhism could accept a similar point of view where the karmic stream is just starting off. And I' I've talked about this a few times in previous Q&A that this one weird book that I read as a young monk called Seth

Speaks. Um it's got two possible ways that you could have like new karmic streams added to the cosmos, added to samsara. One is that a cosmic stream can split. So you could have like this co karmic I say cosmic stream karma. you've got karma as a kind of momentum of

mental states that that could like
diverge. There could be like a little
branch splitting off, then it's it's not
orthodox Buddhism, but it is a
possibility that I don't know how a
Buddhist could disprove it other than
just appeals to
authority. And another one is that in
that another way of of creating new
beings is like in in this book set
speaks he's talking about how in your
dreams you may dream about someone who
never existed. You may dream you just
create some being in your dream and then
you have sort of brought this being into
existence and they continue to live this

shadowy wispy

semi-existence outside of your dream.

You've just kind of, you know, they've got like this shadowy dream realm kind of a thing that they're living in and it's just they start their evolution into more and more concrete, substantial, more conscious kind of beings.

So the idea that you can become unenlightened again after you become enlightened. I mean even the ata waga which is like the the largest chunk of really primordial archaic kind of Buddhism in my opinion denies that once you become enlightened you can become unenlightened

again. So let's see here.

So to avoid these logical snares, the Buddha did not say that past lives are infinite. However, by not saying that previous lives are infinite, then this implies that there is a beginning point.

Yeah, that's possible. Even if the Buddha's omniscience was unable to pinpoint it, well, he wouldn't have been omniscient if he couldn't have pinpointed

it. If he was really omniscient and there was a beginning, then he would have if he wanted to know what the beginning was, he probably would have known it.

But the Buddha's omniscience is itself

kind of kind of debatable I think. So this in turn implies one of two possibilities and I consider this to be a false dichotomy. The these two possibilities are not comprehensive. So our personal experience of sorrow may have started when the conscious element separated from the godhead and then the conscious element was creed by some sort of creator divinity. So, Michael here, that is his name, right? Let's scroll up here. Yeah, Michael here says, "The only two possibilities of, you know, explaining where beings come from is capital G." Both of them, both the only two

alternatives are there is a God, which I don't I just don't see it and I'm not buying it. For example, the two possibilities I just mentioned, which I derived from a strange book called Seth Speaks, no mention of a capital G God. So, let's see. In either case, whether past lives are infinite or finite, there are serious difficulties on unable to reconcile with Buddhist doctrine because the dichotomy seems a little prickly. And I'm not even sure what the dichotomy is whether it's just the dichotomy of infinite past lives in which case it's it's like I've pointed out with regard

to the like the bad logic of taking
bodhicattva vows the bodhicattva vows I
vow to liberate all beings when I mean
there's already been an infinite amount
of time and we still have an infinite
number of unenlightened suffering ing
beings within a samsara
context. So it's just taking these
bodhic sattva vows is pretty much just
like imprisoning yourself in
samsara forever
presumably. Let's see. But I think I
might have just uh fallen off the track
here. Let's
see. The economy seems a little prickly.
I didn't wish to post in a public forum.
perhaps cast doubt into the minds of

practicing Buddhists. Well, my
explanation of where samsara comes from
is as always the simile of the block of
marble. So, you've got like infinite
formless
consciousness that you can I mean that
would be like the vdanist god
except I mean when it's infinite and
formless it's just off the scale. It
cannot be perceived. It's near Brahman.
It's not just God. It's inconceivable
ultimate reality that is just off the
scale. But let's get back to the block
of marble. Sizeless, you know, just
because there's nothing around it to
compare it with. So, it's just call it

sizeless for convenience. Within that block of marble is every single possible statue that could ever exist. An infinite number of impossible statues are in there, too. And they're really there in a sense. They're potentially, virtually, conditionally, already there. An infinite number of these statues all superimposed upon each other just within this block of marble. And some of those statues become so complex that they become reflexive. They become self-aware and delusional because the it's it's an imperfect kind of awareness.

So they think they are separate from everything else when ultimately they are not. So I mean if you want to call that

like a vdanist kind of a god but the Buddhists have always been or generally been very careful about not reifying the absolute because it is totally off the scale. Anything you can say about it is ultimately going to be invalid.

So, I guess I kind of answered the question. I'm not even sure. I mean, there was I don't even know if there's even a question mark in here, but he did request I respond to this. And I mean, I don't think that the only possible explanations for the existence of beings in this cosmos are God

But I mean if you want to be really abstract in a kind of vdanist manner,

you want infinite formless consciousness
that is just completely off the scale
and cannot be
perceived. You want to call that
God, fine. Although orthodox Buddhism
avoids that by just not reifying the
absolute other than just calling it
Nirvana and not saying it's like this or
it's like that. It's just the goal. It's
the absolute, you know, the absolute
goal
anyway, the end of delusion and
suffering.

[Music]

So, yeah, I guess that's enough time. I
mean, we we do have kind of a lot of
questions

here and there was a lot to pick through on this one. So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ryalder. And Ryalder says, "Are you familiar with the recently discovered underground structures found via imaging below Giza pyramids?" And yeah, I am familiar. I've watched a number of um a number of videos mostly by like common sense

archaeologists who are just pointing out that these Italian archaeologists or whatever whatever kind of Italians they were are making really grandiose pretty much unfounded claims. They've found some sort of something

using a kind of under like
imaging like satellite imaging. And the
satellite imaging can't even penetrate
more than just a number of inches below
the surface. But they've got some kind
of gimmick where they're projecting down
and there there's like these they're
like well shafts going down with some
kind of spiral structures and then
there's like these huge blocks down
below. Some people are calling it an
underground city and so forth. And the
common sense archaeologists are pointing
out that most of that is underwater and
has been underwater since prehistoric
times. the just the water level is just
most of it would be underwater. Also, it

would be a really bad place to make some kind of underground city or any kind of underground structures of that scale simply because the the limestone, the bedrock there is full of fissures and cracks and irregularities and so forth. And it could be that this imaging is just finding underground like like spaces

But I would be willing to make the statement that if there really are these structures that have been found to being imaging, you know, these these huge like well shafts with the spiral things going down and the huge blocks underneath that were artificially made made by humans or

aliens or whatever, then I will eat a hat. I will eat a hat on this video or on an upcoming video because I'm not going to sit around until they do that because this video would become prohibitively

long. However, even though somebody may choose the hat, I do get to choose the accompanying beverage.

So with regard to these underground structures supposedly allegedly found being satellite imaging that like in reality can't penetrate more than a number of inches below the surface. Um it's just it's just I mean if you look at the original data it's just kind of

blurry like staticky looking you

know it doesn't look like the stuff that they're saying it is. I mean, you could sort of use like what do you call it?

Matrixing where you see what you want to see and you can kind of add add in the missing details and so forth. But in all likelihood, I think it is

just like

noise in the

imaging and I don't think those structures are really there.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Righter's second question, which is, have you been to the Bass the Bass Pro Shop

Pyramid? No, I don't even know where it is. I don't think it's around here.

There is some place that's not too far from here that I would like to go to sometime in my life, and that is there allegedly is a lifesize replica of the Parthnonon in Nashville, Tennessee.

And I would like to see a lifesized, you know, like well not life-size but a fullscale replica of the Parthnonon now like before like the roof got blown off.

I guess it was during the Napoleonic Wars or the Greek war for independence or something that the Parthnonon was being used as an am like an ammo dump and it took a direct hit and it just blew the whole roof off of it.

So, I think the one in the one in uh
Nashville is probably in better
shape. So, yeah, the Bass Pro Shop
Pyramid, I doubt that it it would rival
any of the great pyramids of Egypt. It's
It's really not that famous. It's not on
the list of wonders of the world or
anything like
that. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Scoladin
or Sculadine.

And Scaladin or Scooladine says, "Out of
everything you have ever read, who was
the most exceptional at ad homonym
attacks or delivered an ad homonym
attack that resonated with people so

much that it defined their career." And then in uh his characteristic bullet point says like Freud who got away with calling everyone a [_]

Um, yeah, I don't think Freud was necessarily making an ad homonym attack against like pretty much the entire human race or at least

Europeans. And when I read this, I mean, I was trying to think of someone who's really good at ad homonym attacks.

Um, I mean, Donald Trump, he's he's pretty much of a an expert at making ad hominem attacks, but the first person that came to mind was Arthur Schopenhauer, and his ad hominem attacks were mainly directed at one person, and that was

Hegel. In fact, I've been told that Schopenhau coined new words in the German language just for bashing Hegel. If you look up Hegel in the index to the world as will and representation by Schopenhau, every single reference to Hegel is bashing the man. Hey Mc Schopenhau just hated Hegel's guts and he made no secret of that. So, I don't think the ad hominem attacks really defined Trump's or Schopenhau's careers, but both of them uh have indulged in ad hominem attacks and they're they're both famous and both were relatively successful, I guess. So, it wasn't a total

mistake. And I'm just going to move on to Scaladin or Skooladine's second question, which is, is there a way to prove false or true ultimate value judgments? No. I mean, if it's a value judgment, then it's just a like a personal

choice. I don't know how you could prove false or true. I I don't even know what an ultimate value judgment would be. I mean, once you get to the ultimate level, there's no more value judgments, I'm pretty sure.

Anyways, his his bullet point is I prefer, I like, I wish. Yeah. I

mean, how to prove false or true? An

ultimate value judgment. I really I think value judgments are just unprovable. I mean, unless it's the value judgment is I like dark chocolate better than milk chocolate. I mean, how would you prove that, you I mean, even that wouldn't be an ultimate. Ultimately, I prefer dark chocolate to milk chocolate. Now, it the question doesn't really make good sense to me. But value judgments, as a general rule, are ultimately objectively neither true nor false. They're just matters of preference and opinion.

So, I guess I'll just move on to

Scaladin's third question here, which is, would you kindly explain the effects of the Fukushima meltdown on the marine ecosystem of the Pacific Northwest?

Well, the thing is, I was living in Burma when the Fukushima meltdown happened. And uh I mean, I was a monk at the time. I was no longer really a professional fisheries biologist or anything.

So, I would just assume that there would be measurable amounts of radioactivity. Still relatively no low. Not that you're going to have like mutant monster fish swimming around in Puget Sound, anything like that, but I would assume that there's, you know,

like slight increase in radio activity
on the the Pacific coast of the Pacific
Northwest as a result of the nuclear
meltdown that happened in Japan back I
don't even remember what year it was. I
was living in Burma at the
time.

So yeah, it would just be a slight
increase in ionizing radiation that
might very slightly increase the
mutation rate

of organic like organic
life. But I don't think there was
anything catastrophic that occurred.

Maybe off the coast of Japan, you might
have some like bikini atole kind of

stuff going on, but I don't think so on the coast of the Pacific Northwest. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Athena Sigil. And Athena Sigil says, "Star Trek or Star Wars or dot dot dot dot dot Babylon 5? I know you read science fiction. Gan Wolf has been mentioned before, but do you follow mainstream cinematic and TV science fiction? Well, this is kind of two questions, isn't it? The first question is, Star Trek or Star Wars or dot dot dot dot dot Babylon 5. I never saw a single episode of Babylon 5. Um, I guess that's like a spin-off of of Star Trek, but let's see. with regard to Star

Trek or Star Wars.

Um gosh, I think I'd prefer Star Trek partly because it was somewhat better science fiction. I mean, I'm a science fiction snob and so stuff that's not supposed to happen like like spaceships roaring through vacuum like you see in Star Star Wars. I mean, it just kind of ruins it. Although the very first Star Wars episode had at least some relatively good-looking aliens like in the the like the bar scene where it's like this rough bar with all these weird aliens there. Whereas Star Trek I have to there were very few Star Trek aliens that did not look like humans speaking

English with an American accent. I mean that's just pathetic. And TV science fiction as a general rule is lame. It's very difficult to find any kind of TV science fiction that really would satisfy a science fiction snob like myself. Maybe like something like cyberpunk, like some kind of cyberpunk dystopia movie. um you know that wouldn't require space aliens and so forth that look like people.

So let's see here. I had this thought when was the middle of that sentence and I'm thinking well I get to the end of the sentence and I'll I'll mention it

and now I've forgotten what it was. But yeah, TV science fiction is generally pretty lame. movie science fiction is better. Although recently any kind of science fiction movie, I mean, you're going to have to wade through all the like feminist propaganda, you know, like some good movies like um what is it? Oh, it's got what's his name in it? You know, what's his name? Tom Cruz. What is it? Uh oh, it's it's a really good movie. Return of return to to tomorrow. No, something like that. Should have looked I should look this stuff up. I should be prepared. But um it has like good aliens in it and the

aliens don't look like people at all.

They don't think like people. They don't talk English.

Um, but I mean it's like the standard, you know, the toughest, bravest, strongest person in the entire movie is a beautiful young woman. You know, that's just almost unavoidable. The Matrix, the first Matrix movie, excellent science fiction in my opinion, even though you've got like why the the the computers, why the machines have got humans using them as batteries and so forth. That's not good science. Not good science fiction. Um, The Walking Dead. I guess that would qualify as science fiction.

I'm, as a science fiction snob, I'm just picking it apart. It's like these people are dead, you know? It's like their body shouldn't work, but yet they're like walking around in some ways. They're they're as strong as they were before. their body in some ways works as well as it did before even though it's like not metabolizing. I mean, it's just the body is dead. It's rotting.

So, with regard to The Walking Dead, you just pretty much have to turn that into something supernatural that there's no way any kind of virus could cause zombies along the lines of The Walking Dead just

because I mean, they'd starve to death.
You know, they can't violate the laws of
of like
thermodynamics, you know, they can't
violate the law of conservation of mass
or conservation of energy. I mean,
eventually, I mean, their body is just
broken. and they are
dead. Their heart doesn't work anymore.
You can shoot them through the heart.
They're just fine. So, they have no
circulation going on. They couldn't I
mean, they just it just wouldn't
work. But movie science fiction does
tend to be better than than c TV science
fiction. like space 1999, the moon gets
knocked loose from its orbit and then

like every week they're they're coming
across some other some new kind of alien
life just I mean they wouldn't even have
gotten out of the solar
system in Star Wars. It's let's get back
to Star Wars. It's like like the
Enterprise and some other spaceship
alien spaceship Klingan Romulan human
whatever they meet in outer space.
They're both of them are right side up.
Both of them have the same orientation
towards each other. There's no up or
down in space. It was like every once in
a while, one of them would be sideways
or upside down or
something. So, I noticed this [_] I

mean, I inherited it from my father. My mother used to say my father could just ruin a movie. She'd be really getting into this movie. And my father would sit there and say, "They didn't have guns like that in those days."

See, because it's like I inherited a [_] detector from my father's side of the family.

So, see, do I follow mainstream cinematic and TV science fiction? I haven't I've kind of pretty much stopped watching movies like over the past year or more, but I did watch uh the the Dune sequel. I watched both Dune movies.

Excellent. And one of the reasons why

the Dune movies are excellent is because they're based on a story written by a genuine science fiction author, a really good genuine science fiction author.

Whereas some of these science fiction TV shows like, you know, like Star or like Star Trek, I mean, they're written by just like

professional professional just script writers. They might be doing some kind of

romance se series or something on

Tuesdays and Wednesdays and then they're doing Star Trek Thursdays and Fridays and it's just they people that really are not good at science fiction are

writing some of the screenplays for these shows whereas movies may have like or like be based on like some real science fiction movie or like a novel or something. So, I guess I've had enough of a mini

rant on science fiction movies and and and TV shows. So, I'm just going to move on to Athena Sigil's next question. And I do I have to admit that it's like the the percentage of dharma questions seems to have been decreasing drastically lately since a lot of these questions have really nothing to do with with dharma or science or like um even philosophy

really. So anyways, Athena Sigil does

kind of bring a little bit of Dharma into this with his next question which is and is there any Buddhist science fiction out there? I've read Lord of Light by Roger Zelazny which has elements of Hinduism and Buddhism plus David Zindell's profoundly amazing neverness and it's three follow-up novels called a Requiem for Homo sapiens which is very eastern philosophically. Anyone else have suggestions in the chat? So maybe this wasn't so much a question for me except for the first question mark was apparently not applied to the chat but possibly to me

personally. Is there any Buddhist science fiction out there?

Um not that I'm aware of. Um I have heard about Lord of Light by Roger Zelazny and that's already mentioned so I can't really bring that one up because it would be obviously just copying the person who asked the question.

So yeah, I mean it may be I've read there's there's one short story by Brian Aldis called

Indifference that really it's it's one of my favorite science fiction stories and it's not like specifically Buddhist but it's about this far distant future where you've got this people are cloned or at least a lot of people are cloned

and there's this Erlowry strain that is used specifically for missionaries. So there's these three Erlowry brothers. They're all clones of each other, identical triplets. They get sent to this remote frontier planet to set up a temple there. And so they build this temple and inside the temple is an omniscient computer. So once they turn on the computer, you know, and within a split second it becomes omniscient. Their job is done. But the thing is their their philosophy like their religion is just indifference. Just equanimity as a Buddhist would call it. So they're like

practicing doing their best as limited humans to practice equanimity through all these trials and tribulations that that happen to them. It has a really nice ending. And so if you want to read a good story that has some Buddhist themes in it, Dharmic themes, read Indifference by Brian Haldis. It's just a short story. And it is kind of interesting that even though these three Earli brothers are identical genetically, each one has his own personality, which I mean you can you can interpret that as you please. So I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from

Xenithoid. And I'm checking to see if we are recording and thank goodness we are. Or at least it says we are.

Xenithoid says, "A few months ago, I asked you about the reality of fictional characters, and I've decided he put the apostrophe in the wrong place."

Gosh. Anyways, and I've decided to expand on the idea here. I think this topic has relevance to one philosophical idealism and two lucid dreaming which I will demonstrate in these questions.

Yeah, this is this is another kind of essay question here. We all exist in the mind of God. Well, I mean you've you've lost most terra Buddhists

already. Oh, it says if we all exist in the mind of God, to him we may as well just be fictional characters. Perhaps God is just another fictional character in the mind of a higher entity. And entities we consider fictional characters do have a reality unto themselves. This process could go on up and down endlessly in an infinite regress. There are no end points in this infinite claim or infinite chain going in both directions. No two levels of reality which could be considered the zenith and nadier. That is that how you pronounce that word nadier. This would effectively nullify the distinction of any one of

these realities being more real than any other. Calling one level more substantial than another would be meaningless. Does this mean that there these fictional characters we come up with are just as real as us? Okay, so let's scroll up to the top here. Okay, first of all, he says perhaps God is just another fictional character in the mind of a higher entity. Well, it wouldn't really be God then. It wouldn't be a capital G god, you know. Maybe to some primitive, some barbarian who who worships some chief god that he's calling capital G god. All the other gods are inferior fake gods or

something. Maybe you could still have this kind of scenario. But any any self-respecting theist, if they're going to put a capital G at the beginning of God, then that's going to be the absolute, the highest being practically by definition. So, I'm I really wouldn't go that far to have like an infinite regress of capital G god creating other capital G gods, creating other capital G gods. Yeah, I don't think so. So, you'd have like the capital G god, which to a Buddhist is just off the scale so that you don't even talk about it because I mean it's anything you say is going to be pretty much wrong anyhow.

at least invalid. You know about the farthest you can get in that direction and still be talking about a capital G god would be like the vedantist Hindus where god like especially near Brahman ultimate reality which has no discernable characteristics you know it's it's off the scale I mean you cannot perceive this god that I mean infinite formless consciousness that is reified enough to like talk about it. So, let's see. So, that part is uh I've kind of like thrown a monkey wrench into that one. This process could go up and down. Yeah. Okay. There are no

end points in this infinite chain going in both directions. No two levels. Okay. This would effectively nullify the distinction of any one of these realities being more real than any other. Calling one level. Yeah. Well, I'm just kind of dismiss the the premise that you would have like especially like capital G gods above capital G gods above capital G gods. I really don't think that that is really a valid way of explaining capital G god. The capital G god there would be one. If any there would be just one. So what you got is the crudest, less conscious beings and then they become more refined, more conscious, closer

to the ultimate, the
absolute, closer to infinite
consciousness. So the more conscious a
being is, then the higher it would be on
the scale.

And when you get someone who's fully
enlightened like the Buddha, he's the
highest being or at least he's tied for
first place with other fully enlightened
beings because they are fully conscious.
Whereas at the bottom of the scale, I'm
not exactly sure where you would make
where you'd make the cut off. You know,
it's like the the Janes consider fire to
be a very primitive kind of life. Cold
water is a primitive kind of life.

probably something like a crystal would be considered a primitive form of life.

So you could have just

like quasi protool life that is sort of quasi

protoconscious and then that would be

down at the bottom and then fully

enlightened being would be at the top.

Just as as consciousness increases, as

you know, it your consciousness becomes

more lucid and clear and and more

expansive, then you get closer to the to

the absolute, which would be just

infinite. So the so at the end of this

with the actual question mark says, does

this mean that these fictional

characters we come up with are just as

real as us?

Um, it when you have a fictional character, there's there's more more than one way of looking at a fictional character. Let's just go with Pierre Bezahov in War in Peace. Okay. Tolto's novel War in Peace. One of the main one of the main protagonists, one of the main characters, Pierre Bezahav. So, in the book, Pierre Bezahov is just ink on paper. So presumably that's not conscious at all. That is not a being. Just these words on pages bound into a volume of a of a novel. I mean that's not like a conscious being. So Pierre

Bezahov actually takes some sort of life
when someone is reading the novel or at
least thinking about the novel and like
imagining Pierre Bezov in which case
Pierre Bezahov may sort of like Seth
Speaks was saying like with regard to
our dreams take on this kind of ethereal
shadowy

semi-existence which may be like a
starting point for a
new karmic stream for all I
know

maybe although that's not orthodox
terraata Buddhism by a long
shot but then again orthodox terraata
Buddhism is not not necessarily
infallible which is something that uh I

was disillusioned to learn relatively early on in my my monkhood.

So I wouldn't say that Pierre Bezahov is just as real as us. I mean at one at one level you can say it's either like ultimately real or it's unreal. In which case, we're in the same in the same camp as Pierre Bezov because we are not ultimately real other than maybe the spark of

consciousness, you know, that pervades us or animates us causes us to be conscious, our consciousness. Yeah.

um we're we're real just to to that extent I guess because we share this infinitismally small spark of infinite

consciousness and then maybe Pierre

Bezahov he's been thought about by so

many people reading war in peace maybe

not as many lately as 100 years

ago or 50 years

ago but I mean it may be that He's got

he's like an egregor like the pagans

talk about

egregor. Um it's like a being that maybe

didn't have any original existence on

its own. Not no objective organic kind

of existence but so many people believe

in this that in a way their belief it's

like the power of faith the power of

belief has created this kind of being.

And I think

like Jehovah, Jehovah God is one hell of

an aggregator. I think Jesus Christ at this point is also an aggregator.

So let's see. I guess I answered that question kind of possibly in a roundabout manner, but I did actually endeavor to answer that question. So I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second essay question.

which is as follows. Assuming our reality is made by our perceptions, thereby making fictional characters or places real in a way, everyone's individual dream realm has some level of reality. If one were to master lucid dreaming and be able to

create an ideal world to return to every night that has a reality unto itself, would there be anything wrong with investing in and cultivating your dream life over your waking life? You could have everything you've ever wanted, including access to things like adventures, the perfect romantic partner, pure lands, pure abodes, etc., while simultaneously acting with entities in the dream that may be just as real as us. If it were true that dream samsara and waking samsara were not ultimately any different. And as long as you're creating a good world for the beings living there, I can't see what the ethical problem this would be.

Well, from a Buddhist point of view,
then I mean, if any kind of existence
you've got, if you're wallowing in it,
then that's not so good. On the other
hand, if you're living a dharmic
existence, then that's good. So, if
you're lucid dreaming and you're
striving for enlightenment within the
context of the lucid dream, go for it.
Fine. But if you're lucid dreaming and
you're just creating like a DVA realm
for yourself in the mansion in the
celestial nymph concubines and all this,
then you're probably better off just
staring at a blank wall in a meditation
cabin somewhere.

But with regard to like lucid dreams becoming more real or at least as real as this waking dream that we're living in, um I don't know if that would be impossible or not, but I I'm not sure that I've ever

um I've ever come across any claims of that other than possibly some sort of Hindu swami who goes into not just a dream but um like

into like an altered state of consciousness through meditation who then you know enters a heaven realm and that sort of thing. There's there's a lot of cases of that that you can find of people who through altered states of consciousness access higher realms but

that wouldn't be the same as just like dreaming every night unless maybe you're like a really adept Hindu swami who's been practicing this maybe.

But ethically, I mean, it's the ethics within the dream would be essentially the same as the ethics when you're not dreaming. At least when you're in your wake, normal waking state. I mean, it's the ethics would be the same. If you're like living a moral life in the dream, then that's fine. Especially if you're living a dharmic life, that's that's good. If your dreams are more dharmic than your waking consciousness, you

might be better off sleeping more.

And I think I'm just going to move on to let's see xenithoid's third essay question which is as follows. At a certain point of cultivation of one's dream world the line between what would be considered waking reality and dream reality would be blurred and eventually the dream would could seem like the more real of the two realities being oscillated between. Yeah, I just kind of brought that up, didn't I? This could be made even more apparent to the dreamer if they set it up so that every dream ended with the feeling of going to sleep and started with the feeling of waking up. Perhaps slipping from the waking

world into the dream world fully
flipping the dynamic on its head and
mastering the process is how one steps
sideways through probability. We know
that in dreams things like logic,
physics, time, etc. seem to break down
if the laws of the dream world and the
waking world are not the same and there
can be no way to say what one reality is
more real than the other or that one
reality is more real than the other.
Would this from a philosophical idealist
point of view give ammunition to the
idea that logical reasoning, physics,
spaceime, etc. may not be ultimately
real? If logic itself changed from one

reality to the other, the two realities would be epistemologically irreconcilable, making it impossible to properly reason about your dream world. Well, I don't think logic is going to change that much. I mean, you just have like bad dream logic. I mean, you can have bad logic in dreams. That that happens a lot. But I don't think that the the formal structure of logic is going to change in a dream unless it's just formally changed into just bad logic. I mean, probably. I mean, there's there's ways you could have, you know, like non uklidian geometry, some kind of logic that is not Aristotilian, that kind of thing.

But you're more likely to come up with that when you're awake than when you're dreaming. I'm pretty sure that when you're dreaming and you have some alternate kind of logic, it's usually just like feverish, sloppy dream logic. Then again, I've never really mastered lucid dreaming. So, let's scroll up to the top of this essay question and try and work our way through it a little bit. See, a certain point of cultivation's dream world. The line between what would be considered waking reality and dream reality would be blurred. Yeah, that's in the zoo when he dreamed that he was a butterfly or

did he was he a butterfly dreaming that
he

was and ancient Chinese people were
thinking of

this and eventually the dream would seem
the more real of the two realities being
oscillated between that's that's sort of
like a science fiction theme right

there. This could be made even more
apparent if the dream or if they set it
up that every dream ended with the
feeling of going to sleep. Yeah, I don't
think it's gonna I would doubt that it
would make a a

full

trans transformation. I mean like in
theory it seems possible. Anything is

possible really. Anything like David Hume used to say you if you can imagine it it's possible at least in a metaphysical sense.

But I've never heard I mean except for like in science fiction stories like the person that's in a coma or something and really they're living in this alternate world or you know the schizophrenic child who's you know hallucinating stuff and it turns out that he's just living in like this slightly different version of reality where he's seeing reality at least objective empirical reality that kind of thing. So, I mean, this sort of thing is theoretically

possible, but I mean it's I mean it's just what's the what's the word? Like conjecture. I mean, it's just lots and lots of gratuitous conjecture about stuff that I mean, it might be kind of interesting from a philosophical point of view, but I mean, it's not really going to help you other than just like an exercise of your intellect, which might, you know, make your your intellect more supple and flexible and muscular and so forth.

So let's see if the laws of the dream world and the waking world are not the same and there can be no way to say that one reality is more real than the other would this from philosophical

idealist point of view give ammunition to the idea that logical reasoning physics space time etc may not be ultimately well from the philosophical idealist point of view I mean you've already pretty much dismissed physics spacetime etc and the logical reasoning I mean that can apply I mean logical reasoning is not materialistic. Logical reasoning is purely abstract and so I mean whether you're a philosophical idealist or not I mean logical reasoning would remain the same. self-logic itself change. Yeah. Okay.

So, I mean this kind of question it's

really like somebody brings up like 15
different

points and then where's the where's even
the question mark? See my Okay. Yeah. I
just I just read the part with the
question
mark.

Yeah.

See, so I guess I answered the I guess I
answered the
question. See, let's let's just make
sure though. If the laws of the This is
the actual question embedded in this
essay is the actual question sentence.

The interrogative statement is as
follows. If the laws of the dream world
and the waking world are not the same,

and there can be no way to say that one reality is more real than the other, would this from a philosophical idealist point of view give ammunition to the idea that logical reasoning, physics, spacetime, etc. may not be ultimately real? Well, again, let's see. If the laws of the dream world and the waking world are all the same, the dream world generally has looser laws. There's less order. There's less structure. And so, it is less stable. That's one reason why this version that we're living in when we're awake is as stable as it is. You know, you go to sleep, things are a certain way, you wake up the next

morning, things are still that way pretty much. You know, it's like like you wake up in a different bedroom unless you've got a strange lifestyle. So, yeah, the dream world, I mean, it has its it has less law and order. It is less structured, less stable.

And so dreams, the dream world, I mean, it's just you, you're living in a different kind of dream world every dream. It's just it doesn't stay the same. And I don't think it's possible that it may just it's too unstable to to remain. Even if you're if you have long dreams, then the like the laws of physics and everything can be changing

throughout the dream. I mean, it's like, you know, you're you're riding on a bus and next thing you know, you're on an airplane. You didn't get off the bus and onto the airplane. It's just the bus turned into an airplane without you fully noticing it. That kind of thing.

[Music]

Um, the backlight just went off again. I don't I'm not exactly sure how to turn it back on, tell you the truth. This happened last time, too. It usually doesn't happen, but for some reason, it's happening. And you guys don't even need to know this. It's just that my face becomes a little bit darker

when the uh Oh, it turned back on again.
the my my woman's computer is behind my
computer when I'm sitting at her desk
and it's bigger than mine cuz she has
like a big desktop and so it's lit up
and it kind of helps helps light my face
but you don't need to know
that if you don't even know why the hell
am I even telling
you
so yeah I mean to say that greater
structure greater regularity and
predictability
makes a a world more
real. That's kind of an arbitrary
assumption, I
guess.

So, yeah, I don't know. It's I mean,
obviously, this kind of argument that
that

uh scroll all the way up here. Xenithoid
is is asking. I mean, it's not going to
make much of an impression on like a
diehard materialist, like some kind of
follower of

scientism. So, yeah, I mean, you're
getting into the realm of woowoo, I
think, with this kind of

reasoning. And I'm just going to move
on. Next question. This is from Mr.

Pronov, who sometimes just goes by

Pronov. So, I guess the honorific mister
is not

necessary. But Mr. Pronov says, "Did your father speak more languages after the past life hypnotic trances he went to? Did he started to speak French or ancient Roman?" Well, the only past life regression that my

[Music]

father told me about in which he's actually talking was as a Scotsman like in the the late 1700s in which they presumably were speaking English. He did have a dream where he was like an ancient soldier possibly Roman, but he doesn't mention actually speaking in in that dream. I mean, he was under orders that he his his I mean, the the military group that he was in had been given

orders to just kill every man, woman,
and child in this barbarian village, but
that was sort of
pre past life aggression. I mean, that
the past life of aggression didn't
include his centurion or whatever
commanding him to do that. It's just
that when he starts having the
regression, that information that he's
supposed to be out there killing
everybody he sees except for the ones on
his own side was already in his mind.
And he wasn't speaking to like the
barbarian boy that he let go, anything
like that. And so,
um, yeah, I

mean, no, I mean, he's never mentioned really any kind of language other than his his previous life allegedly as a Scottish man named Jason Haskell, who I assume would be speaking English.

So, no, the answer to that question is no. And I'm going to move on to Mr.

Pronom second question. Do you agree in considering thirst or tad that is craving as the origin of suffering per se or do you assume that the second noble truth also encompasses all other latent tendencies such as ignorance, aversion, and attachment?

Well, I've been entertaining the idea for a very long time that

desire doesn't so much cause suffering.

I think it is suffering. That whenever you you are suffering, you are wanting something that you have just set yourself up against reality and that friction is the suffering.

So you could say that craving is like the immediate cause or you can say that craving is just a a strange synonym for suffering that you just it's just the same thing looked at from two different angles. But still I mean there's there's going to be like ignorance for example that is going to be like um underlying the desire. You're going to have to be delusional to desire anything.

And aversion is just a desire for something to be away. You know, like loba and dosa, you know, this is loba or attraction is desire for something to be closer, to have more of something or to get something. Aversion is just desire for something to be away from you, to have less of it or none of it.

So I mean ignorance is really kind of the the ground for samsara moa delusion the ground for samsara but then like the immediate cause is craving which could just be the same thing as as suffering. Desire and suffering may be just two ways of looking at the very same

phenomenon. So that would be the closest even though you can't have craving without ignorance. So I think I'm just going to move on to Mr. Pronov's third question. Would pirating movies, videos, games or books or songs etc be considered as breach of the second precept which is taking something which is not given. especially since it's become so easy nowadays that you could just search for what you need and you would have a very safe website offering it freely without even going to some shady Russian website that could potentially hack or install malware in

your system. Well, for a monk, let's just I mean if it's let's just start with monks. for a monk. I mean, it does say that a monk shouldn't even take a blade of grass if it doesn't belong to him. But when you get down to the paraja rule about theft,

then say you have to you have to steal something that is it's enough of a crime that you could be arrested for it. You could be dragged in front of a judge because of this. So,

That could be like the criterion for whether it would technically be against the precept is is it illegal? Could you get fined or arrested for doing it? And

if the answer is yes, then probably
you're

stealing. At least legally according to
the laws of the land, you would be
stealing.

So with monks, yeah, it's it's I think
there probably a lot of Parajika monks
out there who are just pirating
stuff and I mean you look at a book and
it says no no part of this book can be
reproduced in any way without permission
of the publisher. So I mean a
conscientious monk might have to
actually contact the publisher. And then
that happened when I was a junior monk.
There was an Argentinian monk at the

same monastery as me and he wanted to copy parts of this book and he asked his teacher who was not really into Vinia. I mean he knew the Vignia rules but just didn't follow them and he was saying well if it's the only way you can get it you might as well but it's like that's a really cavalier attitude to take for a monk who if he steals something he is excommunicated for the rest of his life. It's one of the worst things a monk can possibly do is steal something. Steal something valuable enough that one one of the definitions if if you're stealing something worth an ancient Indian coin called a pa which was 1/4 of a kapana and the commentary was clueless to what

kapas were. Um but I worked it out that it was you know like 25 cents or something. you steal something that's worth like a quarter, then that's it. I mean, it's it's based on the value of silver, and I didn't look it up. It's it's a certain weight of silver. Silver is getting kind of expensive nowadays. But anyways, yeah, I mean, if when in doubt, don't do it. I mean, go with ethics. If you're unsure as to whether it's ethical or not, don't do it. But I mean, if you really want to pirate a movie or something, then you might want to look into the law and see

I mean, is it really illegal or do they just say don't do this because we want our royalties or whatever? And uh I mean, if if you can do it and it's like an unenforced kind of a law, you know, sort of like driving 5 miles over the speed limit, that kind of thing, then you're in a gray zone and you're going to have to make your own calls. But again, I mean, if you really want to live an ethical life, you're better off not fudging and and when in doubt, avoid the situation. Just don't do it if possible. But the Argentinian monk, I told him, look what it says in the book. I mean, you could be parajika. So, he actually contacted the publisher and

they just said, "Yeah, go ahead."

They're probably surprised that anyone actually bothered to take seriously the statement on, you know, opposite the title page, like on the copyright page that possibly, you know, it's like a fraction of 1% of the people who copy stuff from books actually go to the trouble of contacting the publisher. But back in those days especially, I mean, I was I wasn't going to take any chances. So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin, and we've been going at it for

more than an hour already. This is from Austin, and Austin says, "Are you a nominalist on the existence of race?" Uh, well, he's got one question here. It's got three question marks in it. You guys really need to count the question marks. Anyways, are you a nominalist on the existence of race? If my society became nominalist with regard to race, conventionally, race would only be a concept. So that's the second question mark. If my society granted it conventionally, I could pull a Rachel dozal question mark. Third question mark in that question. Obviously, race is not ultimately real, but it would have to be

conventionally real no matter what anybody said or thought about it.

Okay. Well, I mean, being anomalous is one thing that, you know, it's like it's it's hard even to define nominalist. Maybe I should even look it up in the dictionary. Excuse me. I'm going to look something up in the dictionary here.

Nominalism.

Nominalism. Okay. Nominalism. Noun.

Philosophy. The doctrine that universals or general ideas are mere names without any corresponding reality and that only particular objects exist, properties, numbers, and sets are thought of as mere

features of the way of considering the things that exist. Important in medieval scholastic thought, nominalism is associated particularly with William of Akam often contrasted with realism. It's also particularly associated with Humpty Dumpty in uh it's it's either Alice in Wonderland or through the through the looking glass. It's like why is this called that? It's just because that's what it's that's its name. You know, it's it's hard for me to explain this obviously. You know that when you're you're citing Humpty Dumpty, you're you're you're getting desperate. So, am I anomalist on the existence of race? Well, I'm a

nominalist to the extent that I don't believe in universals. Like Plato, that's one of the main things I dislike about

Plato. I'm not talking about Mickey Mouse's dog here. I'm talking about the Greek philosopher Plato who who said that, you know, there's like in heaven, the the world of forms, this higher higher world than we're living in.

There's like the the

the dog. I mean there's

like like the ultimate dog there and

that any dog that's living on this earth

is partaking of this universal of

dogness and it's like chairs anything

humans even Schopenhauer took this seriously Schopenhauer thought that like with regard to animals it was the species that was the universal whereas with humans it's like each individual person is its own universal

But I I really have no use for universals. That there is no dog that makes a dog a dog that is just exists outside of dogs that you know it's just there's this like element of dogness that makes a dog be a dog and or a element of chairness that makes a chair a chair.

That kind of thing. I just I really just do not see things that way.

So with regard to race, human races,

ethnicities, I see it as as sort of like colors, you know, you've got a spectrum of colors. And the way you divide up these

colors is to some degree arbitrary. Like I learned that the hard way in Burma, where the word for brown in English is called ano in Burmese, but brown and ano do not perfectly coincide. So, I'm trying to get brown robe dye. I'm asking for brown. They keep giving me like this raspberry or cranberry colored stuff that isn't brown at all, but it still qualifies as

ano. So, you've got the spectrum of colors and how you divide up these

colors. You know, like an interior decorator is going to have it divided up way more than the average schmo. An artist is going to have the colors divided up, you know, into way more different categories than, you know, the average person. And it's the same way with races. I mean, it's like a spectrum. It's there are general races, I suppose. I mean in general, but there's a lot of like blurry in between where you know you like all these races like on the the borders like the frontiers they're they're like interbreeding or you have like let's say protoostustralids migrating across

southern Asia and then later homo sapiens come in you know they they out compete the oustrloids sort of like they're marsupials or something so they wind up living mostly in Australia.

But it's like there's some interbreeding with the ousteroids. So like in in a place like Burma, like out in the sticks, there's a lot of people that look very

Oustraloid. So it's it's hard to really pin down exactly what race somebody is because there's a lot of blurriness involved around the edges. And so it's sort of like a spectrum where I mean I'm obviously Caucasian even though the word

Caucasian is now kind of dismissed as like an obsolete term. But I mean obviously I'm not black. I'm not East Asian. I'm not Australid. I'm not Koisan. You know I'm not a Bushman or a hot and tot even though those word those names are now politically incorrect.

So yeah,

it's to some degree there's a certain amount of nominalism in in where your culture is going to be dividing things up if it divides them up at all. But still there's the empirical fact that for example a Japanese woman marries a pure-blooded Nigerian man and they have kids in Japan. So that Japanese woman is going to be

genetically closer to all of her neighbors than she is to her own child just because there is biodiversity. There's differences in genetics, differences in in phogyny between a group of people that is native to West Africa and a group of people that is native to Japan. But then again, Japan, they're they're relatively pureblooded Japanese people. I mean, the Japanese are about as ethnic. Japan is about as eth as much of an ethnic monoculture as you're going to find, but still, I mean, they're they're interbred with the the Aboriginal people that live there. They're they're that are now

called Anu. I guess that that they're sort of interbred with them.

So I mean I am somewhat of an empiricist. I might not think that physical matter is ultimately real but still um science has some validity even if you don't apply it to like material substances that are ultimately real somehow. So let's see here. Yeah, I mean I I guess I pretty much answered that question about as well as I'm able to.

It's sort of like species also. It's like it's taxonomy is is largely subjective that even among taxonomists, you've got the the lumpers and the splitters. The lumpers are going to be

combining groups together and calling them under one name. the splitters who seem to be really taking the ball and running with it since um genetics became such a big deal in in biology that they're just dividing stuff way the heck up into all these different groups except when you get to people like Neanderls aren't even considered to be homo sapiens by a lot of anthropologists now although if suddenly a tribe of Neanderls were found in some remote valley of the Himalayas all of a sudden you'd have these same people or a lot of these same people suddenly insisting that not only are

they human to homo sapiens, but they're not even a different race because races don't

exist. I'm just going to move on to

Austin's next question here. There's

already three question marks that in

that first one. So, are you a nominalist

on the three laws of logic? And this is

like Aristotelian laws of thought. law of

identity which is $A = A$. The law of

excluded middles which is A has to equal

either B or not B . And then there's the

law of non-contradiction which is A

cannot equal not

A . And how do you ground these truths as

a

nominalist? Well, I mean I'm not a pure

nominalist. I mean it's not just arbitrary the the names we give to things. I mean to some degree the actual word is

arbitrary but I mean obviously there is a kind of empirical reality that we are interpreting. So how do you ground these truths as a nominalist and how do you give an account for them following a Buddhist paradigm? Well, I mean, I've proved that, for

example, the law of non-contradiction is is false. I mean, I've done that relatively recently. One of the very first blog posts I ever wrote was talking about the Coca-Cola

bottle. Or let's just use this

cup. This is a cup. It's also ceramic.

Oh,

so a cup and ceramic are not synonyms. I

mean, you can have a cup that isn't made

out of ceramic. You can have something

made out of ceramic that isn't a cup,

but this is cup and ceramic at the same

time. It is a and not a

simultaneously. So, I mean, I just broke

the laws, one of the Ariselian laws of

thought.

So, I'm sort of a nomalist. I'm not a

not as much of a anomalist as like

Humpty

Dumpty, but uh I mean

logic

gosh, I'm getting some kind of tough questions. First essay questions with like lots of these different parts, like very complicated questions, and now I'm being accused of being anomalous, even though I kind of am one. But I mean, I'm not saying that Like it's just purely arbitrary that we consider lions, house cats, and leopards all to be cats. That's not purely arbitrary. That's not just pure nominalism would just be like it wouldn't be based on empiricism at all. Really, if it was just pure nominalism, maybe I should go back and

read the definition again. Where's the definition? I got to find it again.

I think I already deleted it. Damn.

Nominalism. Let's just look up

nominalism again. This is

important. Okay. The doctrine that

universals or general ideas are mere

names without any corresponding

reality. Okay. So,

chair is that that's kind of a mere name

without any corresponding reality. I

mean, you get to some things that are

sort of like chairs, you know? It's like

you can sit on a

stool. I mean, how much of a back does

it have to have in order in order for it

to become a chair? Like some bar stools

have got backs. Are they chairs or are they

stools? So, see, only particular objects exist. So, yeah, a

generalization doesn't have an ultimate

reality. I guess that's kind of what

universals mean. A person that isn't a

nominalist thinks that a

generalization has some kind of actual

reality to it other than just

imagination. And yeah, I'd be I'd be a

nominalist in that sense. So law of

identity

still something is what it is. I mean

that's that's pretty basic. A equals A.

The law of excluded middles. I mean, I'

i've already broken one of these with the cup. This cup almost spilled my coffee. This cup, it it violates Aristotilian law, the his third law of thought, the law of non-contradiction. This cup contradicts itself by being a cup and ceramic at the same time. Even though cup does not equal ceramic. So the cup is A, the ceramic is not A, and this is A and not A at the same time. I already mentioned in some video I made possibly a year ago that the ancient Greeks really hadn't had this completely worked out. It's like they considered it some great paradox that

you can have three people, A, B, and C. B is taller than A but shorter than C, making him taller and shorter at the same time. And it's like the Greeks didn't take into consideration that the specific context is I mean they can't be a and not a within the same context but in different contexts it can be a and not a like this. It's like the form is cup the essence is ceramic. So once you you make that distinction then it's not contradictory anymore.

But I'm not exactly sure. I mean, I guess anomalous would reject the ultimate reality of the law of identity, the law of excluded middles, the law of

non-contradiction, which would just mean that they apply only in specific cases. But when you're not applying these laws to a specific case, they don't have any reality. there's just in limbo kind of abiding in emptiness so to speak. But when you're applying it to a specific case then all of a sudden boom, you know, sort of like numbers that there isn't like a some cosmic three in in Plato's heaven. It's it's like the the universal for three. And whenever you got a group of three that's got to take in this threeness from heaven. No, it was just like but when you count three of something then right there, boom, you've got a specific

case of

three. That's how nominalism

works. And I just uh had to take a

refresher course in what exactly it

means during the course of this video in

order to answer this

question. So I think I'm just going to

move on. Next question here. This is

from CEO of action

cadet. And I think this is going to be

kind of a long video to tell you the

truth. Long video with long

questions. Section Cadina says, "Since

you are an idealist, first they're

calling me anomalist. Now they're

calling me an

idealist. Since you are an idealist,
what makes you think consciousness can't
appear in the form of AI? Since you
believe evolution is how humans came
around and consciousness exists in
humans, why can't the same apply apply
to AI? And Siovakian Cipad Zir has this
compulsive urge to argue and at this
point I mean he's got to completely
misunderstand my position in order to
even ask this question because more than
once on videos I have been defying
orthodox terravada defying some of the
people on on the discord server by
saying why
wouldn't why couldn't a computer become
unconscious. I've never been opposed to

that

idea. So nothing makes me think

consciousness can appear in the form of

AI because that is not a position that I

have championed at all.

I have mentioned that I asked a Burmese

monk who was an Abidama scholar if a

computer become could become conscious

and he just categorically said no that's

not possible at all because it takes in

order to have consciousness you have to

have according to

Abidama kama ja rupa which is physical

matter which is originates through the

power of

karma and so you'd have to have this

matter which arises through the power of karma which would include like a human a human being but not a computer according to venerable Gurudma the Burmese Abidama scholar that I consulted on this and there's at least one person on the discord server who is not a Buddhist who also just flatly denies the possibility or at least is not much inclined to accept the possibility that that a computer could become conscious, but I don't see why not.

So, let's see. And I mean, that just kicks the whole question in the head.

It's like, why don't I believe it when I have no idea how he came up with the

idea that I don't believe it. So I think
I'm just going to move on to Siovation
Sup's second
question which is why do you think
people can have episodic memories about
past lives but no other kind of memories
for example I have never heard of
someone getting the combat experience
from their past life muscle memory or
becoming mathematical geniuses
remembering how they built the pyramids
revealing anything about ancient
civilizations or something new about how
animals see the world. The memories seem
like things that someone could easily
make up without needing to see past

lives. Seems pretty suspicious to me.

Well, one of the first things that came to mind when I'm reading this was I mean, it's just anecdotal. It's a story about this little kid who the first time he sits in front of a piano, he just starts playing like ragtime jazz. He's like four years old. His little fingers can hardly manage the keys and he's he's sitting there playing ragtime jazz. His parents are totally freaked out because he shouldn't be able to do this. So, I would I would consider that assuming that the story is true. That that would be a kind of like like muscle memory, you know? It's it's not like some kind of conceptual memory of him

actually being in a past life. That would be the sort of the conceptual memory of him remembering being some musician in a past life. It's just like his body was just spontaneously doing this. Of course, it it's no proof of past lives. He could have simply been possessed by the spirit of a jazz musician.

So that would be a kind of past life muscle memory. And I assume a lot of this stuff people that have talents. It's it's a kind of memory. It's it's a kind of psychic momentum, you know, like Mozart, you know, it's

like maybe he somehow genetically won the lottery and just had a musical mind or from a more Buddhist point of view, he was a musician more than once and he just had this musical momentum going and he wouldn't necessarily remember conceptually cuz like Seio is specifying here, it's a different kind kind of memory. It's like a muscle memory or some such.

So, yeah, someone who has like a a like a remarkable talent that can't really be explained through genetics or past experience, that would be a good argument for some kind of memory or just like psychic momentum of karma.

But as a general rule, in past life regressions, when people have memories, they are usually remembering the most intense emotional experiences of that life, which often includes their death like my father's past life regressions.

It's always or or other past life regressions that I've read about. It's always the most intense emotional experiences of a past life which may be making the most karma making the most the biggest karmic footprint from that life so to

speak. But other kinds of memories it would it would not be a conceptual you know vivid remembering it would just be

like an innate talent or some such
which is possible especially from a
Buddhist point of view.

And I'm going to move on to the next
question. This is also from SEO of
action

sepa. Another little paragraph question
here. Not nearly the longest of the
questions on this list. You have often
cited Majamanaya 49 to claim that the
pre-orthodox explanation for Nibana
might have concluded that it's a kind of
consciousness. But as you know, the
Atakawaga and Payanawaga probably
predate most of the rest of the sutas.
due to its linguistic dating based on
this since in the

paranavaga the Buddha talks about the death of an arant as the sessation of consciousness and this lines up with later explanations of consciousness ceasing for an arant as well then doesn't it mostly likely mean this is probably how the Buddha actually talked about this subject well the ceasing of consciousness I mean when it becomes infinite and formless from a samsaric point of knew it has ceased. It has disappeared. It's like the fire that blows out. It has gone to its source, so to speak, or it has gone to its cessation and it can no longer be reckoned. That's one of the famous

famous verses, I'm pretty sure, from the
Pionovaga is like just as a flame blown
out by the force of wind quickly goes to
its sensation and it no longer subjects
itself to any reckoning. Even so the ar
the enlightened being who has freed
himself from the mass of names quickly
goes to his cessation and cannot be does
not subject himself to any reckoning but
still going off the scale from a
samsuric point of view is
session everything and nothing
according to Hegel are identical they
are you can't distinguish the two
infinite being and infinite non-being
being absolute being absolute non-being,
they just merge into the

same. So let's see here. But with regard to that verse in Majakica 49 and also found in the dean kaya where the implication is that nirvana is infinite formless consciousness which I mean it's unmanifest luminous all around. I mean that unmanifest indicates that from a samsaric point of view and the infinite and formless too from a samsaric point of view it's just not there you cannot perceive it but again with regard to that verse that's essentially implying that nirvana is infinite formless consciousness unmanifest luminous all around that I'm not saying that that was

like the original teaching of the Buddha

I am saying that Like in early Buddhism
it was evolving and it's early

Christianity is another case in point
where different doctrines are sort of
like vying for acceptance and some of
them are accepted and others are just
fall by the wayside rejected as
heresy. So I'm not suggesting that that
verse was earlier than the atakawaga,
but it was an idea that was entertained
by many serious Buddhists before terra
Buddhism got locked down into orthodox
dogma that there was enough people
accepting of it when the the sutas were
edited, compiled that it remained in the
sutas. It wasn't just edited

out, but that doesn't mean that the Buddha himself taught it. It was just like an early idea. Sort of like the pre-Cambrian explosion where you have all these weird animal forms and like the weirdest ones just kind of died out because they just they they could not compete and sort ideas have the same kind of evolution.

So I think I answered that question and so I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sedarta

Lohachita and the title of this question is

vengeance. This is a question about
vengeance and he
says in the dhamapata the datagata says
he abused me, he struck me, he defeated
me, he robbed me. The many references
the Buddha makes to how hatred is a
poison that corrods the mind carry a
message not so different from Jesus's
teaching to turn the other cheek. Don't
you think that if someone does something
terrible to your parents or your
children, it almost feels like a duty to
take revenge because it becomes a matter
of honor. I can understand a himsa even
to the point of throwing a punch without
hate. But I think it's too extreme when
some monks refuse to step on

ants. Sometimes forgiveness resounds in me with cuckery or not manliness. Well, I don't know what not stepping on ants has to do with a vengeance. Unless the ant bit you and then you're just stomping on it, cursing the little bastard for biting you. But I mean, that's just common courtesy to living beings that you just don't want to be unnecessarily just perpetrating onslaught on other beings. So I mean it it is true that if if you have a family then it's pretty much your duty your obligation to protect your family

which may involve using force against someone who is assaulting a member of your family which isn't one of the main reasons why monks aren't supposed to have a

family but let's say you're a good Buddhist and you do have of a family.

There's some really strange precedents set like in the Jotica stories or in the commentarial literature

where I've mentioned before there's in a previous life of Mongala Buddha who lived a zillion gajillion eons ago on a different earth in a different India in a different Ganges

Valley that there was a a yaka like an ogre who disguised himself as Brahman

and went to the
bodhicatta, you know, the future Mongala
Buddha and asked for his two children
and the bodhicatta just gave him the
children and then this ogre starts
eating the children right in front of
him and and this bodhicatta is
rejoicing because of this great
self-sacrifice of giving away his own
kids to be eaten by an ogre. And it's I
mean western people just can't take this
seriously which is one reason why you
don't see a lot of this stuff printed in
English but it's there. And I mean the
our our Godma Buddha in his previous
lives he did similar stuff just giving

away his family through no attachment.

There's another story where the Buddha in a previous life before he was the Buddha. He was a farmer and he's he took his little boy with him to as he goes out to plow the fields and the little boy is just sitting under the shade of a tree while his daddy's plowing. He's just playing or something. And then uh the daddy the bodhicata looks and his little boy is lying motionless on the ground. So he hurries over. He sees that the little boy has been bitten by a snake and is dead. So what does he do? Does he like whail and grab the boy and rush back to home like almost any father would do? No. He continues plowing the

field. The boy's dead. He can't do anything about that plow. The field has to get plowed. And so when you think about Buddhist ethics, especially very advanced like enlightened or almost enlightened Buddhist ethics, it becomes psychologically inhuman.

So I mean it it worked in ancient India but in a different culture it's it's harder to accept. It was just that was just the way it was in ancient India. But that's not necessarily the way it is in the west where if somebody, you know, it's like somebody asks for your kids, you don't give them to them. And if somebody assaults one of

your kids, then you may just have to resort to a little physical violence yourself to protect your children. For that matter, your kid comes home from school with lice in his hair. You're going to kill those lice.

those poor little lice, you're going to kill them because it's your duty as a parent, which is one reason why monks aren't supposed to have kids. They don't have these duties.

So, let's see what is the actual question

here. Don't you think that if someone does something terrible to your parents or your children, it almost feels like a

duty to take revenge? It's a worldly duty. But if you are like steadfastly striving for enlightenment in this very life, then worldly duties, I mean, they're out the window. Other than just the the absolutely necessary worldly duties like being out of debt before you can even become a monk. So, a matter of honor. Yeah. I mean, honor, that's really not like uh like a Buddhist monk's honor would be a very different kind of honor.

So, let's see. Sedarta thinks it's too extreme when some monks refuse to step

on ants. Well, I didn't step on ants either if I could avoid it. There was a few times when the entire ground would just be covered with like little gnats or something like at the beginning of the rainy season. and they come up out of the ground or something and you just cannot walk without squishing them, then I mean it's not your not your purpose to to step on them. You're not doing it on purpose. So actually um you're not really even breaking a rule unless you're doing it on purpose because you just hate gnats or something.

But uh yeah, I mean if if total nonviolence res resonates as

cuckery or not manliness, then that's just your cultural conditioning and and it's uh you've got kind of a worldly cultural conditioning, which is understandable.

But yeah, Buddhist manliness like Viraa, I mean that's vir in in Pali comes from the same protoindo-european root as virile in English. I mean it means manly, but it's it's like

austerity you know just stoicism is the manliness that is practiced by uh an ancient Indian Buddhist monk and all this honor stuff. honor killing that kind of thing, fighting for your

children and all that. That's you leave that behind when you become a monk. So, I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's next question with the title celibacy and modern western monks. And I'm not sure if there's even a question mark in this. Oh, yeah. Okay, there

is. Okay. The question is the more you explore early Buddhism the more you see that celibacy was a fundamental pillar of the

teachings. I remember at a vajraana event specifically from the new kadampa tradition they held meditation with the monk sessions. I asked a convert European monk about celibacy and it

almost sounded like a joke in the room which was mostly made up of Western women as if to say that's something for monks a lay person doesn't need that just having a straight sexual conduct is enough but in today's era do you think a lay person can benefit from a period of celibacy especially in today's society where everything is about scrolling everybody has the dopamine circuits destroyed and Almost everything is pornography from subliminal to direct especially seeing how today modern women destroy men through sex and after giving it denying it. Well the actual question here is in

today's era do you think a lay person
can benefit from a period of celibacy?

Sure. I mean it says quite clearly in
the texts you know it's like if you can
be celibate be celibate.

But if you can't be celibate, then at
the very least stay away from the wives
of other
men.

So there you have it. I mean it is
better to be celibate than to be
sexually active from the ancient Indian
traditional Buddhist point of view and
for good reason. I mean craving is the
cause of all suffering and sex is one of
the main cravings that people
experience. one of the strongest desires

people experience. So if you don't want suffering, then you should just stay away from anything that you really like and that you really hate, especially what you really like. But for lay people, it is kind of optional. Although still it's very clear in the poly texts that you're better off celibate than not celibate. And it says the same thing in the New Testament. And of course Christians pretty much ignore that other than maybe like ordained monks and nuns. But it's like uh Jesus has this saying in the New Testament that probably most people don't understand

that there are three kinds of unics in this world. those who are born Unix, those who are made Unix, and those who become Unix for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. And that's celibate people, people who are voluntarily nonsexual. And then Jesus says, it's not for everybody. But if you can do it, then it can be to your advantage spiritually. But it's not necessarily to your advantage spiritually. I mean, that's one thing I should point out. And Krishna Murdy pointed this out plenty. Jay Krishna Murdy, he says that being celibate for I mean for a lot there's a lot of celibate people out there who are

just horny as [_] I mean they're just like thinking about it all the time. So physically they're celibate but still I mean it just it's a suit that doesn't fit and it's just not working for them. And I was like that a lot of the time when I was a monk I was very frustrated sometimes.

So, I think I'm just going to move on.

Next question

here. This is from Arpad. RP A. And it's a French name. I don't know what it means. And Arpad says, "Can a monk attend the wedding of a family member?" Sure. So long as he does not participate, like he's not officiating.

He's not giving the bride away. That kind of a thing. He just sits in the audience and watches this the the wedding. That's fine. I did that when my stepbrother got married. I was a monk sitting up in the front row. The the minister was kind of disgusted. Not not me necessarily. He was kind of disgusted by the whole attitude of this non-Christian, non-religious people. The only obviously religious person who attends the wedding is is a Buddhist. So he was he he seemed kind of like a disgusted minister at that wedding, especially afterwards where he's just kind of sitting by himself at a table just kind of kind of

going like

this wishing he wasn't there

apparently. But yeah, a monk can attend

a wedding of a family member. He can

attend any wedding so long as he is not

participating, for example, conducting

the ceremony or like encouraging the

couple to get married in any way really

other than just sitting there passively

observing as a kind of anthropological

study. And so I'm just going to move on

to Arpad's next question. What is known

about Rahula's death? Circumstances, his

age, the Buddha's age at the moment,

etc. So for those of you who are not

familiar with like Buddhist names,

Rahula was the Buddha's

son. The Buddha had one child which was his son

Rahula. And uh there's really no mention in the texts of Rahula's dying that I mean he he must have died. Although I guess some later schools of Buddhism had this tradition that Rahula was going to stay alive until the next Buddha comes along which means he's going to be thousands and thousands of years old.

But that is not an early tradition. And then the earliest tradition does not mention Rahula very much at all. There are a few there like at least two sutas directed to Rahula. One in the suta and I don't remember I don't remember where

the other one I think it's in the
Majinaya. Rahul his son became he was
ordained as as a monk and presumably he
became enlightened although there's
really not a whole lot of information
about him in the earliest texts but then
legends started getting cooked up
afterwards and uh I think some of the
earliest legends about Rahula is that he
died before the Buddha did although how
he died where he died I have no idea and
it's just all lost in the mists of
prehistory
almost any information you find about
Rahula
uh especially outside of the poly texts

is bound to be just legends and mythology. It's like people don't like having this gap with regard to something important so they'll just fill it in any way they can. So I mean there's really no authoritative information with regard to how old Rahula was when he died, how he died, where he died, anything like that. And any information you find in later traditions is just going to be legends, mythology. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sanguine Ultima. And this is kind of a a followup on a little rant that I

indulged in in the previous

Q&A about people who

uh like compulsively bash the

Jews. Like they just take all Jews and

lump them together as being responsible

for bad things happening.

So anyways, Sanguine Ultima says the

Federal Reserve, World Central Banks,

feminism, Marxism, and international

social justice were created by them.

Psychiatry, pornography, nuclear

weapons, and public relations style

propaganda was created by them. The

mainstream media, medical, judicial, and

military-industrial complexes are owned

by them, questioning their alleged

genocide in World War II is illegal in most European countries. while they commit genocide with impunity on stolen land in an apartheid state. They gave the USSR nuclear technology, stole American plutonium to fund their clandestine nuclear weapons programs, all of them apparently, and were one of the only two countries who refused to sign the non-proliferation treaties. And this is without even getting into nebulous conspiracy theories. This is all documented, objective, verifiable, and demonstrable fact. Can you recognize how maybe, just maybe, there's some merit to noticing their involvement? From a purely

pragmatic and Buddhist point of view, I suppose there isn't because being aware of them only generates absurd amounts of dooka and makes one a pariah in the nation states for which they are the ruling bureaucratic and oligarchic class.

So this is typical of the attitude of many people on the the far right. And this isn't just far right as like like lefties will say. I mean this is like a genuine far right. And a lot of these people that are like really rightwing just despise Donald Trump. He's Zion Dawn. He's just a shill. He's sold out to the Jews.

So some of these people on the far right will just despise Donald Trump because he doesn't hate and persecute an entire ethnicity and here like pornography was created by them. I mean, seriously, really? I mean, they must have created it in ancient times since I mean, the the ruins of Pompei. There's pornography all over the place. So, the Jews invented pornography in ancient Rome, possibly even those Venus figurines like the from the the Paleolithic.

One possible explanation for them is that they are just pornography. I mean, if

if Hebrews, people of Hebrew ethnicity,
Hebrew

ancestry, I mean, if they weren't doing
pornography, if they weren't like
publishing it, somebody else certainly
would. There's there's not a large
Jewish population in Japan and they've
got a thriving porno like a pornography
industry over there. So part of all this
I mean psychiatry okay Sigman Freud he
was Jewish although he was an atheist.
So it's like one weird thing about the
Jews is that it's a Judaism is a
religion, but it's Jew is also an
ethnicity.

And most of the problematic Jews that

the that the right-wing especially
despise, they are Jews that have
abandoned God in favor of trying to
uplift the world and uplift their own
ethnicity through like
Marxism or some later
iteration of Marxism, neoarxism now.
But it's true. Like most of the
Bolsheviks, like the like the ruling
class of the early Soviet Union, they're
mostly Jewish. Although they were Jewish
atheists. They weren't like real Jews
anymore. They were just of Hebrew
ancestry. So, I mean, the pornography
thing is just absurd. That's just
ridiculous. And then after after he
claims that Jews invented

pornography, then he's saying this is all documented, objective, verifiable, and demonstrable fact. And I just call [__] on that. And furthermore, it's not an entire ethnicity. There's certain individuals, mainly people who have abandoned the religious aspect of Judaism and have become like atheistic socialists.

I mean, most of the religious Jews, like the seriously religious ones, tend to be conservative.

And I I guess there's still people that will just hate them just just because of their their ancestry or the the influence of of

Judaism in other ways on society. But uh one reason why they've ascended so high is first of all Ashkanazi Jews and we're not talking about Sphartic Jews or Asiatic Jews.

Those those are different groups. We're talking about Ashkanazi Jews because they're the ones that are mainly called the

Jews and they have a higher IQ than the average person. There's a lot of right-wingers that will just reject this out of hand because they can't stand the idea that Hebrews would be superior to them in any way. But largely because Western civilization in its

perversity deified a Jewish person and considers a Jewish person to be literally God. I mean, what the hell do you expect? If it wasn't for the Western civilization, especially the the late Roman Empire, converting to Christianity, in all likelihood, the Hebrews would have gone the way of the Phoenetians. They would be extinct now. They'd just be like interbred and just diffused, like diluted down, just mixed in with everybody else. So, let's see here. But yeah, getting back to their intelligence mean they didn't have much choice. Even though they were considered to be God's

chosen people by medieval Europeans or at least by a lot of them, still they resented them because they were successful because

uh it's it's it's it was sort of like this sort of a vicious circle for the Goyam where Jews were sort of marginalized. You know, they weren't allowed to own property, for example. So they had to make a living through commerce like money lending and and like merchant doing merchant stuff. And also they would get blamed for diseases and so forth like the bubanic plague, Jews poisoning the wells. And so it was like the the slow stupid ones got killed off and the smart ones who were

rich, they they survived better. And so it was like this forced evolution of intelligence in in Ashkanazi Jews, not so much in Sphartic or Asiatic Jews, but in the Ashkenazi ones living in Europe that there was like this forced evolution which according to a book called the 10,000year explosion. It's it has a one of the last chapters in the book is specifically about this forced evolution of Jews towards higher like intellectuality where that's one reason why Ashkanazi Jews are so prone to getting neurological disorders like Tesax disease and this kind of thing because of just this forced like it was

it was sort of like selective breeding
towards

intelligence and because they're

intelligence and they have this this

like culture of worldly success because

even the religious ones are pretty

worldly

minded that I mean they just rise to the

top that higher intelligence that's one

of the main that's like the most

important um quality to have with regard

to being successful in this world and so

I mean they're they're going to rise to

the top with regard to the military

there's not very many Jews in the milit

ilitary except for maybe in

Israel. Like seems like most Jewish

people who want to fight in the military are are wanting to fight in the Israeli military and not in the American military. But uh with regard to psychiatry or cultural anthropology is one that uh Sanguine Ultima missed out on here. I

mean not all early psychologists were Jews. William James was a big name in psychology probably before Sigman Freud got famous. He wasn't Jewish. It's just that the Jews like in academia or commerce this kind of stuff they often rise to the top partly through this culture of worldly success and partly just because on average statistically

they're more intelligent than the
average

person. So that's part of it right
there. So let's see here.

Let's

see. Yeah. Questioning their alleged
genocide in World War II is illegal in
most European countries while they
commit genocide with impunity on stolen
land. All land is stolen land. America,
we're in America. We're living on stolen
land. We took it away from the Native
Americans, didn't we? And we're not
apologizing for it either. Unless you're
some lefty, before you give a speech,
you got to apologize just for the sake
of virtue

signaling. Oh, committing genocide with impunity. Well, it is true that the first recorded case of attempted genocide is in the the book of what is Exodus and Joshua in the Old Testament where Moses was commanding that all Canaanites be exterminated. Yeah. I mean, there's stuff that you have to admit, but blaming all Jews just I mean, right? It's like the Jews did this and the Jews did that. I mean, he doesn't he doesn't use the word, but still, I mean, it's you're better off just if if people are transgressing, people are doing stuff that is not good.

I mean, you call them out individually.
You don't just call out what race they
came from.

I mean definitely I I go along with
Martin Luther King Jr. that a person
should be judged by their moral
character rather than by the color of
their skin or just by their by their
ethnicity. When I hit the space bar
trying to get the my woman's computer to
like monitor to light up again, it makes
that weird noise. See if we can do it
again. Nope.

Okay. So, I mean, it's like the people
that are actually doing the nefarious
stuff are the ones that should be
pointed out. At least something can be

done about that. But most Jewish people, they're just being regular people. And it's like some of them aren't even some of them aren't like practicing Jews. I mean, some of them have converted to other religions and so forth. They're just trying to blend in really just being ordinary people assimilating into whatever culture they're living in. Like in in America, it's like American culture. And it was like I mentioned in the previous Q&A that there was this European guy who said that without hesitation he would just exterminate the entire ethnicity including people that I mean

they're not

even you know it's like one there's one person on the Discord server whose mother's side is Jewish, his father's side isn't. But this European guy and and he's not a practicing Jew. He's, you know, he he's following a different system, but still this this European guy would would include him as as under order of extermination. I don't know what like what percentage he would go down to, you know, how how Jewish you have to be, how Hebrew, I mean, Hebrew is actually a better term because it doesn't imply any kind of religion. And really the problematic Hebrews are the non-religious ones, the ones that have

abandoned God for the sake of some kind of

socialism. So anyways, getting down towards the bottom here, he's saying, "Can you recognize how maybe, just maybe, there's some merit in noticing their involvement?" Yeah, I've noticed it

definitely. I mean, that's not the issue. I mean, I've read like the culture of critique, which is very enlightening, very eye opening.

Anyway, maybe I shouldn't use enlightening for a book like that on a like a dharma oriented video, but certainly it's eye

opening. So, I mean, America, the Western civilization has made its bed by deifying a Jew. And I mean, western civilization traditionally for a thousand years has considered a Jewish person to be

God. I mean, we have made our bed and we are lying in

it. So, I mean, you you're better off pointing out individuals. I mean, like what's his name? Dave Chappelle said, I mentioned this in the previous Q&A.

Nothing good has ever come of any sentence that contains the phrase the Jews. You want to you want to like call out some particular person, that's fine, but just lumping an entire

ethnicity and and making just really just lame accusations. They invented pornography. Even though probably a lot of them are making good money publishing this stuff, I guarantee you they didn't they didn't invent it or saying that in Israel they're living on stolen land. I mean, name some place that hasn't been stolen from somebody else. I mean, that's just that's just a ridiculous that's just somebody coming up with as many reasons as they can for hating on somebody.

And like I was saying in the previous Q&A, feminists can do the same thing about men. Brown people can do the same

thing about white people. You can come up with really valid arguments by just being single-minded in trying to find as much [—] as you can against somebody. You're going to find it. And then you just dismiss the good stuff. I mean, Jewish people, people of Hebrew ancestry have done some good stuff. For example, one of my first spiritual teachers was Rahm Das, previously known as Dr. Richard Albert, who was raised a Jew, even though he converted to Hinduism. But that's not good enough for like the European guy who used to be on the server, who would have just included him in the

genocide. Getty Lee, damn good bass player. He's Jewish.

So yeah, I mean

just you're better off going with individ going against individuals who have actually done something wrong instead of just just lumping the entire ethnicity together, including just the outer fringes of it, including people who supposedly are on your side and agree with you with regard to most stuff.

So, I mean, pointing out stuff objectively, like with regard to what's happening in society and so forth, that's fine. As I specified in the

previous Q&A, it's like
obsessively hating on
somebody or just even worse than that,
obsessively hating on an entire
demographic just because of a minority
of individuals within that demographic.
And that applies to not just to Hebrews.
That applies to like various other
ethnicities. You're better off giving
people the benefit of the doubt until
they they screw you over somehow or at
least try
to.

Anyways, I think I'm just going to move
on. Next question.

This is from

Ruie and Ruie says, "In your experience,

do you think several karmic trends may come to coincide in one lifetime stream?

Looking at my present lifetime, I've detected a few main karmic trends. In early childhood, some died out, others took root and continued to unfold."

Well, of course, there's going to be several karmic trends. There's going to be lots and lots of karmic trends that come to coincide in one lifetime. I mean, you're not just going to have one like theme to your life. There's there's going to be lots. You're going to like certain kinds of food. You're going to dislike certain kinds of food. You're going to like certain types of girls.

You're going to dislike certain types of girls. You're going to like certain types of dogs. I mean, you're going to have like an interest in some kinds of music. Maybe you may have an interest in in hiking or mountain climbing. There's all kinds of stuff. And there's all different like strands of like karmic momentum that are just sort of woven together into one individual so to speak. So yeah, certainly. And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugao. And I'm looking at the Yeah, let's see here. We're getting down towards the bottom, though. Never fear,

this will come to an end. I went to an Iawaska ceremony long ago where before we uh we began the journey, the the uh the shaman who was a a blonde lady said that just always bear in mind there's there's a beginning, there's a middle, and there's an end. which may sound like kind of lame advice, but when when you're turning inside out emotionally and puking into a bucket, it's it's useful to know, useful to kind of bear in mind, you know, it's kind of like the horizon to gaze at. Anyways, this next question is from Yugo. And let's see. I got to take my last drink of cold

coffee, my designated primary beverage,
and then crack open the emergency backup
beverage. And you
could I thought it was going to foam
over. It started making this sudden f
like a foaming
sound. Okay. Yugu says, "Please talk
more about the ignorance. How is it that
people who work in medical fields,
veterinarians, morticians, have all this
chance to see reality as it is and gain
freedom yet fail?" And yeah, I pointed
out like long ago when I was a monk that
a coroner can do autopsies on beautiful
young women and see what they're made
of, you know, and see the like the the
ultimate the ultimate end state of all

beautiful women and still it doesn't
cause him to have any less desire for
his wife when he comes home from
work. So yeah, I mean it's sort of a
kind of dissociation. is a
compartmentalization of your mind. I
mean, he's just he's not in sexy mode, I
hope, but he's just like doing his job,
you know, cutting open this this
cadaavver to determine the cause of
death or
whatever. And uh it's he's just not ripe
for enlightenment yet. I mean, he's just
not ready for it. I mean, there's plenty
and plenty of soldiers. I mean, in
ancient times, just about any

able-bodied man was like he was going to be part of the the the unofficial army of his people. Like, you know, there's a state of emergency. He's he might have to get his

spear, get his shield if he had one, and go out and fight barbarians.

And just because he may see, you know, fields strewn with dead

bodies doesn't mean that he's going to like be filled with samga, like this spiritual sense of

urgency. I mean, it's like in ancient times, it was just death is something that's going to happen to you. So, you just accept it and that's just the part of life. It's just, you know, so what,

you know, if you're going to die, die gloriously. That's that's one thing I've I've been thinking about relatively recently that the the urge for a glorious death has pretty much died out of Western civilization. You know, there's some Muslims who still want to die a glorious death, I suppose, by exploding in an airport or something, but like most Western men, I mean, like it used to be kind of a cause for shame that you'd even grow old, you know, that you're going to die in bed, you know, you're just going to kind of just degenerate, you know, they just wanted to like among the like the Norse,

the only way to get to Valhalla was to die in battle. And even then, the the Vularies had to pick you as being particularly brave and glorious in your death. So, yeah, it's I mean, just because you see lots of death, it doesn't mean that you're going to apply that to yourself in a spiritual sense and use that as like a motivation for striving for liberation when most of these people don't have liberation as an option. They're they're oblivious to the very like the very potential or option of liberation. I mean, they're just completely in samsaric mode that like striving for

enlightenment is is I mean, it's not on their radar at all. They've never been exposed to it culturally except for maybe, you know, in like some they'll watch some YouTube video that's some new age person that just makes the whole thing seem ridiculous or something. and then you know they're not going to they're not going to follow that. They just assume materialistic science or whatever it is whatever their culture tells them is real that's real.

So in a way it's culturally conditioned ignorance and also in a way it's just most people are not spiritually mature enough to really take

the idea of striving for enlightenment
or striving for liberation from samsara
striving for liberation from the wheel
of birth and death that I mean it's just
it's not encouraged and they just really
don't see see the point to
it. Even a lot of nominal Buddhists are
that

way. So I think I'm just going to move
on to Yugu's next question, which is how
is it that desire can be so strong to
make us come into being even according
to Nagar? Mention of Nagarjun. I'll put
on the fez, the Majamaka
fez. Take it back off again. Okay, I'll
just start the question over again. How
is it that desire can be so strong to

makes us come into being? Even according to Nagarjuna, there is nothing there in a first place. Well, desire doesn't have to be strong to make the like some being come into being. that just the slightest desire, the most subtle desire creates a very slight existence, some crude existence. You know, it's like maybe there is a first existence. You know going back to the very first question in this Q&A that there may be some like very primordial kind of protoexistence as a sentient being then in that case the desire would just be the slight wisp you know the slightest hint of desire the slightest

hint of you know I am you know I want to
stay alive I want to promote my
existence I want to keep living this
kind of

thing I want to find food I want to find
a mate

And it doesn't take I mean any desire
would is enough to cause some kind of
being to come into existence. And then
by the time you're up into the mammal
realm, you know, you're like a a primate
mammal, then you're going to have
stronger desires, which is going to lead
to this more concrete, you know, more
more vitality, more more of like uh like
a comprehensive sort of cosmos that
you're living in.

So, but then he throws in
Nagarjuna. There is nothing there in the
first place. Well, it's it's all
dependently
co-arising. So, I mean, whether it
ultimately is real or not, is is kind of
irrelevant. I mean, it's it's
dependently co-arising.
um and trying to explain dependent core
rising especially just as a subsidiary
to a to a question. Yeah. I mean the
Buddha himself figured he wasn't going
to succeed and he was correct because
pretty much nobody understands dependent
core rising because it's such a
mind-blowing concept that I mean it's

like trying to understand a reality that has no firm foundation. sort of free floating and just mutually conditioning and I mean even each mutual condition is itself mutually conditioned. So it's so the whole thing is sort of arising spontaneously in a sense from the uncarved block of of marble cuz the statues are in there. But that's a tough one. I mean the second part of it the nagarina part is tough. I mean, how is desire can be so strong to make us come into being? And the slightest desire is going to create some sort of being that's desiring. It's going to be just this wispy little ephemeral kind of

semi-being that, you know, the slightest desire will cause the slightest individual sort of sort of I'm trying to say sort of and sort to speak at the same time. It's trying to come out as sort of speak.

So, let's see. I just just go to the next question. This is from Romeo. Romeo says, "You put a lot of thought, time, and effort into your Q&As's with little to no compensation. Is doing them a labor of love in which you get some intrinsic reward, or you do you do them with some reluctance?" Um, no. I actually get satisfaction from doing a Q&A. It's it's

one of my main spiritual practices. I think is doing these these Q&A videos, just doing videos in general. I mean, even doing the fish videos is uh I mean, it's kind of a spiritual practice, I suppose.

Um yeah, I mean, I get some intrinsic reward. I mean, you're I'm earning merit, I suppose, by helping people to understand something about Dharma. I might earn a little bit of demerit by throwing seeds of doubt into devout Buddhists or some such or by blaspheming, speaking heresy. But no, I'm definitely doing it voluntarily. I mean, nobody's forcing me to do this. I wouldn't do it if I didn't

want

to. So, I'm Yeah, I'm fine with this.

This is This is all right. I'm good with this. I mean, it takes several hours every Saturday pretty much, but this is like my spiritual practice or it's a major part of it.

Anyhow, so I'm just going to move on to Romeo's second question, which is kind of an interesting one. With so many people following your insights and wisdom, do you ever feel like a sort of guru?

If so, do you relish this feeling or find displeasure in it? Well, I mean, according to the Hindus, there's two

kinds of guru. You've got the up guru
and you've got the sat guru. The sat
guru is god personified. The sat guru is
fully enlightened being. They're just
God in a human body. Like a lot of
people considered nim curly
baba up

there. And then you got the OPA guru who
who could be anybody really that that is
sort of helping somebody along along the
path. Rahm Das denied being enlightened.
He considered himself to be an guru. He
was fine with that. I mean you can you
can see a dog licking its balls and and
if you get some sort of insight from
that that dog is your is your
guru at least a temporary guru just

giving you some helping you with some
kind of little insight along the way.

So that's fine. I've got no problem with
that. Being a kind of guru. I think guru
just means like a teacher. I mean
literally means heavy in like in
polygaru. It means like
heavy. So you're like the the heavy
hitter who's who's teaching things or
something.

But the weird thing is with regard to
being uh not so much being a guru but um
what kind of strikes me more than that
is becoming an egregor and I mentioned
egregor earlier on. It's it's like a
pagan idea of a being whose existence is

conditioned by the beliefs of all these other beings that they're kind of strengthening your existence in a certain way. And I noticed this even when I was a kid to some degree. When I was a kid, if I was surrounded by people that had high expectations of me, I would do better than if I was surrounded by people who had low expectations of me. Like I didn't do very good in sports and school. And people just expected me to do bad in sports and school. And I didn't do very well. It was just sort of a self-fulfilling prophecy kind of a deal. like away from school, I did a lot better in sports, you know, just, you know, playing sandlot ball, that kind of

stuff. And also, I remember I had one sort of semi-girlfriend. We we never actually went to bed together, but she was like legally mentally ill. She was getting checks from the government. She got a section 8 out of the army that Corporal Klinger and Mash kept trying for and couldn't get. She got it. So, she was getting checks from the government for being like too mentally out of it to to like serve effectively in the armed forces. And she was she was pretty naughty, I have to admit, more so than the average female. She was in the danger zone. But she had a very high opinion of

me for some reason. And when I was with her, I could just I could like master stuff, you know? I could just run a pool table if she was watching. It was weird because her belief that I was, you know, better than the average guy somehow helped me to be better than the average guy somehow. And I think to some degree that like when I'm doing these videos, people watching me and considering me to be this sage helps me to be this way, you know, as however I happen to be, however I am. It's like people that watch me and they're perceiving me are sort of reinforcing their own in a way they're kind of projecting this opinion onto me

which is sticking to some degree. So it's I feel like I'm kind of an egregor. I mean I'm not purely an egregor. I would continue to exist, you know, such as I am with without doing videos and all that. Like my woman's high opinion of me also is is sort of uplifted me in life. Like people loving you and respecting and admiring you is is a blessing. It's like one of the greatest blessings you can have is for someone to see you at your worst and still just love you wholeheartedly and and bless you. It's it's very uplifting. It has definitely has a beneficial effect. My

father was that way towards me. I mean he was very proud of me. He always believed in me so to speak which which was help very helpful in life. So I guess I answer that question. So I'm just going to move on to Romeo's third question. Do you ever see an episode number where you will call it quits and put your Q&As's to rest? No, I don't think it's it's going to be once I reach a certain number. I mean, eventually if it just runs its course and nobody's coming up with any any good questions anymore, I mean, it might be time to put it to rest then or just something else comes along. You know, I pretty much

stopped writing my blog when these Q&As started becoming more regular. And so it may be that just as these Q&As's replaced my writing the blog on on the weekends when I wasn't working, something else may come along, but I don't know what it would be. I'm not planning on it. But I don't have any specific number, you know, six gillion or something when I get to that number. I guess it couldn't be six gillion because that's not prime. It have to be some kind of prime number, I suppose. But uh yeah, that's that's the way it is. And so I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from

Quistor. And I told you this is going to be a long one. We're already well over two hours. Quistor says, "The attenuation of ill will and sensual desire is associated with the sakadeagami. Can puja achieve similar results without right view?" Well, of course they can. I mean, attenuation just means making it less. So of course you can reduce ill will and sensual desire without having right view. I mean Christians do it like Christian saints some of these Catholic like medieval European Catholic saints from a Buddhist point of view they had this really egregious wrong view. I mean they they deified a Jewish

person for starters. You know they believed in an eternal soul. They believed in the capital G God. They believed that you only have one life. There is no rebirth except into heaven or hell which is going to last forever. You know this is from a Buddhist point of view they had just really wrong view. But nevertheless they very much attenuated their ill will and sensual desire to the point of some of them really becoming genuine saints. So certainly a puta can attenuate ill will and sensual desire with with wrong without right view. In fact, I wouldn't rule out the

possibility of becoming fully
enlightened without right view.

So-called right view, which is
essentially official Buddhist
doctrine. Like I mentioned in the
previous Q&A, I think it was. I mean,
you could have just just absurd I mean,
from a western point of view, just
absurd views and still become
enlightened. Neem Crowley

Baba up there, he he worshiped Hanuman,
the monkey god. But he was just as far
beyond us as we are beyond
monkeys. I mean, the least.

I consider Nim Crowley Baba to be a kind
of spiritual
superman, but he worshiped a monkey

god. So I think right view is something that

dogmatic terra Buddhists put a lot of emphasis on that I really don't think it's it's nearly as essential. I mean to have right view with regard to how to practice can be definitely very useful and having right view with regard to just abstaining from absurd wrong views.

But once you get to a certain point I mean if you're practicing you're detaching from all views you know like the atakawaga says no view. In fact the word that's usually translated as wrong view in poly is just di which just means view. So originally the Buddha was just

saying don't have any view and then
later after early Buddhist philosophers
were cooking up all this philosophy
they're saying well I mean what he says
what he meant was you shouldn't have any
wrong views which just flings the door
wide open to all these right views that
that we are
promulgating but the Buddha said don't
have any
view

DT none of

it And literally view or dt just means
what is
seen.

So I guess I'll just move on to qua to
our second question here which is do you

notice a significant weakening of
craving and aversion in everyday life
after your time as a monk?

Um, yeah. Although it's it's difficult
to know with certainty how much of it is
caused by my having been a monk and how
much of it is cur is caused by me being
more than 30 years older. So, it's hard
to say uh how weak my craving and
aversion would be if I had never been a
monk. I assume it'd be stronger, but
still like when I'm at work on a
forklift in just this hectic chaos that
I'm cussing a lot. I probably I wouldn't
be surprised if I cuss more than anybody
else at work. There was one guy named

James that cussed more than me and he he quit because he was going through a divorce or something and and didn't want to deal with the hectic chaos, I guess, in addition to the divorce. And I missed him partly just because he cussed more than I did.

And I'm not cussing directly at anybody. I'm not like cussing people out. It's just like fbombs while I'm like trying to manipulate freight. And it's sometimes it's not working out correctly or you know just somebody I mean even if somebody does something stupid they're like park they just pull right in front of me and park when I'm trying to do something that kind of thing. I might be

cussing then but still I'm not cussing them out. I'm just sort of muttering profanities under my breath. But let's get back to the question, shall we? Do you notice a significant weakening of craving and aversion everyday life after your time is about Yeah. I mean, a lot of I mean, especially my my cravings, my aversions for some things and my cravings for for almost anything are much weaker now than they were when I was say a college student, which is in a way it's kind of almost a shame really that I I find this this really lovely woman and I don't have the same this tempestuous passion

that I had when I was

18. But hell, I'm It's like I'm just too

old for the

tempestuous passionate romance stuff. It

seems like except for every once in a

while. But it's not like this perpetual

phenomenon that's just going from day to

day like it was like the first time I

had some some hottie girlfriend when I

was in college.

So, do you notice a significant

weakening cream? Yeah. But to what

extent it's caused by me just getting

older and to what extent it's caused by

my dharma practice for 30 years is hard

to say with with

precision. But I'm sure that my being a

monk just especially just the detachment
from

pleasures, you know, like food and just
comfort in general. I'm I'm I'm living
much more comfort than I would if I were
living alone. That women and and gay
guys notoriously. They like everything
really comfy and and and like tasteful
and pretty and everything. If it was if
it was just me living alone, there'd be
like bare walls. I'd be sleeping on some
mat on the floor. Maybe just have towels
up instead of curtains covering the
windows. That kind of stuff. I'd be fine
with that. That's like a It's like a
meme, you know, a guy who just his

living room. All he's got is like a a TV, a gaming console, and a couch, you know? That's it. Just bare walls, bare everything. Yeah, I'd be fine with that. I mean, it was kind of like that before I became a monk, but even but now it's it's more ingrained through force of habit. Just a kind of almost disdain for comfort.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is also from Quoistor. If we've lived countless lifetimes, what are the odds that this is the one that enlightens us? Well, I mean, going with statistics, it'd be like an infinitesimally small percentage that

this would be our our final lifetime.

But the fact that we've gotten as far as we have so that we are actually thinking about dharma and to some degree

practicing dharma that would really up the odds but still it' probably be less than 1% just going with what percentage of dharma practitioners actually become fully

enlightened. It's it's pretty small.

It's

minuscule. So I mean your odds are better than nothing.

I mean, even going with the idea that there is actually such a thing as enlightenment within a samsaric context,

which I am certainly not persuaded of.

So, yeah, I mean, it's it's hard to say.

So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from

Trasazis and Trasaziz is asking about ignorance. He says, "I've read Yugu's comment and have to ask, do people who see decay, agony, and death on a daily basis fail to realize that we are ultimately all dead and lots of things are just pointless." They have very clear proof of that. Or they fail to realize that maybe we will be born again and again. They don't have any proof of that, though. Well, they don't have very clear proof that that a lot of things

are just pointless because whether something is pointless or not, that's a value judgment. That's not something objective that if something is pointless or not, it depends on your perception of it. And of course, someone who's thoroughly immersed in some sorrow, taking it completely seriously, they're they're attributing meaning to everything and a point pretty much to everything at least to like whatever it is that is their main focus. So I mean that's meaning is samsara really.

So let's see here. What exactly is the question? People who see decay, agony,

and death on a daily basis, let's say uh
an ancient Roman soldier on
campaign fail to realize that we are
ultimately all dead. Well, yeah, I don't
think that they they would see that
because pretty obviously from an
empirical point of view, we're still
alive. We are breathing and moving
around and making
noise and lots of things are just
pointless. Again, that's that just
depends on your point of
view.

So, or they failed to realize that maybe
we will be born again and again. Well,
the ancient like ancient Greeks and
Romans, they just thought that we went

to Hades, just like this shadowy dark
underworld where you're just kind of
sleepwalking in this days. You're never
fully awake
anymore, that kind of thing. So, I mean,
in a way, they were kind of
existentialists who accepted the idea
that so long as you're alive, you play
the game and you go for glory and and
and honor and that kind of thing. And it
works. I mean, it worked at the time. It
might not work very well anymore now
that Western civilization has become
thoroughly feminized.

I'm not I mean to tell you the truth I'm
not sure if women really have a concept

of honor other than maybe like ancient Roman women or I mean when women have had a sense of honor it was mainly like sexual chastity that was their honor.

They weren't

[__] But aside from that, honor is it's I mean, I'm sure there are some women who have a concept of honor, but I think it seems that most women it's just sort of foreign to their way of thinking, but I'm I'm digressing big time. Possibly getting myself into a little bit of trouble, too.

So, people who see decay, agony, and death on a daily basis fail to realize that we are ultimately all dead. Well,

ultimately, I wouldn't say we're all dead. We might not be ultimately alive, but we're not. I mean, that's just part of the the dualism, live, alive and dead. You know, if one of them falls, both of them fall because the whole duality

collapses. So, a lot of things are just pointless. I mean, ultimately, everything

is I mean, it's just conditionally with a point

virtually. So, that's kind of getting into

existentialism. They have very clear proof. And yeah, I don't think they

really do have very clear proof of it. Unless Trzas is seeing something or I'm missing or they failed to realize maybe we be born again and again. Some of like the the ancient Dians believed in reincarnation. Some people believe in reincarnation other than Indians. Some Native American tribes believed in reincarnation, that kind of thing. But I mean, it's just the animal instinct to stay alive really is in the driver's seat. And philosophical speculations about what happens after you die is really of secondary importance at best to most people. I mean, you're alive. You're an animal body. You've got animal instincts keeping you alive. You know,

it's like fear of death is one of the most basic

instincts. That's root chakra right there. So, yeah. I mean, most people are just semi awake and just living kind of anim animalistic lives and and it's just every animal has this instinct to just be alive and keep being alive as long as possible. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Rakasa and this is kind of an interesting question. I don't think that anyone has asked even though it is sort of an essay question of which there have been several this evening. Ricasa says, "How do you think the concept

of see praka Buddhaana arose?" If you read Tibetan and East Asian texts on the different sects, they usually subdivide Hinayana into Shravakayana and Praeka Buddhaana. I'm aware both of these words are in the polycanon sawaka and pacheka Buddha. And the use of sawaka at least makes sense. It originally just meant disciple without a derisive connotation. Probably most terraodins and servos called themselves that. But it seems to me that pacheka Buddha's pacheka Buddha is a very specific tech technical term. A sama sam Buddha that opted not to teach anyone. It seems automatically impossible in this age since God Buddha already taught the dharma and it would

be odd to strive for it in a future age
vowing to become fully enlightened. but
for absolutely nobody's benefit. Could
it be that there were pre- Mahayana
Buddhists using the term Pacheka Buddha
in a different sense? Well, definitely.
Um, let's see. I mean, this is a
complicated question. Another
complicated like compound question with
more than one question mark. So, it
starts and ends with question marks. The
first first question, how do you think
the concept of Pacheka Buddhaana arose?
Well, I mean, I'm not sure how the
Mahayana concepts arose, but the
terravada concept of Pacheka Buddhas,

um, I mean, it was a fully enlightened being who arises when there is no Buddhism in this world, you know, it's in between Buddha Sasenas, then that's the only time you can have Pacheka Buddhas. And so I think that the original concept of Pacheka Buddhas arose as a way of explaining enlightened beings before the Buddhist time. Like the Buddha would say in some of his sutas, it's like enlightened beings in the past, enlightened beings now, and enlightened beings in the future. You know, they all do such and such. And so before the cult of the Buddhas, the the seven Buddhas or the 28 Buddhas came along that there had to be this idea of

I mean the Buddha was saying there was enlightened beings before him. So who were they? And so I think it's good chance that it was the Pacheka Buddha was a kind of fully enlightened being who like became self-enlightened. They didn't have to be taught by some other enlightened teacher.

And see, I think I just confused myself in the middle of a sentence. Forgot how the very beginning of the sentence started. But anyways, the Buddha would talk about enlightened beings of the past. And in a way it was a way of explaining how you had enlightened beings before the Buddha came along who

started the wheel of dharma rolling
probably before the later cult of the
the multitude of Buddhas came
along. That would be my guess as to
where the idea of Pacheka Buddhas came
from. It was just an idea of the Buddha
himself admitting he wasn't the first
enlightened being that there were
enlightened beings before him. And so
people just kind of came up with this
mythology that there are enlightened
fully enlightened beings like the Buddha
who existed before the time of the
Buddha. they just didn't start Buddhism
because they were hermits or they just
could not articulate dharma the way a
sama Buddha articulates dhhamma. And

according to the legend, the Buddha himself almost became a pachcha Buddha because he figured nobody would understand dependent core rising.

And then Brahma, the personification of ultimate reality for the the Vadic

Brahmans had to come down from heaven and beg the Buddha to teach a system that would ridicule Brahma

himself. So then along came the the Mahayana Buddhists who just completely distort the meaning of all kinds of words including

bodhicatta. There there a lot of

Mahayana Buddhists who think you can have a fully enlightened bodhic sata

when the original meaning of a bodhic
sata was someone who is destined for
enlightenment and they weren't
enlightened yet. They weren't they
weren't a Buddha
yet. and also pacheka Buddhas. It's like
you read Mahayana Sutras and the Buddha
has got like
retinu hundreds or even thousands of
Bacheka Buddhas attending his his
sermons which according to the original
meaning or at least the the early
Buddhist like terraoden interpretation
of Pacheka Buddha which literally means
like for oneself
Buddha that I mean you you don't have
Pekka Buddhas when there is Dhama in

this like like Buddhism in this world
when there is a Buddha sasa that is
still alive and functioning in this
world you don't have pekka Buddhas but
then Mahayana comes a few hundred years
later you got hundreds of bacheka
Buddhas attending the Buddhist
discourses and fully enlightened bodhic
santas besides
um there's one little quibble here I
wouldn't say that uh let's see where is
it? Vowing to become a fully enlightened
but for absolutely nobody's benefit. I
wouldn't go so far as to say a pekka
Buddha is to absolutely nobody's
benefit. First of all, they're they're

raising the like the consciousness
center of gravity in the world even if
they remain silent. Secondly, they go
for alms round and the people who are
offering alms to them are are gathering
up treasures in heaven by supporting
these pacheka Buddhas even though
they're not teaching anything
necessarily. Um still they are of
benefit to the world just just through
their existence and their effect on the
the level of consciousness in the world
and also just offering people or
providing people with the opportunity to
see them and even to like offer alms to
them.

And I guess Dewa Data the the Buddhist

version Buddhist equivalent of Judas is
Scariot who tried to kill the
Buddha tried to take over Buddhism from
from his cousin Godma Buddha that uh
he's he's roasting in hell right now but
at some future
age he's going to become a Pacheka
Buddha according to Terravada Buddhist
tradition.

So anyway, yeah,
my my working hypothesis on the origin
of Pachega Buddhas is just a kind of
more or less mythological explanation
for how you could have enlightened
beings before the Buddha and not like in
some vast distant age like some previous

Buddha, but maybe just even like a few decades before the time of the Buddha or a few just a century or two before the time of the Buddha. you know, he's he's he seems to have mentioned that there were enlightened beings just, you know, out there, that he wasn't the only one. At least that's how you can interpret some of the sutas where he's talking about, you know, the enlightened beings of the past, enlightened beings of the present, enlightened beings of the future, you know, they're all agree or they're they all do such and such. And that's one way of interpreting that. So that is my guess. Although of course it is a heretical guess because I'm not

taking the whole idea of pacheka Buddhas
very seriously because I just don't
think that

way. And so I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from Dhamma
River and Dama River says, "What are the
three best and the three worst countries
to ordain from the following list?

Myanmar, Nepal, India, Sri Lanka,
Cambodia, Vietnam, Thailand, Laos,
Malaysia, Indonesia, South Korea, Japan,
and China. The three best. Well, if
Myanmar weren't like in the midst of a
civil war right now, Myanmar might be
the best. It's like the most devoutly
Buddhist country in the world probably,

but it's uh getting a visa and all that might be not a not very easy now. So, let's just leave out Myanmar. So, I'd have to say it'd be like Thailand, Sri Lanka, and Cambodia would be the three best countries for ordaining. Um especially if you're going to be ordained as a Terravada Buddhist. And Donald River doesn't specify like exactly what you're going to be ordained as. I mean, he's got like Japan on the list, South Korea, and there's not much terra going on in Japan and South Korea. That's like Mahayana Buddhism. So, was he including Mahayana Buddhism as as an option here? Um, but definitely China would be a bad country to be

ordained. Yeah, don't don't be ordained in China. That is my advice to you.

Um, see Vietnam is also a communist country that probably doesn't take doesn't have much respect for Buddhism, although I guess there are Buddhist monasteries in Vietnam. Laos is another one where it's it's like a Buddhist country that there's really not much dharma going on there largely because of the the communist government.

Um, let's see. But also like South Korea and Japan, I mean, there's really not a whole lot of Terravata Buddhism there either. But I'm not exactly sure if Dama

River had the door open to being ordained as a Zen monk, in which case South Korea or Japan would probably be the way to go. Not China though. Um, Malaysia and Indonesia have a considerable uh amount of reputable terra Buddhist monasteries and dhamma centers. So those are kind of theoretical options, but I'd stay away from the like the repressive communist regimes. Even though China technically isn't really communist anymore, it's more fascistic now. And uh I mean, if I was going to be ordained as a Terravada Buddhist monk, I wouldn't go to Japan for it. If I couldn't go to the three that I

mentioned or

Myanmar, if you can't go to one of the

Terravada Buddhist countries, then

Indonesia or or Malaysia probably be

fairly

good for ordination. There are some good

are some good places in Indonesia and

Malaysia. And I'm just going to move on

to Dama River's next

question. And uh this could be a

three-hour long one. This will be the

first three-hour long Q&A in quite a

while. Although I have gotten up to like

three and a half hours, and I don't

think I'm going to quite get that

far. But anyways, Dama River's second

question is as follows. Liberals, this is this is an essay question, too. So, we've got quite a few of them. Yeah, this is quite the essay question. Okay. He says, "Liberals in Canada, fueled by their edipus hate towards Trump, have just elected Mark Carney as their new prime minister. Millions of unresolved conflicts between children and their baby boomer fathers are currently manifesting as Trump derangement syndrome. Their blind hatred keeps them from seeing the broader consequences of their actions. For the first time in the history of Canada, the US, the UK, Australia, and New Zealand has a governor of a central bank been elected

as leader. Liberals are getting back at Trump by selecting the equivalent of Allen Greenspan as their leader. Let that sink in for a minute.

Okay, I'm letting it sink in. Although, probably waiting a whole minute is is kind of excessive. Let's just let it sink in a little a little bit more. All right, I guess that's enough. We got to keep the flow going here. So then he says, "What do you think is the main factor that leads leftists to be completely incapable of critical thinking? All they know, think, and imagine comes from whatever the media tells them. There is nothing liberal

about their behavior or logic anymore.
is just mob thinking and virtue
signaling. Ironically, they have become
what they criticize. Even when they try
to investigate any issue, they only
check their mainstream
sources. And let's see, getting I have
before I answer this question, it seems
to me that Australia is doing even worse
now. I guess they just overwhelmingly
elected this left-wing government,
although I haven't been able to find
much about it in the news as of yet. But
I don't know what the deal is with the
Australians either. I mean, they used to
be kind of kind of like Chads. They had
a reputation for it anyway. Then they

gave all their guns away and and now
they're just voting as communist as they
can as they can
get. Practically country was turned into
a a multitude of concentration camps
during the the Wuhan flu
debacle. But anyways, let's get back to
Canada, shall we? So liberals in Canada
fueled by their edipus hate towards
Trump. Yeah, I think part of it is just
Trump with
his talk about I mean putting tariffs on
Canada that were mainly just for the
purpose of balancing the tariff
situation that Canada had tariffs that
were like 200% like dairy products that

kind of stuff against America and then Trump does some tariffs against Canada and of course partly fueled by the mainstream media is just outrageous. And then of course Trump is like calling Justin Trudeau the governor of the state of Canada. That kind of stuff. Just openly mocking and insulting the leader of Canada, which is sort of indirectly mocking and insulting Canadians to some degree. So I don't think it's entirely like an Edipus complex. Just Trump is like a father figure that Canadian baby boomers hate. Although it may be a large part of it, I really am not an expert on the situation. It's just that what I've been told is that

Trump and his tariffs especially and also just talking about annexing Canada and so forth just sort of galvanized a kind of resistance against the right which was sort of proTrump.

Anyways, let's see. What is Oh, yeah.

The question is like in the second paragraph here. What do you think is the main factor that leads leftists to be completely incapable of critical thinking? Well, you've got like two different levels of leftists. You got the people that are like leaders that are actually coming up with the ideas that they are then promagating to the followers who just eat it up with a

spoon.

So you've got like academics for example who still after a century of stagnant and failed economies, totalitarianism and occasional genocide still prefer Marxism or some kind of socialism to a capitalistic model. And I think in that case they're so in their head they just like what sounds good in theory. everybody's equal, you know, it's all fair and just even though you have to persecute or like discriminate against the successful so that the unsuccessful can catch up, that kind of thing. But still, it's it's just sort of they like what sounds good in theory more than

what looks good, what actually works in
ugly dirty truth. like in in ugly
empirical reality, they just don't want
to accept that. They they can think up
some better system which doesn't
actually work, but it doesn't deter them
from continually insisting upon
it. It just goes against human nature,
but they just cannot comprehend this.
And then like the lower down the the
majority of people who vote leftist, you
know, the the hysterical mob or
whatever. Um I mean they're just in a
way they're just following this culture.
I mean it's it's like to some degree the
the new left in modern America and

Canada and so forth. They're they kind of have the same niche as the Christians of the the Roman Empire. You know, it's like this people that were just hysterical in their beliefs, completely intolerant of anyone who disagreed with them and who would who would teach love and acceptance, but only for people who agreed with them. That people who didn't agree with them were just evil and should be just abolished.

So, so long as the left continues to have control over most of the media, you're going to have the sheep, the followers who are going to just assume that, you know, the main voices that they are hearing coming from higher up

are telling them the truth even though
um it's pretty pretty regular for these
truths to be eventually shown to be the
opposite of truth. And then still it's
like, well, okay, maybe they were wrong
about that, but still Trump is evil and
and like anyone who supports Trump is a
Nazi and it's all based on racism and
hatred. And it's just they're told this
over and over again. And it's just this
mutually conditioning kind of a a huge
echo chamber. And there's some of that
on the right, too. Definitely.

But it's it really is a kind of it's
it's like a cult. It seems to me that
the left really has left any kind of

common sense behind in favor of. I mean,
it's like it it's it's so weird now that
the like the left is just wholeheartedly
embracing positions that the
overwhelming majority of Americans
reject.

like getting rid of like
deporting violent criminal illegal alien
gang members that this has become like
the latest battle for the left is
they're trying to prevent any of them
from being kicked out except through
some lengthy process of getting warrants
and all these like hearings and so forth
just trying to to slam the brakes. you
know, you've got this violent gang
member, illegal

alien. He's called, you know, Maryland
father, you

know, kicked out of America, sent to
some prison. I mean, El Salvador, he's
an El Salvadorian

citizen. And it's like it's it's sort of
like religious thinking where the
religious mind can believe anything, no
matter how absurd it is to someone who
is not indoctrinated into the cult.

And at this point they've been believing
it for so long and with such vehemence
that I mean they would just be utterly
mortified and crushed. A lot of them
would to finally realize that this whole
time they've been believing this

essentially like cynical artificially induced insanity imposed upon them by higherups. Some of the some of the higher ups actually believe this stuff for reasons I already mentioned. They prefer the beautiful theory to the ugly truth. But the ugly truth is going to win sooner or

later. I mean you you can't fight against reality, not even empirical reality, and win. Maybe you can hold your own for a while, but it's going to collapse. And that's one reason why civilizations collapse is just because of this kind of

[__] America or Western civilization in general is definitely in

decline.

So I guess I answered that question. I don't know. I guess I did. I answered it enough. Anyways, so now it's time to move on to an easy, relatively short question. Oh, I guess it's not so short. But it's it's also a a paragraph question. Have you ever read a book a guided tour of hell by Buddhist teacher Samuel

Burchles? If yes, can you please provide your opinion of the book? If you have not read it yet, I absolutely recommend it to you and anyone who else reading this comment. It's packed with fantastic Buddhist teachings of mental states that

lead sentient beings to hell. We can learn to avoid developing these mental habits. It's about a near-death experience by the author where he went to hell even though he was the biggest skeptic. And paraphrasing, he always considered the Buddhist teachings on the different realms of existence to be for peasants until he saw it for himself.

Okay, so the actual question is here up at the top. Have you ever read the book A Guided Tour of Hell by Buddhist teacher Samuel Becho? I can't even remember hearing of the existence of Samuel Beoles. So no, I have not read the book A Guided Tour of Hell. In fact, most Buddhist literature not written by

I mean Buddhist literature that isn't like poly texts I tend not to have read very much of. I don't watch Dhamma videos much. It's uh yeah. So I haven't even read anything by Steven Bachelor really.

So, I've read a few books by monks, but books written by lay Buddhist lay people. I read one book by Joseph Goldstein, his first famous book. I actually read a couple books by Jack Kornfield. One was Living Buddhist Masters written back in the 1970s, I think. And uh one was a path with heart just because I happened to be somewhere where the book was there. It was about

the the most interesting thing to read.

So, I read

it. But for the most part, I just don't

read this kind of

stuff. So, I'm just going to move on to

the next question. And I'm gonna scroll

down to see, yeah, only two more

questioners. So, yeah, we're over three

hours already. First, this next question

is from

Phil. And Phil Lees says, "I get the

feeling that watchfulness of the mind,

your third gear, is more effective for

Westerners than traditional nostril

watching since we're so caught up in our

heads as opposed to the the to the body.

At least in my case, the nostril method

never did much. Whereas thought
mindfulness is effective meditation,
thoughts, well, it is a more effective
and more abstract kind of meditation.
And a lot of people just can't do it
very well. They prefer something that
they can actually feel, you know,
something they're they're more in their
body, I guess. And so it's just more
obvious, easier for them to watch the
breath, the air going in and out of
their nostrils than to just sit there
not thinking and try to catch their
thoughts. Because I mean a lot of people
they just identify with their thoughts
especially guys I guess and they can

start to panic when they stop thinking.

It feels like their ego is

dissolving. So for various reasons um

this shikant taza meditation

um I'm trying to turn the computer

screen back on but it's not working.

There we

go. I

guess. No, it just turned back off

again. Oh, there it went. It turned back

on

again. Okay, getting back to I think in

Zen it's called shikantaza where you're

just watching the mind and you just

catch any thought that arises. You know,

it's like in the I think it's the

Dharmapata commentary, there's that

method of just you close off the five senses and just watch the six sense of the mind and just whatever comes comes out, you you catch it. So, I mean, it's just for whatever reason, it tends to be a more advanced method than just mindfulness of the breath. And you can even simplify mindfulness of the breath more by just counting your breaths. You know, one through five, then 1 through six, then 1 through 7 up to 1 through 10, and then back to 1 through five, which is just grinding away at the ABCs. But a lot of people, they need that at the beginning. It's just a kind of like mental push-ups

or something, calisthenics, just
strengthening their concentration.

So if you can do third gear better than
you can do anapana, you know, if you can
just watch the mind without thinking
more easily than you can watch the
breath going out of your nostrils, then
then go for it because it is in general,
it can be a more advanced method.

Although as I've

said, anapana can take you all the way
to fourth Janna according to uh terra
Buddhist

tradition. And so I'm just going to move
on to Phil Lee's next
question which is from a Buddhist or
even personal point of view. What is

your attitude to
fantasy? Recently I have been attacked
by this feeling that the world of lived
experience is like an alien planet
compared to the world of the fantasy as
in what we expect it to be and how we
visualize it in our mind.

It makes one think of the Orthodox
Christians and how they say that fantasy
and even ordinary perception itself is
demonic. More and more I feel that true
happiness and stillness relies on a life
devoid of fantasy. Whereas all of our
culture, especially since advertising
seems to be organized to conduct psychic
attacks to manipulate and flare up our

fantasy through eroticism and fear-based techniques. Well, I mean, I did a lot of fantasizing as a monk. One of my favorite fantasies was being a Roman emperor, like coming along around the time of 360 AD, like right when Julian the Apostate was coming to power and and I'd know what I know now so that I could teach the Romans, you know, how to get technology, you know, tell them about the number zero, you know, a decimal numerical system and that kind of stuff.

I used to think about that kind of stuff a lot. Not nearly so much anymore. But so at first when I when I read this question, I thought he was talking about

like like the literary genre of fantasy.

But he's he's talking about

fantasizing. So a lot of time you're

sitting there meditating and then you

realize that for the past 15 minutes

you've been

fantasizing. And from a Buddhist point

of view, yeah, you're better off not

doing that. You should just be right. Be

here now. be here in the present moment.

Don't be fantasizing about being a Roman

emperor or being in bed with some female

or being a rock star or that kind of

stuff. I mean, that's you're wasting

your time essentially. In a way, you're

creating some little life sort of like a

dream or or that kind of thing like was mentioned

earlier. Like one one thing I've done is if I'm reading a novel like reading Nicholas Nickelby by Charles Dickens while in a cave in Burma. Sometimes I would while reading the novel I'd fantasize about like being a character in the novel and how I would deal with Nicholas Nickelby and all that. So from a Buddhist point of view, yeah, you're better off not doing that stuff. It's just natural that people do it. I do it sometimes

fantasizing. But

um yeah, I mean for like especially a monk, you know, if you're if you're

striving for enlightenment, then you should just be right here right now and and not really thinking about other places or the future or the past, being someone else, being under different circumstances than you actually are.

that that sort of thing is just proliferating more

samsara. Even if you're thinking about doing virtuous stuff, you mean at least you're getting a little bit of merit by sort of aspiring or

admiring virtue, you know, doing the right thing, that kind of thing. But ultimately even merit is for lay people and and monks shouldn't even be trying

to earn merit that they need to leave behind good good karma and bad karma. So let's see what is the actual question what is your attitude to fantasy from a Buddhist point of view it's it's essentially a waste of time it's wallowing in samsara but it's just human nature and people do it. There's a lot of Walter Midis walking around in this world. So, I'm just going to uh move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is the second to last question. Outside of the suta, are there any sutas that you consider more profound or superior to the Dharmapata? Well, the Dhamapata really is not a

wealth of profundity. It's it's I mean
the dumbapana is just individual verses
like little

apherisms that are teaching like basics
of Buddhist philosophy. I mean there's
profundity in the very first verse of
the dharmapata that you know it's it's
all mindmade that kind of thing but I
mean you can find profundity in the
dhamapata but um the most of the
profound stuff is is elsewhere. There's
a lot of profundity in the
samutinikaya. There's a lot of
profundity in in like the
udana like the baja suta is
profound. A lot of profundity in the

majica. So yeah, you can find
profoundity like more profoundity than
you find in the damapata which is really
a relatively late work like in uh GC
Pandai's studies and the origins of
Buddhism. He doesn't even really mention
the damapata. It's apparently the
damapata
was kind of a late addition to the to
the
polycanon. And you read the Mahayana
Damapara and it's almost completely
different from the terra damapata. At
least what is passed off as the Mahayana
and Dhamapata which is more derived from
the Udana and the Sutini pata versus
taken from those texts in

Pali than it is from the from the actual
poly text the

Dapana or as the Burmese call it the
Dapodat. So yeah. Yeah, there's lots of
sutras outside the sutin pana that I
consider more profound or superior to
the dham danaka sutra of the majimminaya
central portion or or like let's see
what would it

be ah maybe the central portion of the
sakapa sutra of the of the dean kaya even
the brah jala sutra is profound when you
think of almost every every possibility
is ruled

out a lot of lot of texts in the udon
are profound

etc.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question. This is from PSA. And PSA asked two other questions. One of them was one of these kind of a joke question where he's just using as many big words as he can. So, I answered that in the comments. And then his second question was just what's up.

So this this is up I guess.

This right here. This is up. And uh this is his third question, but it's really the the only question that I'm I'm going to uh really take the trouble to answer here. And that is if someone completely

new to Buddhism asked for your advice on where to go for their first meditation retreat, where will you direct them? I would direct them to the Dagata meditation center in San Jose, California because it's a good meditation center that's run pretty much like meditation centers in Burma. It's run by a Vietnamese group that have become devotees of the Mahasi tradition. First they were devotees of Mahasi upandida who has passed away and uh but still they invite uh seats of the mahasi tradition to come to California and lead retreats there and it's cheap you know you don't you're not paying 5,000 bucks

for a weekend like you might at some
place like Spirit Rock and you you're
just paying enough to pay for the
electricity and the food you're eating
And it's it's
it's very wellrun. It's a good place.
Although you have to be careful cuz
there's skunks that that there's pimmen
trees on the grounds. I almost got
sprayed by a skunk there
once cuz they come out at night to eat
the pimmens that fall out of the trees
and then you suddenly happen upon one
and you can startle them and then bad
things can
happen. But uh yeah, definitely the
Dagata Meditation Center in San Jose,

California. Although of course I don't know everything there is to know about a lot of other places, but stay away from like the the woke dama centers that that charge a lot of money for their retreats and that kind of thing. And I guess we're done. By golly, less than three and a half hours anyhow. And so like I should always say at the beginning and always say at the end if you got any questions you think I can answer specifically or especially if they're like dharma oriented questions or philosophical questions um especially having to do with terra Buddhism or early Buddhism. Um Buddhism

in general is fair game although I'm I'm
certainly no authority on Tibetan
Buddhism in particular.

um you know, eastern philosophy in
general, western philosophy, Burma,
monasticism, just aspects of like Dharma
practice like meditation, that kind of
stuff. I'm generally fairly good at
answering. But

um and and please like try to make your
questions

succinct, you know, don't we don't need
lots and lots of um like extra
commentary unless you want to put it in
parenthesis for me to read, but reading
like

paragraphs of of like a question where

the the question is actually like right
at the top or right at the bottom and
the rest is just kind of like like
explanation like commentary on the
question. Um, yeah, try just try to
like compact it down. Just get to the
point if you
please. And uh like and subscribe if you
haven't done so already. And uh now I go
like wind on prairie.

Alrighty

then. I'm adjusting this now.

Okay. Hello and welcome to question and answer

number

144. I am your host Po Basa. And I must say that 144 is about as nonprime of a number as numbers get in this world. In fact, it is a perfect square. It's $12 * 12$. But if we factor it out completely, it's $2 * 2 * 2 * 2 * 3 *$

3. Not prime at

all. This is my beverage. Did I mention that I'm

pubasa? So, my coffee is already cooling down. And I did realize just today that

these little paper umbrellas really are nonfunctional. They're just for looks.

It was rainy today. I took one out with me. got just as wet as if I didn't have it.

So, we got some good questions today and I didn't bother to count how many there are, but it's kind of like an average number and it's probably going to be after midnight by the time I'm done with this because again, I'm starting late. I work nights. I work nights now. Work nights now. I'm trying to start a word with L for some reason in that sentence. It just seemed like one of the words should start with

L. Anyways, I work nights, so get up at

like noon anyway. And then I had to run
around run around town and like purchase
objects and so

forth. And then I got a haircut just
now, just minutes ago, I got a haircut.

So I've got like little hairs down the
back of my shirt. So that I'm sort of

like a postmodern equivalent of some
medieval aesthetic wearing a hair

shirt. So before I get started with uh

answering questions though, I would like

to shout out give a shout out to

somebody named Kevin who has generously

donated to the cause twice since the

last time I shouted him out. So your

your generosity is acknowledged and

appreciated. Oh,

Kevin. And with that, I suppose I should just wade right into this, start answering questions. And the first question is from Dhamma River. And this is like a good introductory question.

Introductory. He says, "Before you became a monk, at which point did it click in your head that you wanted to go forth? Was it a sudden realization that something was broken in the world or that you were in a sort of dream world? Or was it a traumatic experience, a romantic heartbreak or too much suffering? Or was it just an intuitive decision without any major event triggering the beginning of your

spiritual pursuit? What was it?" And
it's it's an an it's a question that
I've answered more than once in the
past, but it's been a while. So, I may
as well give like a very abbreviated
version of my life

story. So, when I was a kid, like almost
all other kids in this world, you just I
just assumed that adults knew what's
what. You know, it's just taken for
granted. And certain adults know what's
what even better than other adults do.

Like for example, when I was a kid, two
of my role models were the professor on
Gilligan's Island who I mean he he could
he could do anything with his knowledge

of

science and also Mr. Spock on Star Trek who was kind of the same, you know, he was like a half alien space professor.

But then around the age of

13, I started to become

suspicious that adults really didn't

know what's what. And by the time I was

16, it was just painfully obvious that

the adults were just as clueless and

messed up as I was as a general rule. So

when I was about 16 years old, I just

went into open rebellion. Got into lots

of trouble. Started skipping school.

Went from like an honor student to

almost failing out of school and just

went I guess what what caused it was my

16th birthday was the first time I was ever higher than a Georgia pine and drunk as the proverbial skunk both at the same time. I was like a skunk in a pine tree. And at the time, I mean, I remember I was laughing so hard I just fell forwards onto the ground, just face it down on the ground, still laughing. And it just seemed so brilliant at the time, you know, sick for a 16-year-old. It's like, wow, I've just discovered the the a new way. And so that's one of the reasons why I went into the open rebellion. It just I had this philosophy, you know, if you want to be happy, don't do anything you don't want

to do, which includes going to school sometimes, things like that. Reporting into your your father when you're not going to come home for a couple days, that kind of thing. And so I got into lots of trouble. And so one night in a towering rage, my father gave me like this ultimatum. It was like, let's see, go to a kind of like a like it was like a halfway house or something. I can't remember exactly. It was sort of like the equivalent of a halfway house for like teenagers or I could see a youth counselor or I could just like hit the road just because he was just fed up with it. And so seeing the youth counselor seemed like the like

the least

inconvenient option. And so I started seeing a youth counselor who was whose name was Ron Sherman. And it turned out that Mr. Sherman was a wise

man. And he could see something in me, I guess. Or maybe he would just try and like

uh convey a little eastern philosophy to all of his clients, you know, his troubled teenage clients. But with me, it really hit. I mean, it really struck a chord. He gave me books by Ram Das to read. I thought it was Ram Das at first. And um so I'm reading these books like the um The Only Dance There Is and also

Grist for the Mill. Gris for the Mill
really made a strong impression on me as
a teenager and I didn't really
understand it very well. It was so alien
to anything I'd been exposed to before
that that it couldn't really integrate.
But nevertheless, intuitively, I felt
this is worthwhile. This is better than
what I rejected at first, which is
screwed up adults just trying to be
happy, failing because they don't know
how. Just he who dies with the most toys
wins. Just take the salmon approach.
Just swim upstream spawn and die. That
kind of thing. So I rejected that
already. But just the roller coaster
ride of just partying and getting into

trouble and partying and getting into trouble. I mean that wasn't working very well either. And all of a sudden there's this guy named Rahm Doss talking about how you can understand ultimate reality. You know, there's like this higher level of truth that is just it's like was a quantum leap beyond what normies consider to be reality. And that I mean it's it's just a quantum leap beyond what normies experience just with regard to the quality of it. you know, it's just something that you should dedicate your life towards mastering and youthful idealist that I was, it was

like, yeah, that's what I want to do.

And so, starting with the age of about 17, cuz it was it was right before my 17th birthday that this [_] really hit the fan. And I was, you know, my 16th year was, it was like the year of youthful rebellion and chaos, being a feral teenager. So around the end of that year, that's when my father put his foot down and I decided I was going to see the youth counselor and so forth. And so yeah, that was around the age of 17. I had this idea that I should renounce the world and become like some kind of renunciient aesthetic and do my best to realize ultimate truth to know ultimate

reality to transcend some sorrow so to speak but I wasn't sure exactly how I was going to go about it just I I knew myself well enough to know that just being non deni nominal. I mean, I considered it for a while, just like get myself a wool robe and some kind of wool bowl. A wooden bowl, not a wool bowl, a wood bowl, and just take off walking. But I knew myself well enough to know that I didn't h wasn't good enough at self-discipline at the time, especially that I mean, it wasn't going to work out very well. It would be better to like enter into some established tradition with like tried

and tested rules and and methods and so forth. That would work better. And so I was considering Zen cuz I was pretty much converted to Buddhism by reading Zen Flesh, Zen Bones compiled by Paul Reps. So I still favored Zen back then. Um, I for briefly was even considering just becoming like a Carthusian Christian monk that undertakes a vow of silence. And with the vow of silence, I wouldn't have to confess that I actually wasn't a Christian. But I realized that was a dumb idea. Probably they'd have to break their vow of silence to make confession somehow.

Anyway,

so that was that was the the point where

it clicked. I mean it wasn't just like one sudden click but it was mainly uh my interactions with this youth counselor who was into Rahm Doss and reading especially Grist for the mill by Ram Doss that I mean it was just like opening up this whole new possibility of how to live my life that seemed just infinitely superior to just being like a a middle class normie with, you know, the the wife and the the kids and the dog and the the mortgage and the car payments and the insurance and all this. It just that just seemed like walking death to me at the time. Now that I'm kind of detached, you know,

from 30 years of being a monk, I realize that, you know, it's like your attitude towards your environment is really essential. And it's it's not really that your surroundings that are that are all important. It's just your attitude. So I can go back to to like working for a living and so forth now with a different attitude than the average guy has towards it I suppose. But I'm just rambling all over because the actual question was at which point did uh the click go in my head that I wanted to go forth and it was around the age of 17 and I I had this ambition that before the age of 30 I should definitely renounce the world and

so I was ahead of schedule on that. I
was I was like

27. But yeah, that's essentially it. And
so I'm just going to move on to Dama
River's second question, which is what
was the worst aspect of being a monk?
And the first thing that popped in my
head was just celibacy. Just no orgasms
except for maybe when you're
sleeping. But thinking about it, that
that wasn't really the worst aspect. It
was the most
difficult aspect and like a lot of the
time, especially when I was younger, you
know, you're just full of juice. It's
like there were times when I was just

like climbing the walls just wanting to cry at howl like a dog. I was so horny essentially.

But that wasn't really the worst aspect. I think the worst aspect of being a monk is having to rely on other people to be to be able to do just about anything really. I mean, if you're just living alone out in a forest, you have to rely on other people for your food. But if you want to do anything that costs money, for example, and you're a conscientious monk that doesn't handle money, you've got to rely on other people. just you got to rely on other people to do stuff that as a lay person you could just do yourself really

easily. And I've always been relatively self-sufficient. You know, if I can do something myself, I'd rather just do it myself than to even have help doing it. I'm still that way at work. I really don't like people helping me unless I just cannot do this thing by myself and then I'll ask someone to help me. But so for me, I think that was really the worst aspect of being a monk is just having to rely on other people for so much that as a lay person, you can just do freely, practically effortlessly on your own, like I mentioned. I mean, you you can't even feed

yourself. I mean, once they give you the food, then of course you you shovel the food into your own mouth.

But just acquiring the food, you can't even do

that. So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Whoich. I don't know how to pronounce

his name. It's really not particularly

common name. And so, I'm just calling

him Who Cheer. I hope he's not offended

by my mispronouncing his name. And he

says, "Do you think Alan Watts and

Echartah

Enlightened? I have been listening to

their YouTube videos. They sound like

they got

it.

And Earl is always just kind of a question mark for me. And Alan Watts, I know less about Alan Watts than I know about Eckhart. I've read a couple of Alan Watts's books. I've heard a few of his videos on YouTube, and he says the right things, but just because you say the right things doesn't mean that you're you're enlightened.

Um I mean Alan Watts supposedly there were some kind of scandals about his life but then again there were scandals about like Jay Krishna Murdy too and I'm still open-minded with regard to the realizations of Jay Krishna Murdy. So, I

mean, you you can't really know. I mean,
with regard
to Ecarola or Ellen Watts or anybody you
think might be enlightened, just seeing
their their public
appearances and like hearing their their
speeches and so forth, it's not really
enough to know because like St. Francis
of Aisi said, "You don't really know
somebody until you see them when
everything's going wrong." Like somebody
betrays them, somebody that they felt
that they could trust just like like
stabs them in the back, that kind of
thing. How do they react then? You know,
how do they react under a situation that
normally triggers people? That's when

you can have a better idea as to just how wise this person really is. Because if they're saying all the right things and they seem peaceful and serene, but then they're just like losing their [_] over something, you know, it's like some unusual situation, some bad situation they don't like, then they're not really enlightened, at least not according to the the standard Terravada Buddhist interpretation of enlightenment. But then again from the standard terravada Buddhist interpretation of enlightened I mean they couldn't laugh that kind of thing. They certainly wouldn't get married. So yeah I mean it's and then

and then also there's just the the
further confoundment of the idea that
from an unenlightened point of view
there is no enlightenment there. I mean
there's like an unenlightened person can
have an idea about enlightenment but
that idea is going to be unenlightened.
Their I mean their criteria for judging
whether somebody is enlightened or not
is going to be unenlightened. And so an
unenlightened person is just going to be
looking at the world through
unenlightened glasses, unenlightenment
tinged glasses. And so even the people
they think are enlightened really their
whole criteria criterion criteria for
for judging whether another person is

light is going to be
unenlightened. So in a way it's it's
sort of like a Zen Buddhist way of
looking at things. I I derived the idea
from the sutra the platform sutra of Hui
Ning where he says once you become
enlightened you look around and see that
everybody else is enlightened. You know,
it's like you're from an enlightened
point of view, you look around and it's
it's all like
nirvana. Whereas, if you're
unenlightened, you look around and you
just see unenlightenment. You see
samsara. So, there's that, too.
But if I just had to guess offhand,

Echart Tollola, he had some kind of realization, but I really cannot say just how advanced he is from like a more traditional point of view like establishment Buddhism or establishment Hinduism. I really can't say. And Alan Watts, I just have insufficient data to really have much of an idea. There's um a lot of you probably know who what's his name? Ken Ken Wheeler, you know, the the tattooed monkey guy that I mean, he says Alan Watts is just flatout evil. But then again, Ken Wheeler says that Trader Joe's grocery stores are also flatout evil. So, I guess the correct answer to Huie Cheer's question is I don't know.

And and based on like the information that I have regarding these two gentlemen, I don't think it would even be possible to know unless I was like some sort of fully enlightened being with psychic powers and could just see them clearly, you know, more clearly than an unenlightened person sitting in the same room with them. But just because you sound like you got it doesn't necessarily mean that you got it.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Fred and Fred says, "Does celibacy have any metaphysical

merit and I mean outward acts or outward
absence of acts really is not
meritorious. It's it's all it's all
mental. So whether celibacy has any
metaphysical merit or not depends on
your mental states. And as a general
rule, it does. I mean it's it's
meritorious in a way you know it gets
you closer to enlightenment or at least
it can for a lot of people which is why
the Buddha apparently also Jesus of
Nazareth many other spiritual teachers
have encouraged
celibacy but it doesn't work for
everybody just like Jesus says with
regard to his three kinds of unix you
know there's those who are born unix

those who are made unix and those who are unix for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. And then the next thing he says is it's not for everybody because some people they'll they'll be celibate, but then they're just horny as hell all the time. You know, it's like a starving man just thinking about food all the time. You got some celibate renunciant just thinking about sex all the time. I mean, it can happen. I was like that sometimes. So, I mean, you can get demerit from being celibate, too. If that's the kind of celibate you are, just I mean you're just scoping out every female that you come across. I

mean, a lot of guys who aren't celibate are like that too. Like Ram Doss pointed out that that there's some people, some guys especially, they go to a party, they just immediately categorize everybody into three categories. There's women that you could possibly score with. There's guys who are like competition for the women you could possibly score with. And then there's just like insignificant nobodies that you don't pay any attention to. So if you're celibate and you have this kind of attitude, you know, even just potentially, then yeah, you're going to get demerit too. But in Buddhism, it's

not all black or white. It's almost impossible to do anything that's pure good or pure evil. It's always a shade of gray.

So for some people celibacy is light gray and for other people celibacy can be dark gray. I mean you got like prison inmates in prison who I mean they're celibate. I mean they're sort of like incelss. I guess either that or they're just bugging some twink if you'll pardon the expression. But there are some who just like are staunchly heterosexual and so they're going to be celibate in prison, but that doesn't

make them saints.

So yeah, so celibacy

um just celibacy in and of itself is

sort of like ethically neutral because

it's the mental states that really

determine whether something is good or

bad, meritorious or unmmerritorious,

wholesome or unh wholesome. As it turns

out though, I mean, some actions are

extremely difficult to do with wholesome

mental states, which is one rise, one

reason why there's precepts, you know,

don't steal, don't lie, that kind of

thing, because it's difficult to steal

or lie without having unh wholesome

mental states that are creating bad

karma for

yourself. But celibacy in general is considered to be a good thing in Theravāda Buddhism. And as a general rule, at least a person who is sincerely trying to live a dharmic life than celibacy is better than the alternative from the traditional Theravāda Buddhist point of view that's found all the way back in in the Pāli texts. You know, it's it's pretty it's pretty strenuously stressed in the Pāli texts that, you know, the Buddha says you should avoid having sex with a woman the way you would avoid falling into a deep pit of burning coals. This kind of thing.

So, it's not for everybody. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin.

And Austin says, "If I wiped everyone's mind of the number three, would three still exist?" No, it would not.

I mean, even if you're a nominalist, you reject

some three up in Plato's heaven, you know, like the the primordial three that's supposed to exist and it just sort of infuses with threeness any group of three or just the abstract idea of three like when people are doing math, that kind of thing. If nobody's thinking of it, it doesn't exist.

I mean multiplicity doesn't exist unless somebody is thinking of it and that would include

threeness. So I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. This from

Xenithoid. I'm going to check to see if we are recording. Yeah, we are. At least it says we are. Okay. Xenithoid says,

"Well, I definitely this is this is sort of like three complicated kind of

longish political economic questions, I think." Anyway, Xenithoid says, "While I

definitely consider myself a social conservative, I know that I don't know

[__] about economics or political theory. If I were to seriously and

objectively research these topics, I may either become a classic far-right conservative or a social conservative or fiscal liberal, which I guess would be the opposite of libertarian. Apparently, there is a political party called National Bullsheism or Nazbull, which combines right-wing social positions and traditionalism with left-wing economic theory. This is not the only socially conservative and fiscally liberal political party, but it seems to be the most popular one and actually has some prominence in places like Russia. Perhaps this ideology can fix the mistake Marx made in believing

the blank slate theory while still keeping potentially good points from his economics. Have you ever heard of or had any experience with Nazbs?

No. Long question, one syllable answer.

No, I've never heard of I've never heard of national bolsheviks. And I'm I'm not sure if his next question or questions are going to refer to this in further detail, but I mean

socialism, it's really kind of an an ethical like a conundrum. It's it's like if you don't have socialism, you know, it's

like you don't have like the government, you don't have a welfare state, let's

say. So, I mean, you're going to have people who are just hitting rock bottom, just freezing to death in the wintertime, maybe starving to death, dying of easily curable diseases, this kind of stuff. And I mean from a just a hardnosed nationalist point of view or just like a Darwinian point of view that wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing.

It's like the weak are just, you know, the misfits are just being purged by Darwin, you know, and it's the strong are are succeeding, which should be a good thing, at least from that point of view. Whereas in socialism, I mean, it has its bad points. It's like it it like lifts up the like the people that can't

really compete, you know, it keeps them going and they're able to just keep reproducing and have children that also can't compete. So, from a Darwinian point of view, it's it's kind of I mean, you don't really have devol devolution, but it's it's it's kind of tending in that direction. You know, it's causing what Edward Dutton is always ranting about how, you know, you've just got all these like mutation mutational load and lowered intelligence and so forth because it's like you don't have the the least capable of competing dying out. And so it's in a way it's visiating the species, visiating the population. is

making it less robust, less intelligent,
less strong,
etc. But from an ethical point of view,
you should have
compassion. So, I mean, personally, I
mean, I I I ranted a little bit about
this in a previous Q&A, possibly the one
right before this, where I mean, it's
not good to let people just starve to
death or freeze to death. I mean, there
should be some compassion and you should
help them. It'd be better though, first
of all, if it's private private charity
instead of just paying more taxes and
letting the government do it because if
it's private charity, not only do you
not have a socialist welfare state, but

you get to choose who you're going to help for starters, and also you're gathering up treasures in heaven. I mean you are doing something meritorious by helping somebody with your own volition rather than just having money deducted from your paycheck as taxes. And then some bureaucracy, some corrupt bureaucracy may be, you know, distributing like a percentage of that, certainly not all of it, to poor people who are then using the money to buy nachos and and purple drink and just having diabetes, all these health problems from like just foolish choices and just having having packs of kids

that they also can't really take care of.

So I really don't think that uh

Marxism or like some sort of cons like socially conservative socialism I mean it'd be an improvement over like degenerate

socialism but socialism in general should be kept to a minimum and it would be better to just promote as much as you can private charity to help people in need. And that's the way it used to be back when Western civilization was predominantly Christian. It would be like churches would take care of the poor. People would donate to their church, they'd pass the plate around or

whatever, and then there'd be church groups that would be helping the poor. And that would be preferable to having the government do it. But I'm not even answering the questions. I mean, the the answer to the question is just a simple no because I've never heard of or had any experience with Nazbolls. So, I'm just going to move on to uh Xenithoid's second question, which is, do you think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? And that's that's the actual question. But some people including um Xenithoid like having like some

explanatory commentary to kind of fill out the question I guess make sure that I don't answer the wrong question or some such. So after saying do you think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? He says, "I'm sure many of the most hardened commies from the Russian Revolution would vomit at modern leftist moral degeneracy, even if they were fed up with what was considered traditional at the time."

While I don't think early Christianity is a good example of social right, fiscal left political thought, as they would have been the social lefties of their day, many modern Christians are appalled by capitalism for its mammon

worship. There's actually a subreddit called

r/conservative socialist with a lot of people on it who seem sensible enough

which makes me more interested in this obscure section of the political

landscape. Okay. So, getting up here,

social conservatism, which is like

having moral

standards, like traditional

conservative, old-fashioned moral

standards, which I mean, there's can be

all kinds of different kinds of social

conservatism. I'm assure Buddhist social

conservatism would be very different

from Muslim social

conservatism. and fiscal

liberalism. Well, I mean, liberalism is

kind of a weird word because

um a lot of people in in America,

especially like people who vote

Republican, consider liberals to just be

any any person who's leftwing. So, that

even like a a Marxist would be called

liberal, which I don't I just don't see

that.

So fiscal

liberalism, social conservatism and

fiscal liberalism. So fiscal liberalism

I would assume would be a welfare state

or at the very least you've going to

have the government having some

socialized tasks like you know re up

until relatively recently the postal service had kind of a government socialized monopoly on sending mail.

Now, of course, you've got other groups that are doing it even a little better in some

cases or, you know, just like taking care of roads, maintaining public property because they don't realize that it's socialized that, you know, they can be on board with

that. But fiscal liberalism, I I assume it means like a welfare state. It's like the poor people just get checks from the government, you know, low income, public housing, that kind of

thing. So, do I think social conservative and fiscal liberalism are compatible? Yeah. I mean, they can they could fit together. I mean, it would make the the fiscal liberalism or like the economic leftism uh a little more stable, a little less self-destructive because when you've got like social leftism, which is just anything goes, you know, it's kind of libertarianism with no ethical principles really holding it, you know, just keeping it on track, just anything goes. And then when you combine that with a welfare state, then really it's just sort of a toboggan ride downwards. But again, I'm not nearly as

left-wing economically as I was in my younger days. Not even then. I was sort of like a social eco libertarian.

And I was endorsing pretty much what I endorsed just a matter of minutes ago where it's like, you know, you shouldn't allow some

law-abiding citizen to freeze to death or starve to death or die of some easily curable disease that they should get sort of a bare minimum at least enough to keep them

healthy. At least with regard to easily curable diseases, I don't think the government should necessarily fork out millions of dollars to give someone some

long difficult cancer treatment that maybe is only, you know, 20% likely to save the person anyway. That's when when you have socialized health care, you have the government playing God, deciding who is going to survive and who isn't. Sort of like triage on in like a battlefield hospital.

And then it becomes corrupt too because the government always becomes corrupt. So what is the actual question? Do I think social conservatism and fiscal liberalism are compatible? Yeah, in theory it's it's compatible and I think social conservatism would combine with fiscal liberalism better than

social liberalism would combine with
fiscal

liberalism because people would be
encouraged to be self-sufficient. they'd
be encouraged to get a job instead of
having just being on welfare, being like
an unwed mother on welfare, having that
be seen as a viable career
choice. Then back not too long ago,
women were
shamed into being wed mothers instead of
unwed ones.

But when you've got the government just
sending you
money, then you can just do as you
please, sort

of. So, I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is an equally long question.

So, have there ever been any attempts at a kind of social at a kind of Buddhist communism or Buddhist socialism that were still genuinely in line with Buddhist ethics and tradition? That's the question. And then he continues, I'd like to think that there have been at least some Buddhist political leaders groups who really did want to help the poor without getting swept up in the [__] of Western liberal ideology. While the Buddha definitely wasn't a kami with an

attachment to lay people having perfect easy lives, he did express some fiscal liberalism in the sutas such as saying poverty causes crime and that there should be some redistribution of wealth. However, I think Buddhism is fundamentally opposed to communist ideals in spirit because it is above the flourishing of a small spiritual elite it is about the flourishing of a small spiritual elite where only the best of the best achieve the goal. not a please do all the work for me religion like Christianity. Buddhism requires a kind of leisure class in monastics and certainly isn't set on making an earthly

utopia. The desire to always have all your material needs met as if it would ever end your suffering is fundamentally [—] and unBuddhist. Okay, so let's get up to the actual question. Have there ever been any attempts at a kind of Buddhist communism or Buddhist socialism that were still genuinely in line with Buddhist ethics and tradition? Well, I mean the emperor Ashoka would have been uh like a a prototype of that because I mean he was definitely into Buddhism. the emperor Ashoka of India definitely Buddhist and he was trying to rule through Dharma where he's trying to keep like law enforcement and that kind of stuff to a minimum where

what was supposed to govern the country
and just sort of keep it like
regularized is just he's just promoting
Dharma and just encouraging everybody to
be as dharmic as they can. And then he
was sort of relying on like a kind of
honor system where people would live
dharmic lives. But at the same time, he
he set up like hospitals even he set up
like veterinary hospitals where people
could go or they could bring their dog
or whatever and be treated for free. So
that's kind of a step towards socialism.
you know it would be libertarianism kind
of but it would be guided by you know
Buddhist

principles and then he had a kind of
primitive socialism

going. So there is that and also I might
as well mention that back around the
19 80s I think Burma they had the it was
like the Burmese

I can't remember exactly what the slogan
was. It was the Burmese approach to
socialism that they were going to have a
kind of Buddhist socialism, but of
course it's run by a military
dictatorship. And so it's kind of like
the mafia trying to run a Buddhist
socialist state and it didn't work at
all. You know, at the very beginning,
the government just comes in and just um
what is it? not socializes, but what

what is it when the the government just like confiscates your your business, you know, it's the opposite of privatizing it. That that happened a lot. They were like prosperous shop owners and so forth in Burma. And then when the the Burmese military government decided they're going to try to be socialists, they're going to be Buddhist socialists, they just confiscate people's shops and things just went downhill from there. So there have been attempts. I think Ashoka's attempt even though it probably wasn't extremely socialist, not by modern standards. Nevertheless, you know, it was encouraging compassion. He

was no doubt encouraging private charity as much as he could. not only to lighten the load on on the government but also to like encourage people to earn merit through helping the poor and so forth.

And even like Islam does the same, Christianity does the same, Judaism does the same. At least in the texts, it encourages people to help the poor.

But of course, even when Christianity was pretty much universal with all this emphasis on help the poor, you still had people starving to death and freezing to death and so

forth. So I guess I answered that question. Let's just move on to the next one, which is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, "I sometimes attend meditation sessions and dharma talks at my local Buddhist temple. In addition to offering meditation and dharma discussions, this temple also hosts kung fu classes. Is there any historical and/or philosophical link between Buddhism and any of the martial arts? If so, which ones and how?" Well, I don't know if Romeo is American. If he is American, he's not old enough to remember the old kung fu TV show which is about Shaolin monks in China who I mean Shaolin monks their their dharma practice is sort of like their meditative practice consists largely of

martial

arts. Um you know it's just sort of like uh I don't know how to explain it really. It's just like you're in the present moment. You're not thinking. you just you just become a master of martial arts through just being you know in harmony with the moment and then they can like throw spears at you and you're just dodging the spears and so forth. So I mean obviously Shaolin Buddhism which is a kind of Mahayana Buddhism in China and nowadays there's like the original Shaolin monastery in China that I think the government just allowed it to continue for tourism purposes. They're they make money from the tourism and I

don't know how much the monks
there are really interested in Dharma.
is more of just kind of a martial arts
school

maybe. But when Mahayana Buddhism, yeah,
I mean there's all kinds of all kinds of
stuff, you know, it's sort of like the
strictness of the early Indian schools
just got blown wide open and almost
anything goes. Tantric Buddhism just you
can do all these things that in the
early text is just strictly prohibited.
For there's an one one example also with
regard to Burma is that before the
Burmese converted to Theravada Buddhism at
the decree of King Anorata of

Pagan that they mainly were following a kind of tantric Buddhism called Mahari and it's not Maharia like the the great nobles it's I think it's comes from the word arana in in Pali which or Sanskrit which means forest. So it's like the the great forest tradition, but they drank alcohol and they ate they ate in the afternoon and apparently they had what is called the youth pre-main noctis which means that before a girl got married some village girl got married on her the night before her wedding night she got sent to the monastery to learn the the ways of love or whatever. But these Mahari monks also practiced a kind of boxing which I mean that's could

might be a mistranslation into English.
It could be some kind of martial arts,
maybe some kind of kickboxing or
something. But it does happen,
especially in Mahayana, not nearly so
much in Theravada. If you've got martial
arts like monks practicing martial arts
like maybe like Thai monks or Burmese
monks doing Thai or Burmese
kickboxing just sort of as an amateur
you know amongst themselves at the
monastery or something. They would be
considered lax, sloppy, shameless
monks. Probably happens, but it would
not be the most serious, conscientious
monks who were doing that sort of thing

in terra Mahayana is a whole different story. So, I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from

Quistor. And quisetur says, "When a being comes out of hell, do they need to recover from the trauma or is all that forgotten in their new life?" Um, it kind of reminds me of something Rahm Doss said in one of his books about how you can kind of tell if a baby is coming from above or below. Um cuz like a baby who has had a fortunate, you know, pre-birth experience or, you know, just sort of a um a tendency towards pleasant, you know, nonharmful

pre-birth experiences, you know, in their previous life. They're happy babies. They don't cry a lot. They're not as fussy. They trust strangers, you know, like some stranger can come hold the baby. The baby's fine with it.

Whereas other babies who did not come from higher up, you know, they're they cry a lot. They're fussy. They they'll just start screaming if someone they don't know picks them up, that kind of thing. So, yeah, I think a being who comes out of hell and is born as a human, they probably would still have a lot of baggage from their previous, you know, eons of torment. you know, they

would not be just a happy go-lucky,
cheerful kind of person who trusts
strangers and so forth. That they would
probably be um relatively unhappy kinds
of people just from the like the
momentum of their past life and just you
know it's had their it's had its effect
on

them. But I can't really speak from my
own personal experience because I do do
not recall having been in hell before I
was

born. And so I'm just going to move on.

Next question. This is from

PSA. And PSA has got more than four
three questions here.

Um, but since two at least two of his

questions are extremely simple questions to answer, I think I might let this slide even though he's he's tried to to like trick me here. So, his first question is, "What are your thoughts on the show Black Mirror? Never saw it. I don't think I've ever even heard of it. No idea. Utterly clueless." PSA's second question. Which Netflix show or movie would you recommend with subliminal or unintentional Buddhist lessons? I don't have Netflix. I don't watch Netflix. We had Netflix like a couple years ago. Didn't watch it a whole heck of a lot. Um, I think maybe The Walking Dead was on Netflix, even though it didn't

originally appear on Netflix, but I think they they were showing The Walking Dead, which is like the only the only show I was watching on Netflix back then. And but there was also a series called The Crown that my woman and I watched, which was about Queen Elizabeth II. Um, but I mean, that's it. That's my that's my uh my knowledge of Netflix. I really I mean I I can't really answer this question either. I couldn't recommend any Netflix shows or movies with subliminal or unintentional Buddhist lessons. I mean if if The Walking Dead really is on Netflix, then you you got recollection of

death, that kind of thing. And that's
that's about

it. So I'm just going to move on to
PSA's third question.

which is as follows. When you lived in a
cave in Burma, did you actually live
there the whole time or did you spend
the day in the cave and go back to your
cootie at night? I'm just worried about
you being bitten by ticks at night and
harassed by bats. Well, you don't have
to be worried because I'm not there
anymore. Um, and I think you'd be more
likely to be bitten by ticks in a hut
than in a cave. I just I would just
guess

offhand. Um, let's see here. Did I actually live? Yeah, I mean when I lived in a cave, I didn't have a cootouti. Usually the cave would have like a thatched roof in front of it either like a butting the side of the cave or else you know it'd be like, you know, 15 feet in front of the cave. There'd just be like this little platform, you know, like a bamboo platform with a thatched roof or a bamboo roof and um I'd like eat my meals there because you don't want to eat meals in a cave. If you live in a cave, you're better off not eating your meals there because just one crumb falls onto the floor without you noticing. there's going to be an ant

finds it and then it's gonna alert its entire colony and you're gonna have just thousands of ants looking for the second crump.

So, I would go out um in in the morning and eat my meal under the the roof, you know, sitting on the the bamboo platform. Um but I would sleep inside the cave, spend the days inside the cave. I just pretty much live inside the cave most of the time. And the only time I was harassed by bats, um the the main cave that I lived in, I lived in this cave for gosh at least eight

years. Um, at first there was no well, it had a wooden door and it had like mosquito mesh over this the window which was it's kind of like windows like this. And because of the mosquito mesh, there was almost no air circulation inside that cave. And so it was just too stuffy for me to really sleep inside that cave with the doors closed. I'd have to leave the doors open at night and then bats would come in and then I would have to get up before dawn and close the doors so that the bats couldn't spend the night there because I mean you don't want bats spending the night in your cave if it's like a an like an enclosed small

cave. Um, I mean, for starters, it takes like two weeks off your lifespan. Every time you're trying to do walking meditation inside this cave, and this bat just swoops right at your face. I mean, it's two weeks off your life right there. And also, this they they pee where they're hanging upside down and it just stinks. And they're kind of creepy looking. If you ever seen a bat close up, you know, there's there was a couple times where um you know, I' I'd wake up after dawn and the the bat had already come inside and you cannot get rid of a bat. I mean, you can't get a bat to fly out into broad daylight. It's just going

to do everything it can to avoid going out into broad daylight. And you just look at it close up and they're like vibrating and they got like these little gargoyle faces and they're like kind of vibrating all the time. It's just weird. So eventually within a relatively short time, one of the first um modifications I made to that cave was to get a kind of chicken wire uh screen door put up, you know, with, you know, like spaces, you know, this big, you know, like an inch across that bats couldn't get through. You know, it kept out mostly rats, bats, humans, and snakes. Um, so bats weren't a problem there. Also, when I lived at Alando

Cathopa National Park, there was a great big cave there. And I mean, just the opening of it was like 100 ft wide and like 30 ft high. So, there were bats in there, but it was such a a spacious cave, they didn't bother me. I mean, there's a few times they were actually kind of helpful where I'd be doing walking meditation at night and there'd be like a mosquito, you know, you could hear this mosquito whining around me and then a bat would whip by and then it'd be silent. You know, it just zipped in to get the mosquito and and took off again. Although, there was one time I was sitting in that cave and I felt

something on my arm. I looked down. I'm looking right up into the looking right down into the face of this little gargoyle. This little bat was just like clinging to my shoulder right there. So, yeah, ticks. I never had much of a problem with ticks. I mean, that was You live out in the forest, then just walking through the trails, you're more likely to get ticks than if you're just staying by yourself. Bed bugs are a different matter. I mean, bed bugs, you have to always be on the alert. First time my cave got infested with bed bugs, I didn't know what they were. I'd never seen a bed bug before. I thought they were like baby cockroaches or something.

And then one day I'm reading a book in my cave and one of them is crawling across the book. So I just kind of flick it off like this and it splattered bright red blood. And I have a degree in biology. I know that insects don't have bright red blood but that I do. And then I realized and I started looking for them and they were just everywhere. I mean, it was an ordeal getting rid of those bed bugs, especially for a Buddhist monk who's not supposed to be killing them. You're not supposed to be using poisons and so forth. Although, you are allowed by Vinaya to take your bedding and spread it out in the sun,

which pretty much kills the bed bugs because even if the sunlight and the heat doesn't kill them, the ants find them. And then you've got like this ant highway of ants carrying little bed bugs back to their nest.

So, I'm I'm giving really long rambling answers to to questions here. So, I guess the question is, when you lived in a cave in Burma, did you actually live there the whole time or did you spend the day in the cave and go back to your cootie at night? Didn't have a cootie. And in fact, in Burma, you talk about a cooty, that's that's the bathroom.

That's the outhouse that uh I mean like a a monk's

hut would be his kamatan jou his
meditation building or something. Kudi
just usually in in Burmese means a
monastery
outouse but kudi in pali does mean a
hut. So yeah, I just pretty much lived
in the cave all the time and would just
spend the
mornings out
outside. I' I'd meet visitors and so
forth outside. And so now PSA has his
transgressive py question. He's got
question number
pi and he says, "Do you hold any
resentment in your heart towards the
nontacionics?"

And no, I I'm I'm pretty I'm I'm
forgiving of the non-tackian onx. And
then and then he says, "Notice that pi
is valid number safely placed between
three and four. Not quite four yet.
Therefore, no transgression has been
committed." But yeah, actually has
because the limit is three. Anything
more than three is is transgressive.
Even if it's not all the way to four
yet, three is the limit. Three shall be
the number of the
count. Okay. So I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Sedarta
lohachittita which is like
uh sida is like accomplishment or

attainment attainment

achieved copper mind something like

that. So anyways, Sedarta Lohachita

says, "Acting with determination or

adana can overcome bad

karma." Or acting with determination is

also a mental

karma. If you decide to act with

determination with clarity of purpose

without doubt, are you creating the

force of your

life? Or at some point, can the stream

of past karmas prevent you from

fulfilling that will?

So if you were paying attention, you may

have noticed that there are four

question marks in what is supposedly one question and that's not even his only question. So anyways, let's try to let's try to tease out what the actual question is

here. So it's with regard to

determination or adana which is one of the 10 parames in Theravada Buddhism.

Determination, unflinching

determination. Okay. Can it overcome bad

karma or acting with determination is

also a mental karma? Well, I mean it's

like a quality of your karma. I mean

determination is like just unflinching.

I mean it's it's like more I want to say

determined. It's just it's like

unwavering. It's like, you know, like a

determined action would be like an unwavering action that you're that you're not going to give up halfway through. So, I mean, that could be something good or something bad. I mean, it is considered to be one of the 10 parames, one of the 10 perfections in Theravada Buddhism. So, I mean, it is considered to be a good thing. I mean, you have to have a certain determination to attain the goal. unflinching determination. But I mean, it can also be something bad. I mean, you're just absolutely determined to get revenge on some enemy, then that would not be

meritorious determination

there. So, can acting with determination overcome bad karma? Well, I mean, overcoming bad karma, I'm not exactly sure what Sedarta is referring to here. I mean, bad karma, I mean, it's once it's there, it's got to run its course. So, you're not going to make it disappear. You're not going to make it become less really through determination, through acting with determination now. You know, it's already too late. You know, it's closing the barn door after the horse has gotten out.

So yeah, it's

like determination is like a quality of

your mental states that you know it's just sort of like a an intensifier so to speak. So let's see here. If you decide to act with determination with clarity of purpose without doubt or you creating the force of your life. Yeah. I mean it's still I mean it's still karma. Yeah, I mean definitely you're still creating karma. I mean in fact it could be a stronger kind of karma. So if you're doing a meritorious deed with determination, it's going to strengthen the karma of that meritorious deed. If you're doing a demeritorious deed with determination, it can strengthen the demerit. So or at some point can the

stream of past karmas prevent you from fulfilling that will? Um, I mean you can have

uh like mental momentum. That's essentially what karma is. It's like the momentum of your mental states, kind of the momentum of your stream of consciousness, so to speak.

Um, it won't nec I mean it can effectively prevent you from fulfilling some determination.

Um but I mean still I mean you can you can overcome that if you try hard enough if you have sufficient determination or it may be that you've

got determination not to give up and then you just can't do it. It's like the karmic conditions are just preventing you. I mean you're just going to like die before you get there. That kind of thing. So that's possible.

And I'm just going to move on to Sedarta's next question after the first question had four question marks which is let's see here it's all in quotes for some reason. I have a very rational mind. Sometimes I'd even say too rational or maybe too western. I know that faith is a shield, but for me, I find it very difficult to believe in Dava's heavenly realms or the Buddha's

miracles as the Tibetans describe them.

Do you think it's possible to reach enlightenment purely through reason or puna? Well, according to terabara, it is not possible to reach enlightenment purely through reason or puna because pa or reason in this case is one of the five balas, one of the five powers or also strangely it's one of the five faculties or the five indrias and four of these faculties or powers are paired up. So pa which here means more reason than than really wisdom is paired up with faith. Sad and pa there they have to be in balance. If you have too much of one you have too much faith and not enough reason then

you can believe anything no matter how ridiculous it is. But if you have too much reason and not enough faith you become skeptical to the point of just it just kind of immobilizes you. And the wisi ma which is the main commentarial work in terabara Buddhism says that a person with too much pa not enough sadda is like a person who is sick and their sickness is caused by the medicine that they take. So if you just try to make it through pure reason then I mean pure reason can't really motivate anything. It's the faith that motivates you.

[Music]

So, I mean I mean you wouldn't even really be practicing if you didn't have enough faith. That's one thing I used to say like I'm kind of the same way that I prefer reason to faith. I consider faith to be ultimately delusional. Faith is, you know, believing something that you don't have sufficient grounds to believe. You know, thinking that you know something that you don't really know, that kind of thing. And so I would tell people in Burma, you know, I I just don't have much faith. I'm more PA oriented. And they say, 'Well, I mean, you're you're dressed in monks robes. You've traveled halfway around the world

to live in this blazing hot wasteland with people that you you didn't grow up with. You don't know them. I mean, that that requires a certain amount of faith, doesn't it? And I had to admit, yeah, I guess so. I can say that I don't have much faith, but nevertheless, I was inspired to become a Buddhist monk with the intention of becoming enlightened or at least to get as close to it as I could manage. That kind of thing. So, I actually did have probably more faith than I realized. And I mean, if you're a Buddhist, it's there's going to be a certain amount of faith involved. You know, it's like before you

become enlightened, you still have to have faith in the idea that there is such a state as enlightenment. You have to believe without any proof that there was actually a person called God Buddha who taught this stuff and that he was enlightened. So, I mean, you could sort of rationalize it and call it convenient working

hypothesis, but still it it's pretty much a more a matter of faith than reason. that is if it's going to be motivating you to practice even that is more a matter of faith than reason like uh Emanuel Kant said I don't know if he said it in his critique of pure reason but he did say that and

David Hume was the same that pure reason
can't motivate

anything that you have to have like
value judgments in order to inspire you
to actually

act. So that may be where your faith
comes in in addition to just believing
that Buddhism is true without any actual
proof of

it. I mean some aspects of Buddhism you
can you can see the truth of it like if
you have enough insight if you have if
you're capable of introspection you can
see that the first and second noble
truths are pretty self-evident and the
third noble truth I mean that's just a

logical consequence of the second noble truth I mean if if all desire is caused by if all suffering is caused by desire then if you don't have the desire you don't have the suffering So it's like the third noble truth is just a logical consequence of the second. The faith comes in mainly with the fourth noble truth and that's practice. So considering that Sedarta lohachita technically asked five questions because there are five question marks, I'm going to move on to the next question which is from dimensional fuse. So he probably got teased a lot when he was a kid in school.

with a name like that. And he says, "You mentioned before that psychedelics were a spiritual activity for you. You just mentioned taking Iawasa, too." That was in the previous Q&A. Is this still a part of your spiritual journey? Or since your time as a monk, is it no longer useful or helpful?

Well, yeah. Before I became a monk, psychedelics were kind of my spiritual practice. Like I've mentioned before, I'd go off into a a forest by myself, you know, some remote wilderness area and and like take LSD, that kind of thing. And I when I was younger, almost

always I'd have religious experiences
when I when I would take
LSD.

Um but mainly now I mean I have taken
similar substances

uh after I stopped being a monk. took
took let's see even when I was a monk as
I've gotten older though I've noticed it
has a different effect on me that LSD
um when I was younger I mean it would
just kind of blow my mind wide open and
um you know like almost always I'd have
religious experiences as I got older it
was it would cause sort of a headachy
feeling and it didn't have as as
profound as an effect on me as it did
when I was younger. So there's that. I

mean Iaska is kind of in a class by
itself because it's not nearly such a
head trip. It's more of a visceral thing
for

me. Um but still I mean I have had um
like religious experiences on
psychedelics

um you know within the past 10
years. Um, but I mean, one of the
reasons why I don't take it nearly as
much as I did when I was younger is I
just don't have any
connections. I wouldn't know where to
get

it. So, I'm just doing fine without it.

You got a woman now who worries about

stuff like that

anyway. So, I mean, there's there's also that as kind of a foot on the brakes.

But there is a good chance that I will do it again

someday. And I guess I should just uh move on to the next question. But uh yeah, I mean I would be taking it more often if the guy who lived next door happened to have a good supply of of such substances, that kind of thing, which is not the case now.

So I just I mean you just take life as it comes you know you just deal the hand that you are

dealt and so I'm just going to move on to the next question here and this is

from throat lorbeller mangrove I believe
that is how you pronounce his name
spelled k r i e l and he says is
consuming cannabis against the fifth
precept of taking no
intoxicants and I've discussed this For
a fact, I think I've done an entire
video on this with uh my friend Brian.
Maybe, maybe not. But in like just
dealing with monks, like the the rules
of monastic discipline. And if it's okay
for monks, it should be okay for lay
people too because the rules are much
stricter for monks than for lay people.
And monks are allowed to use banga or
cannabis for medicinal purposes. In

fact, the rules of monastic discipline even allow a monk to own a pipe for inhaling the fumes of burning medicinal substances. Doesn't spec specify that it's just for cannabis, but it does specify that monks can use cannabis so long as it is for legitimate medicinal purposes. Whereas, um, doing it recreationally would be against the rules. At the very least, it would be a dooka offense, a minor offense of wrongdoing for taking a medicinal substance without there being a legitimate medical need for it. But I have to admit, when I was a monk, I did smoke cannabis um quite a few times, especially my last maybe 10 years as a

monk because that's when I started dealing with Westerners, I think.

Um, yeah, it's it's almost every single time I got any weed as a monk, it was some westerner giving it to me. And I was starting to meet more Westerners, especially in Burma after like 2012, I guess, when Burma kind of opened up. 2011 or 12 started being more Westerners coming into the country and then they'd be like offering me offering me a a hit off their pipe or something. But uh that was it's kind of like a borderline like I mean I'd be taking it partly for spiritual reasons in a sense sort of

like the psychedelics I mentioned in the
in the previous question where it it can
have like beneficial effects. I mean
cannabis for me it's not so much mind
expanding you know it's not like
necessarily lifting you up to a higher
level of consciousness but you're
stepping sideways you know it's like
it's you're having like an alternative
kind of consciousness which can actually
give you insights it's it can help you
kind of triangulate on samsara a little
better that you have more than one point
of view and it it kind of helps you
acknowledge that your usual way of
looking at the world isn't necessarily
the only way or the right way. It's just

one of many ways of looking at the world
and then you you know you you take a
bong hit or eat a gummy or whatever and
then you're all of a sudden you're
you're like sideways a little bit and
you're looking at the same things from a
different perspective and and it can
kind of loosen your grip on attachment
to some version of
samsara. But if you're just doing it to
get high, like as a way of escaping,
then that's not so good. I mean, um,
cannabis, I mean, it can be like
alcohol, too, which is strictly
prohibited. It's against the rules for a
monk to drink alcohol even by accident.

If he just accidentally drinks something alcoholic, he's got to make confession for that. He has broken the rules.

So in a way cannabis is considered not as bad as alcohol in orthodox terra Buddhism but still if you're doing it for recreational purposes

then it would be it'd probably go under the the precept of you know I undertake the the precept of abstaining from ale wine and other intoxicants which cause cloudedness of mind. So if if the cannabis is just kind of dumbing you out, you know, sort of like narcotics or something, just kind of putting you into a, you know, kind of a stupor, then yeah, that's not

good. But for me, it's like I I' I'd have these urges to do walking meditation if I would get high as a monk. You know, it's just walking meditation goes much it's it's so much nicer for some reason. But it's it's going to definitely be dependent upon your mental states like your attitude that just an outward act is uh is sort of morally neutral. It's the the mental states associated with that act. So, if you've got glaucoma or something and cannabis helps with that or you've got some other kind of it I mean it could even be like a psychological just

like stress, you know, stress could be considered a kind of medical problem and it just helps you to relax and calm down, that kind of thing. So long as it's not stupifying you, then that could be a legitimate uh use for it. But that would be controversial. You'd have people, you know, like like the the hard-nosed like moralists would say, "No, that's just wrong. You shouldn't do it." And then other people say, "Well, I mean, you got reasons for taking it, you know." But yeah, I've I definitely prefer cannabis to alcohol personally.

Anyways, is I'm just getting back to the

question though. is consuming cannabis against the fifth precept of taking no intoxicants. It depends on the circumstances and it depends on your motivation, your reasons for taking it.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from

Ryan. Ryan says, "I've watched several of your videos with Ajan Punadamo. Your your knowledge depth reminds me of Biku Samita, RI, from Denmark. He committed a word that you're not supposed to say on YouTube. Do you know who this beu was? His vids are still on YouTube. And I had never heard of him until I happened to meet somebody who knew him. And so I I

learned about this this Danish monk Samita from this other person who was telling me about him, how they had been communicating and so forth. And how this this beu I think it was after his father died or something. It was like he had some kind of episode that he kind of became unhinged or some such. At least he appeared that way to people who knew him and then he selfdeleted. Um, but yeah, I've I can't recall. I might have seen briefly like one video from him, but it didn't make much of an impression on me. And so I I really do not recall him. I don't remember what he looked like or any such thing.

And so I guess I might as well just move

on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "Do you think the bodhicattva ideal might have been the result of contacts with early Christianity in the areas of West Asia around the first and second centuries? Uh I consider it unlikely. I mean there are a lot of people who believe that doubting Thomas, the Apostle Thomas actually went to like southwestern India and that there there are actually Christians in southwestern India that have been there since ancient times that considered St. Thomas to be the founder of their Indian um Christian tradition.

But I it's it would have happened so soon. It's like Mahayana was already beginning to arise by the time of Jesus of Nazareth and the bodhicattva ideal was probably already well established by the time Christianity ever found its way in India.

So what I think happened with the the the Mahayana bodhicattva ideal, I think I read got this idea from Francis story who was like a one of the early western writers about Buddhism. This is like back in the 1950s kind of like Edward Kay those kind of guys and he was saying that um the bodhicattva ideal which is probably a

mistranslation of the polyword bodhic
sata that bodhicatta probably has the
sata part being a kind of past
participle of the verb sadi which is to
be bound for to be attached to be
dedicated to. So probably bodhic sata in
pali meant someone who is bound for
enlightenment. It meant someone who
wasn't who was destined to become a
Buddha but hadn't become a Buddha
yet. But apparently early Mahayana
Buddhists didn't quite understand the
etymology of the word bodhicatta and so
they assumed sata meant being. And so a
bodhicattva is considered to be a kind
of enlightenment being which is kind of

ironic because a
bodhicattva I mean traditionally isn't
someone who is is is someone who's
postponing enlightenment
indefinitely until all beings are saved
even though all beings ultimately don't
exist.

So anyways, you had the the
glorification of the Buddha. Like when
Buddhism became more of a popular
religion, you have more kind of normie
type people who are more
devotionalistic than really inclined to
practice strict dharma for the sake of
becoming enlightened. They want to just
worship, you know, some great being,
some godlike being. And so they started

glorifying the Buddha. And one of the ways that they glorified the Buddha was through jotaka stories where they would there there'd be these stories called jotakas where I mean the a lot of them started off just being fables you know sort of like as fables in India sort of like you find like in a a text of of Indian fables like the punch tantra or something like that where they would just become Buddhasized you know the hero would be the Buddha in a previous life And some of the other um characters in the story would be some of the Buddhist chief disciples. And then at the end of the story, you know, he would

point out, you know, I was this wise
rabbit and you know, venerable Sar Puta
was the wise otter or or whatever, you
know, and anyways with this kind of
glorification of the Buddha, it started
separating the Buddha from his disciples
where he was considered to be just
vastly beyond any other enlightened
being. So his orant enlightened
disciples still were nowhere near to
being at the level of the Buddha even
though I mean the Buddha was I mean he
was essentially saying I became
enlightened you can become enlightened
too and when you're fully enlightened it
doesn't get wiser than that full
enlightenment is maximum

wisdom so I do think that the whole idea of a Buddha being just qualitatively way above an ordinary enlightened being. I consider that to be largely the result of the glorification of the Buddha, which is just a human thing. I mean, the Christians turned the founder of their religion into God Almighty. Buddhists didn't go quite that far, but they went a hell of a lot farther than the Muslims did.

So probably the bodhic sava ideal just came from glorification of the Buddha just showing how you know it's so much nobler and better to dedicate just just eons and eons to perfecting all of your

parameies so that you can become fully enlightened without even needing a teacher. And Christianity was I mean it arose around the same time that Mahayana was arising in India. So I don't think that there would be much likelihood of the bodhicattva ideal coming from Christians. And so I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana.

And sea of action sepad zeda says, "You have claimed before that religious figures like Muhammad might have had epileptic seizures and modern neuroimaging has shown that people have people having mystical experiences are heavily correlated with the temporal

lobe which is also related to temporal lobe seizures. The same is true when you give people drugs like mushrooms and they claim to have mystical experiences and heavily involve the temporal lobe.

Maybe mystical experiences are just the brain shortcircuiting. And since the brain is always trying to explain things and it has no subconscious understanding of itself being a biological computer that shortcircuited. Uhoh. The the my woman's

computer the my backlight or the the light that helps light up the things.

Okay, let's go like

this. Now, I was supposed to jiggle the

the mouse every once in a while to keep it from going off, but it didn't work. Okay, I'll just have to jiggle the mouse every now and then, I guess. Okay, let's get back to Sea of Action Cadina before the the computer so rudely interrupted me. Maybe mystical experiences are just the brain shortcircuiting. And since the brain is always trying to explain things and it has no subconscious understanding of itself being a biological computer that's shortcircuited, it comes up with a rationalization that this is somehow something spiritual or divine as something beyond itself and the world. But in reality, rather than being a divine intervention, it's nothing but a

result of being a biological slave to
chemical reaction of the physical brain
and seovacin cadena. you should be
ashamed of
yourself. What do you make of this
theory as a
biologist?

Well, I actually came across this
theory. It was like in Time magazine or
maybe Newsweek magazine. I think it was
when I was a monk and there was I just
went to some place that had this stack
of old Time and Newsweek magazines or
maybe some other monk just bequeathed
onto me this stack of Time and Newsweek
magazines that I was just systematically

looking through just to see all the stuff that I missed in the news over the past 20

years. And they had some article about they were doing some kind of a PET scan. I think it was called positron emission topography or something like that where um you know they can see what parts of your brain are active when you're doing something or not doing something and so they have somebody meditating like in a deep meditative state I think it was mainly Tibetan monks and they would find that certain areas certain area of your brain that usually is lit up goes dark and then of course the materialists the the people the followers of science

scientism who are writing the article
are saying there you go. It's like that
part of the your brain that that
acknowledges

multiplicity is goes dark and so it's
just turned off and so you you you have
this illusion that it's all one. But
really, I mean, they just
completely like ignore the possibility
that that part of your brain isn't
acknowledging pre-existing multiplicity.

It is generating
multiplicity. So, let's see here.

Uh, I'm not sure if I claimed that
religious figures like Muhammad may have
had epileptic seizures, but in Dostki's

the idiot, Prince Mishkin, who is like this Christlike figure who has epilepsy, thinks about Muhammad, how Muhammad supposedly he had some kind of made a trip all the way to I can't remember if he went to heaven or not just while the pitcher was tipping over. It was before any before any water actually spilled out and hit the floor already. He had gone to heaven and back. Something like that. And Prince Mishkin was thinking, "Yeah, he must have had epilepsy." Cuz the same kind of stuff happened to Prince Mishkin, how he'd have these mystical experiences right before having an epileptic

seizure. But the thing is, I mean, your brain, I mean, even scientists will will tell you this. The purpose of your brain is not to understand reality. The purpose of your brain is to keep you alive long enough that you can have babies. Preferably that you can have babies in such a way that your babies will live long enough to have babies. You've got to you've got to like continue your DNA going.

So the purpose of your brain is not to understand reality. Like the natural brain is not an enlightened I mean the natural brain doing its natural thing is

not

enlightened. So to assume that any deviation of the function of your brain from the natural way of things is going to take you farther away from reality. I mean that's just wishful thinking unless you've got some really hard evidence to support that. In some cases no doubt you have some kind of brain malfunction.

It's going to take you, well, I don't know if it's going to take you farther away from reality, but it's definitely going to shift you into a different version of reality that most other people do not share. But just because your brain isn't like functioning normally or naturally,

that doesn't mean that it's that it's
whatever the aberration is is going to
take you farther away from reality. I
mean, it can take you closer to reality.
under certain
circumstances.

So yeah, I'm not even sure if if all
like somebody like who was that early
Greek philosopher
permenities who's just saying it's all
one. I don't even know if he ever had a
mystical experience. I mean you can use
just sort of like
intellectual philosophizing to take you
to the same
conclusion. It's really not that

difficult that that multiplicity is is just like a an artifact generated by perception.

So yeah, see what what's the actual question? Where is the question mark?

Where is the damn it question mark?

Okay. What do I What do I make of this theory as a

biologist? Well, still I mean I'm I'm a mystic first and a biologist second, I guess. So it my theory would be what I what I just said that just because I mean your brain is not designed to know reality. That's just for starters.

That's pretty basic. And so any malfunction or like aberration of brain function, it's not going to necessarily

be taking you away from reality because you weren't in reality to begin with. In fact, it's there's a good chance that certain things if they're just sort of stopped in in your perceptual process, it will take you closer to reality.

So that's my theory and I'm just going to move on to seovat zena's second question here which is is saying it's all just empty and illusory just the Buddhist version of it's all just particles and chemical reactions for materialists. Well I mean obviously it's not just the Buddhist version of that. I mean they're coming from very different

positions. So I mean there's a little bit of

overlap. So the Buddhist saying it's all just empty and illusory and some material is saying it's all just particles and chemical reactions. I mean they can be used for similar motives.

You can as a way of sort of detaching from this some

sorrow that that we're so attached to.

Although the materialist they're just justifying clinging to a different

samsara whereas a Buddhist I mean most

Buddhists probably also are just

promoting clinging to a different

samsara but at least it's it's not as

that's that's not what it's supposed to

be you know it's not like you're just preferring this version of reality to a different version of reality or this model of how it is with some other model of how it is which is scientists are doing that it's it's all just empty and illusory including all models. So the Buddhists are going farther in that direction definitely than some scientific realist materialist type. But I mean they can be used for similar reasons as a way of helping you to detach from this mellow drama. And so I guess I'm just going to move on to sea of action sepat's third question

which is you have said there are sutas
where the term Buddha is used
synonymously

for based on this wouldn't the Mahayana
claim allegedly of anyone who is fully
enlightened giving teachings of becoming
enlightened be considered Buddha Vachana
and there's kind of a backstory to this
question whereas recently ly on the
discord server there was a lot of debate
going on. There's a purand Buddhist on
on the server who is saying that any
teaching that will help you to become
enlightened or that will inspire
enlightenment is Buddha vachana or
literally words of the Buddha or
Buddha's words Buddha's

speaking yeah literally be Buddha

speaking Buddha

vachana and so sevak is kind

of saying that I I mean if some other

person some other enlightened being can

be called a Buddha then whatever that

person says could be Buddhavna also um

it depends on how you want to interpret

how you want to define the term

Buddhavana at the time the term

Buddhavana arose there was one Buddha

it's the words of the Buddha not the

words of any Buddha not the words of

some Buddha chosen at random It was the

words of the Buddha, Godma Buddha, the

great philosopher of the Shakya

clan. And so, I mean, you could kind of call the the teachings of some other enlightened being to be Buddha Vachina, but I mean, how do you know? I mean, the Buddha was one person. You know, that person existed. You might not know for sure that he was fully enlightened, but he was called the Buddha. And so what he taught was Buddha Vachana. Even if you don't even think he was fully enlightened. So long as you agree that he was called the Buddha, then his words were

Buddhacha. But then if you want to just sort of cut Buddhavacha loose from the founder of the Buddhist religion and you just want to say any

enlightened being, anything they say is
Buddhavina. Well, that's a different
kind of buddhavcha. And you should
certainly

specify what kind of Buddhava you're
referring

to. And I mean, how do you know that
someone who cooked up a Mahayana

Buddhist text was enlightened? I mean,
maybe. I mean, some some Buddhist texts
are very profound, although those are
the ones that pure land Buddhists don't
have much use for.

So I mean if you want to redefine a
term away from you know like the
original intended meaning of it it's

like is something Buddha vacha just means did the Buddha really teach that it doesn't mean that did some other enlightened being let's say for the sake of argument that Nim Karoli Baba up there on the altar there he is that he was fully enlightened Well, he was a devotee of Hanuman the monkey god. He really liked um the Ramayana, you know, the the great story of Rama and with the help of Hanuman the monkey king, you know, going to Sri Lanka to rescue Rama's wife Sita from the demon Raavana. Well, I mean that would be Buddhacharya too, wouldn't it? I mean sort of I mean anything that he

would say would be Buddha Vajna also
including the stuff about Hanuman the
monkey god but I mean that would be
pushing

it and I mean to to just assume that the
teachers of say you know pure land
Buddhist texts were enlightened beings
when I mean the pure land Buddhists are
saying there is no enlightenment in the
world

anymore except maybe for you the early
ones who who were teaching this stuff.

But I mean puran Buddhism is teaching
you can't get enlightened in this world
anymore. It's the kaliuga. So you pray
to the mythological space Buddha to save

you or you recite his name over and over again and then that will cause some kind of merit or with his help maybe you wind up being in a way reborn into this pure land but in a way in this in a sense that I do not comprehend that you've got this realm this pure land which nevertheless isn't in samsara which I mean it's just turning the teachings of the original Buddha on its head. I mean, when you've got a teaching that is teaching in some ways the opposite of what the historical Gorama Buddha was in all likelihood teaching, then how can you call that Buddha

Vachina? Just any enlightened being which would include, you know, non Buddhist like like Hindus or like St. John of the cross that say St. John of the cross is fully enlightened. Well, anything he said about Roman Catholicism would be

Buddhavina. I mean, it's you're just it's loosed from its moorings. You've got like a a boat that's just floating a drift at this

point. So, let's see here. What is the actual question? There are sutas where the term Buddha is used synonymously for arhats. Yeah, there are a few. Based on this, wouldn't the Mahayana claim

allegedly of anyone who is fully
enlightened giving teachings of becoming
enlightened be considered Buddha
Vachana? Well, again, Nim Kuroli Baba,
Ramana Maharshi, maybe St. John of the
Cross, maybe Mister Ekhart, just Buddha.
I mean, you could have an enlightened
Sufi turning the Quran into
Buddhavina. Yeah. I mean, you've just
you you've loosened the word so far away
from its original intended meaning that
it becomes almost
meaningless. It certainly becomes a far
cry from what it originally
meant. So anyways, I'm just going to
move on to the next question. This is
from Cherasquez is who recently joined

the discord

server and he says why desire to be happy is a cause of suffering. Well, desire itself pretty much is suffering. So desire for anything is pretty much suffering, isn't it?

And it's like desire is like you would prefer that things be different or you would prefer that things be a certain way which isn't necessarily in accordance with the way things actually are. And so it's it's like a friction against reality. It's like struggling against the way things are. Even a desire to be happy is a cause of

suffering because it's like you're not just accepting the way things are. you are preferring or pushing I mean sort of mentally pushing just physical pushing is just neutral but it's like you're creating friction against the way things are by trying like wanting oh it's it's hard to to define this because I mean it's hard to say to define desire without just throwing in like wanting or desiring or preferring ing. You know, it's it's it's really a strange situation. I'm not sure how to define the word desire without using a synonym for desire in the definition. But essentially, you're struggling against empirical

reality, even if you're doing it in a very subtle manner. And that's that's suffering. I mean, desire itself is suffering. Even if it's desire for happiness, desire for enlightenment, you eventually before you become enlightened, you have to get rid of that last desire. So long as you desire enlightenment, you're never going to be enlightened. You have to stop desiring even enlightenment in order to become enlightened. It may be very useful at first. It's like skillful means. It's guiding you in that direction. And for an ordinary normie,

just like desiring money may help them to get money. desiring a certain woman may help them to get that woman, but still there's going to be suffering involved. It's just the way it is. And I guess I've spoken enough on that. It was a short question anyway. And so I'm just going to move on to the second question of Chzask as is, which is as follows. If materialism, if materialism isn't true, why when we take material medicines, for example, for boosting our dopamine or serotonin level in our brain, they actually work and people feel ecstatic or calm and happy. My advice, if you really want to understand how all medicines work

through the placebo effect, read Science and Health Was Key to the Scriptures by Reverend Teacher Mary Baker Eddy, the founder of Christian Science. That book is like the second bible to the Christian

scientists that she explains how all medicines work by the placebo effect.

It's your faith in the medicine that works or even if it's like a like a blind test or something. It's like the

faith in the people who give you the medicine, you know, it's like this

common shared belief that keeps Samsara going, keeps this version of the world

going. this common shared belief that if

you really believe something like
this pure faith, you have like this pure
belief in something, it's
true, including your belief that
medicines will make you feel better,
that whatever it
is. And she she has lots of weird
stories like
uh let's see what would be a good
example just like people with certain
mental illnesses that they have these
weird beliefs that actually like there
was this one woman she mentions who had
this mental breakdown when she got
jilted on her wedding day. Kind of like
Miss Havsham in in a Charles Dickens
novel. But she it was like her time

froze for her at this certain age in her life and even when she was very old she looked like she wasn't old. this kind of stuff or

um Mary Baker Eddie that the like

there's this section after

um science and health before you get to

key to the scriptures but there's this

appendix to science and health where

called fruitage which is um testimonies

of people who cured themselves or were

cured from reading this book and I mean

a lot of it is stuff that has

psychosomatic elements like um

tuberculosis or asthma or just bad

vision, this kind of thing. Those are

known to have psychosomatic elements.

Not that tuberculosis is, you know, just purely made up in your mind necessarily, but it's known that your mental states uh have a strong effect on whether you get it or not. You know, how badly you get it, that kind of thing.

So I mean some people there's one person who was cured of a broken arm from reading science and health is the key to the scriptures and another person the very first story it was like a 40 lb fibroid tumor where they had this tumor then they're reading this this book explaining to them that it's all mindmade because Christian scientists don't believe in physical matter and

also they don't believe in in any kind of illness. You know, the idea is God is good. God would create only what is good. God would not create diseases because diseases aren't good. Therefore, they don't really exist. So, I mean, it's just it's a kind of placebo effect essentially, at least going with this idea of of like uh you know, physical matter doesn't really exist kind of thing. I mean there's other ways other approaches like George Barkley who also did not believe in physical matter would had a different interpretation you know it's just God is implanting all these perceptions into

your mind so God implants the perception of you taking the medicine and then God implants the perception of you getting better even though the medicine didn't cause you to get better God did that kind of thing so there's different ways of explaining

it but mainly it's faith faith in samsara keeps this version of samsara going for us which includes the idea that if you take medicines or go to a doctor and get some sort of procedure done that you're going to get better or at least I mean it doesn't always work that way does it but it you know it's going to have some kind of

[Music]

effect read Mary Bakeretti she'll
explain it to you and I'm just going to
move on to Chzas is his third question.
Please explain to people that I am
definitely not Tig. And this is I mean
this kind of drama I've I've spoken
about this on a previous Q&A how there
was this guy named Tig who was kind of a
smart alec and was so smart alike that
he eventually got kicked off the server.
Just completely irreligious, irreverent,
just
trolling. And so then this other person
joins the server and he's he's got
certain attitudes resembling Tig. So a
lot of people start suspecting this is

just Tig trolling us again, pretending to be this other person. So then it started this joke going where, you know, it's sort of like the TIG witch hunts, you know, prove that you aren't really TIG. You know, we start turning against each other, this sort of thing. And so a little bit of that was directed towards Cherasas who joined the server. It's like people, you know, calling him TIG, you know, prove that you aren't TIG, this kind of stuff. And he's he's taking it seriously. He thinks that people really think that he's Tig, but he's just kind of TIG. He's like a he's like a Polish TIG. Maybe TIG has many forms, you know,

just so many an infinite number of
TIGs. And I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from
Phily's and Philes says in this video oh
this is like the previous video. This is
this uh this question was found in the
comments below the the previous Q&A. So
he says in this video you say western
culture is perverse for deifying a
Hebrew. Do you then believe Christianity
is perverse? Well, I meant it in a
certain sense that when I said that that
Western culture
perversely, you know, set itself up for
the whole JQ by
deifying a a Jewish person. I mean, what

the hell did they expect? I mean, you've got these people nowadays, these right-wingers, some of which some of whom are even Christians, who, you know, they despise the Hebrew race. They consider the Hebrews responsible for so many of the world's ills, but at the same time they they just kind of overlook the the elephant in the room, which is that Western civilization pretty much as a whole converted to worshiping a Jewish person, which is largely responsible for the Hebrews still being a discrete ethnicity instead of just going the way of the Phoenicians and just blending in with everybody

else. So, do I believe Christianity is perverse? Some of it I consider to be like absurd, unfounded, unwarranted assumptions. I think that Christianity is largely, not entirely, but largely based on unwarranted assumptions.

Yes, pure land Buddhism would be another case in point that it's just these beliefs you have to adopt that you couldn't possibly prove. There really is no empirical evidence really supporting it. But it's just the insanity of the religious mind is willing to accept these assumptions and just fervently believe that they're true when really they've got no evidence other than just

everyone around them believing similar stuff.

So it's sort of like what is it some kind of bias validation bias something like that the the exact term is escaping me.

So Christianity is it perverse? I mean I would consider certain aspects of it to be absurd and even early Christians acknowledge this. You know it is absurd therefore I believe it. this kind of stuff. But I mean, the real perversity of it wasn't Christianity in and of itself. If it had remained like a reform movement of Judaism, yeah, I wouldn't I

wouldn't have as much bad to say about it. But um for western culture to just abandon its own spiritual traditions in favor of a largely absurd group of assumptions that yeah I mean it's more western culture adopting it being in a way kind of perverse than the system itself. And perverse doesn't mean like depraved, anything like that. It just means sort of like sort of like what would be I mean I'm trying to use perverse in the definition again, but it's just sort of like deviating from what would be viewed as like appropriate or just you know the I I don't know how to

explain it but you know it's just sort
of like
willful just going against
oneself or just
willful deviation from what would be a
healthier or more
dharmic point of view. I don't
know but Christianity itself is not
necessarily perverse. I mean, think
there's a lot of absurdity
involved, but it's just Western culture
abandoning its own indigenous spiritual
traditions in favor of this largely
absurd group of assumptions that this
Jewish man is the creator of the
universe who died for our sins, which
came from a man made of soil, a woman

made from a bone, being tricked by a snake into eating some root. So, I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's second question. Overall, do you prefer Tolstoy or Dostoevsky? And from the two, which one do you choose, which novel is your best? Well, I prefer Dostoevsky to Tolstoy. Dostoevsky was actually a socialist and he tries to sneak in a little socialism.

Um like War and Peace. One of the main reasons why he wrote War and Peace, it wasn't necessarily socialism, but it was sort of um trying to destroy the protofascistic um idealization of

Napoleon that I mean he keeps going off on these tangents in War and Peace. If you've read War in Peace, you you'll you might remember this. He keeps going off on these tangents of how Napoleon I mean he didn't do anything great. I mean, he's he was just a product of his times. If Napoleon wasn't there, someone else would have been lifted up and have been just like the carbon copy just this this the same as Napoleon. This kind of stuff cuz really he was trying to exercise the ghost of Napoleon by writing war in peace because he just figured, you know, it's Napoleon was the wrong direction. We should be going into more softer, more compassionate, more, you know,

equal kind of a kind of an approach kind of. That was that was his attitude largely. Dostki started off as a socialist and then was cured of that big time in a prison camp in in Siberia and like in his one of his great novels the the possessed or the the devils is interpreted or translated uh variously you know he's got socialists um as symbols for Satanists essentially. So he just did a 180 on that one. But with regard to who was the greater greater novel, I still think Dostki even setting aside their politics, Dostki just had this I mean he was down in the trenches. He understood

human humanity from the bottom up.

Toltoy was more like on Olympus, you know, gazing down like like Zeus on the struggling masses, whereas Dostki was down there struggling with the masses and he just had these this profound insight into just finding divinity even in just the quagmire of of human filth.

So anyways, yeah, I definitely prefer Dostki to Toltoy. Although Toltoy was no slouch. I mean, I'm not saying that Toltoy was like a bad writer or any such thing. He was still a giant, but I just like Tolto Dostki better. And my favorite novel is is Dostki is the idiot. It is a profound novel. And it's it's weird that The Idiot I mean, you

can read it at at least three different levels. you know, there's the level of what's actually going on. Prince Mishkin, he falls in love with um Nastasia and she's got this self-destructive streak, you know, because of her pride and so forth. And there's this guy Regoan who's also trying to trying to get the girl and, you know, so on and so forth. And then at a different level, it's it's Christ and and the devil struggling over the soul of the sinner with Nastasia being the sinner. Also, in a way, she could be interpreted as Israel, but we don't need to get into that. That's kind of an

obscure reference. And then also at another level, the the whole book is apocalyptic. It's about the end of the world, but it's a great novel. Dosioski is the idiot. It's probably my favorite novel. And so I'm just going to move on to Phil Lethy's third question, which is generally was being a monk fun? And then in parenthesis, he says, "Sorry if this sounds a bit silly, but I don't know how else to word it." Um, being a monk, yeah, fun is it's not really the best word. I mean, like pleasant, conducive to contentment. Yeah, sometimes. I mean, it's not supposed to be really pleasant other than just the joy of of like meditation,

practicing dharma, living a pure and and peaceful life, that kind of thing. I did have a certain amount of fun, but um I probably have more fun now than I did when I was a monk.

So yeah, I mean it's it could be blissful at times and then other times it's just it's just like you're you're staggering through a like a sandstorm just blinded and and lost. I mean it could be like that sometimes too. So yeah, I mean I did have some adventures in Burma, you know, rafting down the Pollon Creek, that kind of thing. That was kind of exciting. hiking through Alando Kathaban National Park

barefoot with no

food. So yeah, I mean it definitely had its moments. It had its times of like just triumph and and excitement and and joy and all that, but it was definitely more subdued than a life of like a lay person. You know, like a monk is supposed to keep pleasure and pain to a minimum by just kind of taking this this middle road between pleasure and pain, so to

speak, but it definitely had its its good points. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And this is from somebody maybe called Tenku.

And Tenku says, "What do you think about Deepama?" And I really know about

Deepama just a little bit kind of circumstantial like reading. I read an article in a Buddhist magazine once about Deepama and just pick up little bits and pieces. I guess she was from Bangladesh. She was a a Buddhist from Bangladesh. And for some reason all the Buddhists in Bangladesh have the same have the same last name Buua or something like that. So maybe her last name was originally Buua. But um she was considered to be like very highly advanced. She was a terra Buddhist, not an ordained nun, but I mean they didn't have ordained nuns

back then.

So, I mean, she was just a like a spiritually very talented person who was very advanced and uh that's really about all I know about her. I don't think she's alive anymore. She was a figure of the 20th century. I I remember one anecdote where she came to America and I mean she was sort of idealized or idolized by sort of the leftist boomer uh western Buddhist because of course she was a spiritually advanced female. So you know you got to have diversity and all that. But um there was this story where um somebody went to a cash machine like in the side of a it was like on built

into the side of a bank or something and Deepa was she was really kind of overwhelmed with compassion about the poor person who who has to live inside that brick wall can't see anything that all they're doing is just exchanging money. She didn't know that it was all automated.

But yeah, I don't know enough about her to know just how wise she was. And if she was wiser than me, then there'd be no way I could possibly know how wise she was. And that's that's the way I mean earlier on in this this Q&A a similar question came up where it's like you know how can you know you know it's

like Echart Tollah Allen Watts I mean if
they're wiser than you you cannot know
how wise they
are and if you just don't know them also
I mean Deepa Ma I just saw a few some
like an article and just heard a few
things at random every now and then
that's all I know about her. So, it's
hard to say. In fact, it's pretty much
impossible to say. But that's that's all
I that's all I can say about her because
I really don't know much about her. And
I'm just going to move on. Next
question. This is from
Yugao. And his first question is is
actually two questions which we can just
conveniently lump into one question is

how are you? How is life under tariffs going? Well, I'm fine. I mean, when I was a little kid, I used to hate grown-ups asking me how I was because my mother instructed me when when somebody asks you how you are, you say, "I'm fine." But I didn't know what fine meant when I was like 3 years old. I mean, the only time I'd ever used the word was when I'm telling some grown-up how I'm how I'm doing. So, I'm fine. And then, how is life under tariffs going? Well, I've I'm so far there has been no significant perceptible effect of tariffs on my life other than just reading about them or

hearing about them in the news. That's it. You know, you've got some panicky cowards who are freaking out or just, you know, they're just cynical anti-Trumpists pretending to freak out because, you know, the tariffs, oh, it could be so horrible. And you know, they don't really have any confidence that Trump actually knows what he's talking about. In fact, Trump has been talking about tariffs since the 1980s. There was some famous interview he did on the Oprah Winfrey show, you know, long before he ever got involved in politics. And so, you know, by the same token, long before leftists started hating his

guts, where he was saying essentially the same thing. It's like, you know, countries like China are just taking advantage of us by having all these tariffs against American imports into their country, but we don't have similar equivalent tariffs against their stuff coming into our country, and something should be done about that. He's been saying that literally for decades, and there's a good chance he knows what he's talking about. So, I'm fine with I'm fine with the tariffs thus far.

So I'm just going to move on to Yugao's next question which is do you think that once some kind of a sacred teaching

leaves its nest and becomes widespread
it is susceptible to corruption and
originality can be lost like with dharma
being now widespread it doesn't even
have to leave the nest it doesn't have
to become widespread even I mean all it
happens is it gets into the hands of
humans and especially Especially if the
humans are not as wise as the founder,
then it starts to degenerate. And that
happened with Buddhism
back back when it was still in
India, ancient
India, long before it came to the west.
I mean, there was all kinds of weird
tantric stuff, the pure land stuff, just
I mean, it was just all over the board

from the ridiculous to the sublime.

So it's just a matter of falling into the hands of unenlightened humans. Even some enlightened humans can have some pretty weird ideas like Nim Karoli Baba assuming that he was enlightened again worshiped Hanuman the monkey god. So yeah it's just over time things change everything is impermanent. That's that's one of the basic teachings of Buddhism. Everything changes including dharma as an established religious system. It's just going to change over time partly just through random drift. I mean that's that's one reason how the ancient Buddhist schools arose. It was

back then and like Buddhism it could spread only as fast as a monk could walk. And so you'd have isolation. these different monasteries, they'd be isolated from each other. You know, 50 miles might as well be 5,000 miles today. And it'd just be like slight differences in emphasis. You'd have some teacher who was interested in one thing. He'd be teaching about that and then, you know, some other monastery 50 miles away would have a different teacher teaching, you know, some other emphasis. And it would just gradually result in in different schools splitting apart and drifting away from each other with no ill intentions at

all. So let's see. Once some kind of a sacred teaching leaves its nest and becomes widespread, it is susceptible to corruption and originality can be lost.

Um, well, you can still have original corruption, but I think he means he doesn't mean originality in the sense of like independent thought. I think he means like authenticity, you know, like um faithfulness to the original teachings. And that was lost. I mean, pure land Buddhism, I mean, this that's I mean, it's very different from what the Buddha the historical Gorama Buddha actually taught.

And that was ancient India. Purand

Buddhism was actually one of the earliest schools of Mahayana Buddhism that that are that is known today.

Anyway, I was surprised when I read that. I think I read about it in uh what's his name? AK Warders's history of India or his history of Buddhism in in India.

So yeah, I don't it doesn't even have to leave the nest and become widespread for it to become corrupted. That it's just natural that it's going to become corrupted. The only way for it not to be corrupted is for it to be dead. That it just doesn't change at all. It just remains in stasis that humans don't interact with it. Because if humans

start interacting with it, different kinds of humans are going to be interacting in other ways and it's just going to start diffusing and certain aspects of it will become more corrupted and it's just it's just the way it is.

It's impermanence. is

an so I'm just going to move on to

Yugu's third

question which is people lonely people are looking love in AI companions and care they give them back gives them much love and comfort. They are being criticized that that love is fake and only in their minds is it not that all love is just in our minds. Thus their

love is no different. Okay. Well, I mean love, my interpretation of love is that genuine love is acceptance. To the extent that you accept somebody, then you love that person. To the extent that you reject somebody, then you hate that person. Love is acceptance. It's not an emotion at all. Like when the Bible says God is love, it's not saying that God is an emotion. God just accepts all of us perfectly. Therefore, God loves all of us perfectly. So, uh somebody who loves like an AI generated mate, I mean love in the the biological sense, love is a kind of mating instinct. Then

it's it's like a perversion of that sort of like pornography is a perversion of biological mating instincts.

So, in a way, it'd be sort of like emotional pornography, something like that. And some guys fall in love with like girls like like webcam girls, that kind of stuff, too. At least the webcam girl is able to respond to some degree that he's not falling in love with, you know, just some chick that's in like a a magazine or in a in a video or something.

And then I guess the AI generated companions, you know, they're they've got like this generated love coming back

which is that love is fake presumably unless the AI is is advanced enough to actually be sentient. So I mean the AI love coming back probably at this stage in technological development is is not real love. It's just a a mimic mimicry of love.

So, I mean, the person's love for the AI mate can be genuine, but I mean, there's no love relationship. I'm not sure like in a real like a deep love relationship. You're you're creating a third being, you know, you've got person A and person B love each other and then it generates this person C, which is the combination of the two. My woman and I

are like that. We have like a group mind. Sometimes it's stronger than at other times. Sometimes we might seem kind of alienated from each other, especially like if if we're in like in a bad mood, whatever, you know, it's just sort of contracted or something. But still, there's like this third being which is us.

And I'm not sure to what extent you could have something like that with a like an artificial computerenerated fake human, especially when AI is not yet fully sentient and capable of of generating,

you know, genuine affection or anything like that.

So yeah, all love is just in our minds, I

suppose. But uh I mean there's obvious differences between a man's love for a woman and a man's love for an AI

generated woman. Partly because the

woman loves him back ideally. The AI

generated woman does not. And and also

you just do not have the the depth of

feeling because it's all just going one

way towards an

illusion. So yeah, there is some genuine

love in there. I mean, guy loves his

golf clubs. That's that's still love,

too. May not be

the profoundest kind of love, but it's still love.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. And we're getting close to the bottom here. We're down to our last two questions, which is kind of good. We're This isn't going to be nearly a three-hour long one. Next question is from Raphael, and I do not fully understand this question. Raphael says, "Should one realize awareness without self-consciousness according to the anat doctrine? Is that even possible?"

So to realize awareness, I'm not sure even what that means. To realize

awareness without

self-consciousness according to the anat
doctrine and does the this according to
the anat

doctrine clause or is it a phrase? I
don't remember now. Does that apply to
the entire string of words preceding it
or only to the uh

self-consciousness aspect? I I do not
understand the question fully but I
guess what it means is to realize

awareness does that mean but to become
enlightened to realize awareness without
self-consciousness should one realize
awareness without self-consciousness
according to the anat

doctrine I mean can any of you guys tell

me exactly what this means to realize
okay maybe it's not just realize
awareness. But what you're going to
realize is in parenthesis, awareness
without

self-consciousness and then all of that
you do according to the anot
doctrine. This this is a surprisingly
difficult question for me to even
understand to realize
awareness. Oh, this is like a
headacheinducing question because I do
not fully understand it. to realize
awareness. I mean, you can't just
realize awareness. That could just be
like a strange way of of becoming

enlightened. So, you realize awareness
without
self-consciousness. Okay. So, so that's
it. I mean, should you
realize
like consciousness that is not
self-conscious? Well, of course. Yeah.
Yeah. It's possible if enlightenment is
possible.

Did I just answer that
question, man? Because it's it's really
just the sentence
construction is such that it's difficult
for me to to figure out what exactly
Raphael is
asking. But I assume awareness without
self-consciousness is like a verbal

unit. And it's not just should one
realize awareness and then to do that
without self-consciousness, but it's
should you realize and then in
parenthesis awareness without
self-consciousness and all of that in
accordance with the doctrine of anata.
Well, of course.

Yeah,

man. It's it's weird. This reminds me of
Burmese that the Burmese language is
very abbreviated and so a lot of it is
just you got to fill in the gaps just
through
your it's like your harmony with Burmese
cultural conditioning that that a

Burmese person can just sort of say a few words and because Burmese people tend to all think pretty much alike that the other person can just fill in the gaps and knows what he's talking Well, like sometimes Burmese people would would say, "How long has it been?" And I'm like, "How long has been?" And they say, "Yes." And then I say again, like, "How long has been?" And then then they Yeah. And like, "How do I answer the question?" But the Burmese people know. I mean, they know what it means. I'm just going to go on to the next question.

This is from

Arin. This is the last question. And Aryan says, "Can you teach us about guardian spirits in Buddhism and how they are mentioned in the texts versus culturally? I don't hear of this topic often, but I hear them mentioned in some chance."

And yeah, I mean, in the in the poly text, there's not much mention of guardian spirits. In fact, I cannot recall any mention of guardian spirits in the text other than maybe something like in the Baja Suta. You had this non Buddhist philosopher named Baja who lives on the the west coast of India and

he's getting a lot of respect. You know, he's he's been practicing diligently and conscientiously in whatever system he belonged to. And the people were starting to believe that he was fully enlightened until he started thinking, "Wow, maybe I really am fully enlightened." And then uh a deity, a a deva who had formerly been uh like a relative of Baja in a previous life maybe comes to him and says, "No, I'm sorry. You're not really enlightened." But there is this Godma of the Shakya clan living far to the east who is enlightened. And so um yeah, I don't need to continue with the story, but I mean that would be about as close as a

mention of guardian spirits. You know,
it's sort of like some dava or
highranking pa even who has some
particular interest possibly due to some
relation in a previous life who is sort
of like keeping an eye on you that kind
of thing. I mean there there is some
kind of precedent for that in in the
poly texts

but that that there is some deity who is
assigned to to be your guardian spirit
or it's like a position that everyone
has one and it's just sort of like a
natural process of this deity who maybe
is waiting for a convenient opportunity
to be born as a human again who's still

interested in humans

who, you know, they just it's their duty
to like help you

somehow. Sort of like the opposite of
the screw tape letters, if you're aware,
if you know who what that means. Um,
yeah, that's that's really not found in
the in the text that I can recall. It
might be in there somewhere, but it
certainly is not

emphasized. So, this this idea of
guardian spirits, it seems to be more of
a Southeast Asian thing. I'm not sure
what the Sri Lankans feel about this. It
could be a cultural thing that that is
not found in the text. Like the Burmese
definitely believe in guardian spirits

and the ties apparently do too.

And so in Burma a lot of the time if you're sending meta like you've got a monk who's sitting in the front and he's guiding this meta meditation where you're you're sending meta to all these beings and it'll you know he'll have like the yogaonat and the the it's like the the tree the tree deities and and the the sky deities and the ground deities and so forth. And then you'll have the co-saltnat that you're sending meta to your co-altnat which is your guardian spirit. And then you send uh you send meta to the analn which is the guardian spirit not of you personally

but of your house of your home. Sort of like the ancient Romans believed in that kind of thing. And then you've got like the the guardian spirit of the neighborhood. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the city. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the the state or province. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the country. And then you send meta to the guardian spirit of the world. And the Burmese consider the guardian spirit of the world to be loanata who in the iconography is always kind of sitting with his legs with his feet together. You know, he's kind of sitting maybe leaning a little bit to

one side and his the soles of his feet are touching together. I don't know why. Maybe some symbolic reason for that. And I guess judging from the the meta meditations led by monks in a Thai tradition like in the Ajan Cha tradition, they talk about guardian spirits too.

So it may be more of a Southeast Asian cultural thing that has been incorporated into Buddhism rather than this belief in you guardian angels that I mean it's fairly common in the west too or at least used to be that it could just be a kind of like an archetypal sort of belief that I grew up as a kid

just believing that I had a guardian spirit because a Ouija board told me when I was a kid, you know, they they would the spirit came through. My father's guardian spirit. My father firmly believed in guardian spirits. His guardian spirit was a dead Vietnamese Buddhist monk named Ting is what he called him. And they just met in a previous life. And and this this this being just took an interest in my father and would keep an eye on him and come, you know, communicate to him through uh mediums in trance occasionally. Wow. There's more coffee in there than I thought, man. Ah,

so it does seem to be like a universal phenomenon believing in guardian spirits, but at the same time, I do not recall it being any kind of significant teaching in the poly text or in like early like poly Buddhism.

So I do not know exactly when it got incorporated into terra Buddhism but it's incorporated big time in Burma and probably in Thailand

also and like any kind of empirical truth or falsehood to the idea of guardian spirits. Um, I'm not exactly sure about that either. That I mean it may very well be that there are going to be certain spirits out there who are

particularly interested in you for whatever reason due to past life um, associations or whatever. Or maybe they just kind of latch on to you as a way of sort of vicariously, you know, living in a meat body because they don't have one at present. Something like that. I don't know.

But if you're in Thailand or Burma and you're sending meta with some monk leading the chant, there's a good chance you're going to be sending meta to your guardian spirit and also various other deities. I mean, they're generally considered to be a deva, but I would guess they'd be a relatively lowranking

unfamous kind of dva if they are the particular guardian spirit of an individual

person. And that's it. I just answered the last

question. So, as I should always say at the beginning and never do except maybe

once, do you have any questions you

think I can answer particularly about

early Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism? And

then the farther away you get from

Buddhism, especially Terravada Buddhism,

the less likely I'll be able to give

some intelligent answer. But there's

still possibilities. I mean I have many

interests and so

um you know like western philosophy,
eastern philosophy in general,
mysticism, monasticism like Burma, that
kind of thing. I'm generally pretty good
at answering. And like and subscribe if
you have not done so
already and be happy.

Alrighty

then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

145. I am your host Ponyo Bosa. And I must say 145 is obviously not prime because in the famous words of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the only number ending in five that is prime is five itself.

So 145 is 5 times 29. And I'm not even sure exactly why I got off on this prime number thing, which has been going for several episodes

now. But I did. This is my beverage. And it's, you may notice I'm drinking Starbucks today because my woman and I went to Home Depot to get

some mulch and some
plants.

And Starbucks is just right next door
practically. And sometimes you just want
to be served a hot beverage by a young
transsexual undergoing hormone
therapy. And Starbucks is the place to
go for that.

In fact, there's even like Well, I
shouldn't even show you what's what's
drawn on the side of the cup, but it
does seem to be uh of a sexual
nature. So, we'll just we'll just skip
that. And you'd think Starbucks would be
like a classy enough place that they'd
put paper umbrellas into their drinks,
but I had to provide my own. Such is

life. Dooka takes many forms. So anyhow, I suppose I should just wade right into this. We don't have a whole lot of questions. It's kind of on the lighter side this time. So those of you who don't like threehour long Q&A videos or three and a half hour long ones, today is your lucky day. And so first question is from Kundrew. And Kindrew says, "Why do so many sutas end with Ananda or one of the Buddha's other disciples praising the Buddha in the form of simileies? Many of them always seem to end with something along the lines of excellent Lord Godma.

It is as

if dot dot dot and there's a slight

misunderstanding here. Kundrew is

somewhat misunderstanding the situation

because when you have this

stock ending of somebody like the the

the Buddha gives a discourse to somebody

or he is just like having a conversation

with somebody and at the end they say

this stock phrase you word for word

excellent Sir Godma excellent Sir Godma

just as Sir Godma one would set a right

what had been tipped over would reveal

what had been covered, would explain the

road to one who was lost, or would hold

up an oil lamp in the darkness so that

those with eyes could see what is

visible. Even so, the Dharma has been shown by Sir Godma in many ways. I go to Sir Godma for refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May Sir Godma consider me to be a lay supporter from this day on. For the rest of my life, I have taken refuge. So that's the uh

stock ending, the stock speech. It's like a stock conversion speech that is just plugged into many sutas. And it's hardly likely that everyone who gets converted to Buddhism by the Buddha is going to give this exact same speech. In fact, other schools of Buddhism, other ancient

schools of Buddhism, they plugged in a different stock speech at the end. just where it was wherever was a suitable place to plug in this speech, they just plug it in and each school of Buddhism had its own variation on the speech. And so this is a conversion speech um that is just like a traditional thing. The ancient mind is kind of a traditionoriented mind and so they just figured well you got to have the conversion speech at the end. So it wasn't a nandanda or one of the Buddha's other disciples. Th that particular speech is always given by a lay person or a non Buddhist like a non Buddhist aesthetic or something who had just been

converted to Buddhism after talking to
the

Buddha. So I really don't recall Ananda
or one of the other one of the Buddha's
other disciples praising the Buddha at
the end of a suta like this. I mean it
may happen but it's not like this stock
verbatim paragraph that just gets
inserted into suta after suta that is
just a conversion speech and it's for
some reason it just came became
traditional to end these sutas where the
Buddha is converting somebody to
Buddhism with this excellent soda
excellent soda you know it's it's sort
of

like most sutas probably begin with

Thus have I heard you know it's just a
traditional
thing.

So I think I'm just going to move on to
Kandrew's second

question which is which translation of
the dhamapata do you prefer the most?

And my favorite translation of the
dharmapata

is this one. This is like the the

Buddhist publication society version or

a Buddhist publication society version

translated by Acharia Buddha Rakita and

actually uh the introduction is by Bikub

Bodhi back when Bikubodi was still

living in Sri Lanka and was like some

kind of leader of the Buddhist
publication

society but I haven't read all
translations of the Damopat. would
assume that there's translations out
there that I would like better than
this. But of the ones that I have read,
this is one of my faves, probably my
favorite version. And this is one of the
few possessions I have owned since
before I became a monk. I acquired this
back when I was in my 20s, which was
several coons ages ago.

So I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question which is from
Quoistor and Quistor says can you

elaborate on how someone entering forth
Janna regularly could change the general
consciousness of the universe? Does
entering Janna bring more insight into
shared consciousness and change belief
systems on a subconscious level? That's
two question marks, isn't it? I mean,
that technically should be two
questions, shouldn't
it? Um, but I think altogether he has
only three question marks. So, he's
still not not exactly
transgressive in this combining putting
two question marks into a single
question. And that's setting aside cases
where you have multiple question marks
all together for emphasis.

So quite says can you elaborate on how someone entering forth John regularly could change the general consciousness of the universe? I'm not sure that it could change the general consciousness of the universe whereas the universe is just

everything. So since the I mean the universe in that

sense you know of just everything you know infinite everything

um yeah I think it already contains like infinite consciousness and everything I don't think you could really change the general level of consciousness uh with regard to that but with regard to this

world or this version of samsara that we
happen to be

inhabiting that it may be what quiset
really had in mind anyway. way though

I'm not trying to second guess quator

uh so I mean it reminds me of a

statement by St. John of the cross that

I have mentioned numerous times where

St. John of the cross in one of his

books and St. John of the Cross was a

Spanish Roman Catholic discel

carmealite. I guess he'd be a monk. He

wouldn't be a frier, I think. And he

said that you've got two people. One

person is just like feeding the hungry

and clothing the people with not enough

clothes and housing the homeless and

just tending the sick and just doing all this meritorious stuff at kind of a worldly level. And then the second person is abiding in deep contemplation or high contemplation, which is what the Catholic contemplative order is called what a Buddhist would call Janna. I'm pretty sure that they're essentially the same based on what I've read from St. John of the Cross and what I've read in Buddhist texts.

So how would some how would the second oh anyways um St. on the crosses is these two people. One's doing all this worldly meritorious stuff and the other one is just sitting alone practicing

high contemplation. The second person is helping the world more than the first person. And that is because he is like uplifting like the the consciousness center of gravity of the earth. you know, he's adding higher consciousness, just sort of injecting it or inoculating it into

this global system that we're living in. And I mean, how some how someone entering forth Jonah could change the general consciousness of the world is simply the fact that all consciousness ultimately is connected.

So by uplifting your own consciousness, it has an effect on the consciousness of the beings around you. And mental states

are contagious. I mean, it's it should be fairly obvious. You've got somebody who's like really upset or depressed and they don't even have to be yelling or crying or anything. They can just be sitting there and it's going to have like a like a dampening effect on the spirit of the room in general. You know, the other people in the room. On the other hand, someone could just come right out of like a a meditation center and they're just sort of radiating contentment. You know, they're practically shining and they can just be sitting there quietly, too. And that's going to have an effect on everyone else

in the room. And it's just there's like this subliminal empathy that we have and animals have it too. Maybe they're all conscious beings have this just deep down maybe at a subconscious level there's sort of an awareness of the consciousness of other people because ultimately the consciousness isn't separate. It's perception that separates it.

So I guess I should read the second half of this question which has its own question mark. Does entering Janna bring more insight into shared consciousness and change belief systems on a subconscious level? I don't think it would directly change belief systems,

but it would sort of increase the level of wisdom to some degree. And um sort of one one thing that just came to mind is the beginning of um I think it's Victor Hugo's novels, Le Miserab, I don't know how to pronounce French names. I'll just mis deliberately mispronounce it as less miserabilis where you had Jean Van Genev who just gets out of prison I think and he's like a hardened criminal and he steals something from this kindhearted Catholic priest and then he gets caught. He steals some silver candlesticks that like the priest just

lets him stay stay there just out of the
generosity of his heart you know
goodwill in general.

Genevan steals these candlesticks and
takes off and a police officer sees him
taken off with it, arrests him and
brings him back to the priest and the
priest just pretty much just lies and
says, "No, I gave those to him. He
didn't steal anything." And it just
changes the way Genev thinks. It's like
this person did him a
kindness for no reason really. I mean,
he shouldn't have done this kindness. he
should have gotten revenge or whatever
and he didn't and it just sort of like
opened up this awareness of a new way of

being, a new way for him anyway that just caused him to like move in a different direction. And so I mean it wasn't

like the the priest did anything directly to change his his belief systems. It was just that Gene Vene was just coming into contact with like a saintly person and that just sort of uplifted him, you know? It like gave him an opportunity that he wouldn't have gotten if the priest just like, "Yeah, he ripped me off. Arrest him, officer." That kind of thing. And that can happen at a more subtle level where you're not even coming into physical contact with

the other person. It's much more subtle that way. But still, it's not like this direct changing of beliefs, anything like that. It's just sort of kind of uplifting the general consciousness of of the world, so to speak. And it kind of reminds me of the uh the Old Testament scene of, you know, that God would spare a city just for the sake of one righteous man living there. And in a way having saints in this world, you know, it kind of increases the the merit or the sort of it makes really bad things less likely to happen because these saintly people don't have the bad karma to be living for example in a thermonuclear holocaust and

radioactive wasteland something like that. So the more saintly people you've got, the the less likely it is that something horrible is going to happen. And that can kind of help uplift people too, just with gen general contentment instead of general misery. And I'm just going to move on to Quistor's next question. And in parenthesis, he's got a follow-up question to see if any part of karma has to do with suffering inflicted or if it's essentially only in your mind. I think this is a follow-up question to a different question that somebody had had already asked which I think is going to

be lower down on the list simply because Quistor asked the first question and then he waited some time before asking this subsequent question after other people had already asked. That's how it works.

So anyways, Quisator says, "If you get angry at an AI and act aggressively towards it with the belief that they are conscious and consider them to be similar to a human, thinking that you can hurt their feelings, would you be generating karma similar to if you had offended a human?"

And this is kind of similar to a question I was asked in the previous Q&A about like people falling in love with

AI generated

mates or the AI generated mate. I mean, they don't really have a physical body yet, but still they can say all the romantic stuff and, you know, at at least simulate someone who understands your problem and understands your problems and sympathizes and so forth. Uh, offers you consolation, helps you not to be lonely, this kind of thing.

And so, it reminds me of that. And it's kind of a similar question. So, you get pissed off at an AI, artificial intelligence, and you're like, you're insulting it, you know, you're cursing

the AI, and you think that you're you
just assume that the AI can't have its
feelings hurt, which probably can't,
then yeah, you're making karma, but it's
not necessarily as bad of karma as
actually hurting a real person's
feelings. Because when you're actually
hurting a real person's feelings,
there's like this feedback going back.
Their consciousness or their mental
states are kind of feeding back on you,
you know, and so and then there's that
deeper down level where it's everyone is
is more or less empathic or telepathic
and there's this connection. So that
when you hurt somebody, deep down you
feel that you're hurting yourself

because you're hurting this sort of the
the group consciousness the or the group
mind of this your environment.

So, I mean, the trying to um trying to
insult an AI is like a midpoint between
insulting a real person and just like
cursing an inanimate object. And I have
done that plenty. I have cursed the
forklift that I drive because, you know,
it's just not working right. Or it's
like you get the forks underneath a
pallet and it's not lifted up high
enough so that the forks slide into it
and kind of lift it up off the ground so
you can't pull the forks back out. You
just pull the pallet when you back up.

Then I can just be cursing that
pallet. You stupid son of a [_] kind
of stuff.

And

it's I mean obviously you're making
karma. you're pissed off just or or
irritated or annoyed or or whatever. You
just feel like cussing and I mean you're
making karma by doing that. Just the
it's like the most abstract thoughts are
making karma. Your own thoughts are
making karma. um the belief that you
have insulted a being that doesn't
really exist or I mean I've I've talked
about this sort of thing before too like
you try to shoot somebody you shoot them
they fall down you take off you think

that you you kill them when really they just happen to they were like startled by the sudden noise of the gun going off and slip and fall and they're actually fine. So I mean you don't make the same kind of karma as if you actually killed the person just due to like the the feedback of their own mental states with your your mental states which are happening at a level below like the ordinary conscious level.

So it's a one-way kind of karma. There's the AI really isn't I mean maybe the AI is programmed to like insult you back something like that which could then

escalate so that you could like have
this screaming match towards this
artificial intelligence that really
isn't feeling anything at
all. So there's a few complications
involved but still I mean mainly karma
is volition karma is urge karma is will
the will to insult another being is
going to be bad karma
ausalakama unskillful
action. It's just that when you're doing
it towards a an inanimate object or some
object that just isn't conscious, then
it's going to be one-sided and there's
not going to be any kind of feedback
loops going on or like subconscious
empathy that are that are like um acting

as complications that can add to the karma. So, I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Clefy and Clefy says, "What Buddhist school would be better suited for westerners and it depends on the westerners. I mean like Buddhism has moved into the west. It it did that quite a while ago and some westerners prefer Zen and some westerners prefer terraada or rather we pass. Some some westerners prefer Tibetan Buddhism.

And uh you know it just one of the main determinants is just you know what

teacher is the wisest. You know you could have like a really advanced zen teacher and just sort of a like a a terra or teacher who's just teaching you stuff from a book that they really don't have personal experience in much of what they're teaching. That happens in Burma all the time by the way. Um, so I mean you'd be better off with a Zen Roshi than a Terra monk. Just if the Zen Roshi just happens to be wiser, that he's better suited to be your teacher. But with regard to schools of Buddhism in general, what would be best for Westerners in general?

Um, Terravada maybe, but if you're if you're even including extinct schools,

then probably Saltronica would work better for Westerners than Terra or one of the Mahasangika schools that uh wasn't as materialistic and wasn't as essentialist as like the the terrible as terrible is terra believes in suaba or self like self-nature self-essence like um it doesn't believe that a person has this suaba or selfexistence but they do believe that the tiniest particles of like anything real like matter or mental states or whatever that those have their own self self-existence And that is probably a

step away from what the Buddha was really teaching. that the Buddha was probably more in agreement with the Mahayana's point of view that even the tiniest particles of matter or the tiniest units of of mentality even they do not have this like essential self-existence this ultimately real self-existence or ultimately real existence in general. just get rid of the self problematic word selfh that they have their own existence.

So there's a good chance that some of the extinct like so-called Hinayana, you know, the early schools of Buddhism

would be preferable

to to Terravada. But then again, I mean,

so long as you can accept like the pure

land stuff and all the the myth

mythology and that sort of obviously

like apocryphal text and so forth, then

I mean Zen Zen is good

too, but Zen does have a lot more sort

of apocrypha added to

it. Um, let's see. Tibetan Buddhism is

it's it never really appealed to me.

It's just

too kind

of

garish maybe just it's got too many

complications even though you eventually

penetrate the complications and you get into like Zogchan or something which is very similar to what uh is being taught in some of the earliest texts.

So it it reminds me of um a Buddhist cartoon I saw a long time ago had three meditators all sitting in a line. One of them was a weasna meditator which like some woman with a shawl. And then next was a Zen meditator who was like a Zen monk with the the pajamas and the the bald head. And then the third was a Tibetan meditator who I think was like a guy in a business suit. And so the tarovat meditator has just this ordinary thought balloon coming out that is empty just blank. Then the the Zen meditator

has uh a more like um Chinese ink
painting kind of you know the paintbrush
the ink and the paintbrush kind of Zen
uh thought balloon coming out and it
also is just empty. And then finally the
Tibetan meditator has got this really
ornate curly Q kind of um you know sort
of paisley sort of looking thought
balloon which also is
empty. So I mean westerners generally
don't have much use for faith. If they
if they do have this have a use for
faith generally they're
Christians. you know, you you've already
got your culture already supplies you
with this

faith-based belief system that you if you're just devotionalistic by nature, you can just go for that. So, it's like westerners, a lot of westerners who tend to be more of the scientific temperament than the artistic or the more the philosophical temperament than the religious. They like Buddhism just because it explains things nicely. A lot of like engineer types like Terra Buddhism because it's so systematic.

And again, there's not a lot of fairy tales that you're really required to believe. There's fairy tales in the text. It's just that they're irrelevant to the central message of Buddhism.

So, it seems like early Buddhism would be better than later Buddhism as a general rule. But I mean, it's such a hard question to answer because there's so many ways of interpreting it, so many different ways of looking at it. like what would be best suited to Westerners might be just some sort of very corrupt, watered down, very materialistic, politicized kind of Buddhism, which is there's plenty of that around. But I assume kifi means by better suited is like most beneficial and you know sort of acceptable and beneficial like the best combination of

those those two. So yeah, I would guess it would be maybe Saltronica or if you're not including like extinct ancient schools of Buddhism, then Terravada, I guess, or maybe some kind of Zen that goes real easy on the sort of the extra added stuff, you know, like like the Pure Land elements. a lot. Maybe most Zen has sort of been has incorporated pure land into it, which really did not inspire me to want to be a Zen monk after I realized this fact. That kind of thing. But I mean, if Zen were like the Coan collections where you've just got these people dressed in black, standing around talking in

riddles and hitting people with sticks,
then that might appeal to a certain kind
of Western mentality, although hitting
people with sticks is very much frowned
upon in a in a much more feminized,
kinder, gentler sort of western
civilization.

Ah, so let's just say Terra and move on
to the next

question. Next question is from Jules
and am I recording?

Yep, certainly looks that
way. Jules says, "Did you ever come
across the phantom leaf experiment
before? Have you ever had any type of
perception perceptive experience where

this light body or aura of objects is observed? And I came across the phantom leaf experiment back when I was a kid because my father was he went through this phase of being fascinated by Kieran photography. And so I've seen lots of photographs of Kieran photography, including the phantom leaf where you take a leaf and and I I think the way it works, Kurian photography, I've never really understood it very well, but I think it's there's like supercharged with an electric field or something and then you take a picture and there's like this aura around the leaf or any living thing really. Then you you like tear off a piece of the leaf or you cut off a

piece of the leaf. You you put the leaf, you take the same picture and it's not the aura is going around the the actual outline of this torn or cut leaf. It's there's like the outline is shaped like the the original leaf that somehow that there's some life force or something there that is still causing the leaf to have an an aura that is like the shape of the undamaged leaf.

Another kind of experiment that I really liked as a kid that kind of well anyway it stands out in my memory was a man and a woman would press their their finger up against like a pane of glass and there'd be a a Kurian

photograph of these two fingertips up against the glass and it's got like the little aura around each fingertip and then the man and the woman kiss while their fingers are still there and the aura just blazes. you know, it gets way bigger and brighter. So, I mean, I never really understood Kurian photography very well. So, I mean, that's kind of a handicap to me in answering this question. Although, I mean, the first question mark here, have I ever come across the phantom leaf experiment? Yes. Back when I was a kid when my father was studying up on curian photography and auras in general. And then the second part of

this question, have you ever had any type of perceptive experience where this light body or aura of objects is observed? No, I've never really been able to see auras. Although my father claimed that he could see auras and he he claimed that he could tell when someone is lying because their aura would change color. You know, there's different different colors of auras and so forth. And whether that is the same sort of phenomenon as is recorded in Kurian

photography, I don't know. I'm not exactly sure what an aura is composed of. You know, that's that's like the the

origination of like the halos around the heads of of saints or around the nimbus shining from the Buddha. All of those presumably would be some sort of aura.

which might be the same thing being recorded and purely in photography for all I

know. So my father claimed to see auras.

I've never been able to see

auras. And I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Sedarta

Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says,

"During your stay in Burma, did you meet any World War II veterans? Are there still bombs in some parts of the jungle?

From the Burmese point of view, the Japanese were the good guys. That's

three questions right there. And I even got to the end yet. Even though, as they did throughout all Asia, they installed a puppet military dictatorship. So, you're not tricking me by putting like multiple questions together in the form of one question.

So, anyways, so did I meet any World War II veterans? I don't recall meeting World War II veterans. I've met people who were old enough that they recalled British Times. Like one of my main supporters, he was the son of a of a a mayor of Rangun, a Burmese mayor of Rangun. And he spoke English with this upper crusty British accent. So a lot of

the older Brit the older Burmese people like older educated Burmese people would speak English with like an upper crusty British accent. Whereas when you get into like Gen X or you know sort of my age even then they'd start speaking when they'd speak English it would be more with an American accent because by that time it wasn't the British Empire anymore. It wasn't part of the bridge, but instead you had American Christian missionaries running Christian schools that people would send their kids to even though they were devout Buddhists and they remain devout Buddhists just to get a good education and so they would learn to speak English with an American

accent. But with regard to the closest I came to a World War II veteran maybe um was back in the 90s I was interacting with a Burmese monk who was a retired surgeon and he was doing missionary work in Japan. He learned how to speak Japanese during the o the Japanese occupation of Burma in World War II and he always had this liking for the Japanese because the Japanese soldiers liked him. you know, they were kind to him and so, you know, he kind of left a good impression on this boy so that he can sort of continued liking the Japanese and wanted to go to Japan and teach terra Buddhism, teach Dhamma

there.

So, yeah, he eventually talked me into going going to Japan with him once. I spent uh the reigns retreat of 1997 or 98 in in Japan.

So that's my answer to the first part of Sedar Tooha's question. See, are there still bombs in some parts of the jungle?

I assume there would be, although the only bombs I saw in Burma were bomb casings that were used as monastery bells. that quite a few monasteries in Burma will have like World War II era like dud bombs, bombs that just didn't explode as monastery bells. You know, they're just hanging from a rope and you you beat on them with a mallet or

something and calls the monks to the meditation hall or it's announcing it's time to leave for alms round, that sort of

thing. So, I mean, but I would assume there's still bombs out in the jungle, but I just never came across any. And then uh the third part of this first question from the Burmese point of view, the Japanese were the good guys. No, not really. I mean that monk that I met who had good experiences with Japanese soldiers, you know, that's there were probably some, but like when the Burmese talk about pets kit, which is the fascist era, when they're talking about

the f the time of fascism in Burma,
they're talking about the Japanese
occupation. So the way it worked was the
Burmese considered the British to be the
bad guys during the time of colonialism.
You know, we're getting into like the
1930s where there's more of a
nationalist movement among these
colonial possessions of, you know, the
European
powers. And so you had especially young
malcontented men who just, you know,
they're they're kind of angry. They're
not very happy. And so they just blame
the British for it. And that's it's
extremely common in this world that
you're not happy so you just blame

somebody else for

it. And I mean to sometimes you could say, well, yeah, okay. like you've got a woman who's living in a with an abusive husband who's beating on her, that sort of thing. That's one thing. But I mean, the British Empire was relatively well-run and it was relatively humanely run. In fact, it was more humanely run and the people prospered more after the British took over than before.

Like there was a time when the British ruled southern or lower Burma and the Burmese kings still ruled upper Burma.

And there was just this

migration of Burmese people migrating

from the Burmese upper Burma to the British run lower Burma just because it was more prosperous and you weren't as likely you had human rights under the British which you didn't you didn't have under the Burmese kings. In fact, one of the reasons why the British um in invaded Upper Burma or rather the main prop one of the main propaganda reasons to get the people in England behind this was pointing out that I mean it's a true story as I know that uh the king's astrologer told him that the current capital city which I think may I think it was Mandalay at the time. It's

running out of juju that you're gonna have to move the capital again. And that was a pretty common thing. In fact, it happened just relatively recently when the capital of Burma got moved from Rangon to

Napedo. The capital of Burma is now Napedo. And that's that's was going on for a long time. And it was largely for astrological reasons where the fortune teller says, you know, it we've we've sucked up all the mana out of the ground here or whatever. We're going to have to move the capital. And so it moved a lot. But the king, King Thibo, I think was his name. Um he wasn't a particularly

intelligent person, but he had enough sense to realize that they just could not afford to move the capital. just pull up stakes, move everything to a to a different city, maybe even build a whole new city. So instead, he decided to compromise by having I think it was like 400 people buried alive around the the precincts of like the central city, the Acropolis, sort of like where the king's palace was and everything. They had walls around that. You can still go and see the walls in in Mandandalay. And it just caused this exodus of people, you know, fleeing Manderlay because of course they consider themselves unworthy to be buried alive and turned into a

kind of guardian spirit for protecting
the

area. So I mean the British I mean they
had their moments of inhumanity and all
that but they weren't just burying
people alive for superstitious reasons
for example. So, but anyways, getting
back to the the the story I was starting
to tell in that the Burmese resented the
British because they just thought they
were going to become this glorious
utopia without British rule. And so um
at the beginning of World War
II, there were a group of sort of
Burmese resistance leaders including
Ansan who became like the father of

independent Burma went to Japan to receive training on how to be like insurgent fighters and you know essentially terrorists. And so they came back and they were fighting for the Japanese and they helped the Japanese to some degree to drive out the British which did happen. the British were driven out of Burma and then the Japanese established, you know, this kind of mini dictatorship there and then the Burmese realized that they were better off under the British because the Japanese were much more ruthless, less compassionate, were less concerned with justice and human rights than the British were. So then like

Ansan, he he switches sides again. He goes back to helping the helping the British and then the British finally drive the Japanese out with the help of the Americans and

Onsan he's he gets to be the next he gets to be the the first president of independent Burma but then he's assassinated

immediately. So from the Burby's point of view the easy answer is no. The Japanese were not the good guys. They were considered to be worse than the British. So I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohitta's second question.

Do you know the story of the barren Ang

von Sternberg? A German with Russian nationality who installed a brutal theocracy in Mongolia became the dictator and wanted to create some kind of Shambala Empire uniting the Tibet, Mongolia and Central Asia under an absolutist vajraana monarchy. I've read a little bit about him. You know, I've heard about him. I know generally who he was, but I'm not familiar with his biography. It's it seems like he may have been inspired by Roger Kiplings, The Man Who Would Be King. Um because he I mean he was trying the same sort of thing essentially. But yeah, I mean I've I've heard a little bit about it, but um

apparently he did not succeed in his attempts. I mean, he probably sort of like, you know, the guys in in uh The Man Who Would Be King, you know, they they kind of kind of start getting set up and then they they mess up and and then they're they're destroyed. I I would assume that it would be something along those lines happened with the Baron,

too. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. And this is from Jonty.

John spelled J A U N. And Jonty John says, "What do you think about the cases of people that have no visual imagination?" And it's called

aphantasia and no internal monologue. It appears to be a quite widespread barely studied phenomenon on a spectrum from no verbal internal monologue to not even abstract conscious monologue at all in context of Buddhist practice like meditation etc. Um, yeah, I've heard about people that do not have an internal monologue. And I mean, it's hard for me to imagine. It may help to account for why like simple subsistence farmers living in a village in you know third or fourth world Asia they can get into deep meditative states that when a westerner is still at the you know the pain in the knee stage because they don't have

wandering mind I mean it's like they
just don't think very much I mean I
assume in order for a human to be pretty
much sentient in a human sense
They have to be able to think, at least
when they're trying to think, you know,
what should I have for
dinner? You know, where how should I tie
up the cows tonight? This kind of thing.
I mean, they must have some kind of
thoughts going on in their head, even
verbal thoughts. It just may be that
when they don't have some specific task
at hand, they just go silent. And that
may be one reason why people in third
world countries especially love to have

loudspeakers just blasting in the village because their head's kind of empty. It's not like they can't hear themselves think. It's just that they're kind of accepting this noise as a kind of substitute for thinking. That's one hypothesis I came up with after living in Burma for many years being exposed to blasting loudspeakers.

Just about every village has got at least one blasting loudspeaker playing cheesy Burmese pop music or monks chanting or just announcements, that kind of stuff, which can sometimes start at 3:30 in the afternoon or if they're doing a

baton play, it can just be

247. So, let's see here. What do I think about the cases of people having no visual

imagination? Gosh. I mean, they'd they'd have to dream. Even an animal has dreams where they're they've got like visual images. So, I'm not exactly sure how they're measuring this, you know, how they're determining this kind of stuff.

Um because it would seem like even a person who supposedly has no visual imagination and no internal dialogue, they'd still be able to think in words if they got some reason to think in words. And they're probably still having

images at night when they're
dreaming. Although I've also read that
many, if not most people dream in black
and
white, which is not the case with me.
So let's see it. It appears to be a
quite widespread barely studied
phenomenon on a spectrum from no verbal
internal monologue to not even abstract
conscious monologue at all. Yeah. I mean
I really don't have a lot of personal
experience with that. I mean some people
are more simple-minded than others
and simple-minded in that context is not
necessarily a porative. I mean some
people are just better off being
simple-minded more simplehearted I

guess.

So he wants me to to discuss this or what I think about in a context of Buddhist practice like meditation. Well, I've already pointed out that some people who just don't think very much are become really good meditators at least with regard to samata. they might not be as good at getting insight because insight may require some kind of thinking like I mean in Zen Buddhism if you're dealing with a [__] then you have to be thinking that's your meditation involves thinking or just breathing in and out then I mean there's still some thinking especially at the beginning

level

so it can make people better sata

meditators but it may be a handicap with

regard to the arising of insight

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Mr.

Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says, "Is the

three marks of existence human centric?

I can't think." No, I can't seem to

understanding how the mark of dooka

applies to non-living things like a rock

or a cup,

etc. Is it dooka because if the cup

breaks, the owner gets sad? Well, I

mean, dooka is a mental

state. And as far as I know, rocks don't

have mental

states. Cups don't have mental states. But largely because they don't have mental states, they also don't differentiate themselves from their surroundings. And so from that point of view, a rock or a cup simply does not exist as any kind of entity unless some conscious being is perceiving it.

So I mean dooka I mean obviously a a rock or a cup itself is not going to suffer but the person perceiving the rock or the cup and thereby causing that rock or cup to become some discernable entity there it's like what is fueling our existence some in samsara is this restless

dissatisfaction which is largely what
karma

is just this momentum of mental states
just kind of shoving us through
samsara or like in some of the earlier
texts it's the thorn in the
heart that I mean just you can't fully
relax you can't fully be
content you're just driven through life
by just this restless dissatisfaction
essentially and even like modern
biology like cognitive science agrees
with this that I read a book I think it
was the tangled wing
um like biological constraints on the
human spirit by I think his name was
Melvin Connor

Coner who said that I mean like fear and just desire I want is just driving us through life even though the desire may not even I mean it just may be this ambig ambiguous. You don't even know what it is you want really. It's just wanting that's that's like from from a biologist.

So yeah, I mean a a rock or a cup is dooka because that rock or cup exists as any kind of distinct entity only through a mind perceiving it. And there is no rock or cup there other than potentially if no one is perceiving it. And it's a mental state. And obviously dooka has to be a mental state. It would only really

apply to conscious beings. But a world of multiplicity also applies only to conscious beings because it requires perception to divide things up to distinguish things.

So, I hope I answered that question because I'm moving on to the next one. This is from Fred and Fred says, "What is the ego really?" And one way of looking at that question is, I mean, it depends on the definition that ego is not. I mean, it has more than one possible meaning. Although I mean ego literally means I in in Latin I'm pretty sure like cojito no that's that's different that's ergo never mind but

the the ego really is sort of like
self-consciousness you know it's I think
according to Freudian psychology who I
think Freud was maybe the the person
that really got the word ego uh into the
English language that uh you know it's
sort of like the
the feeling of identity or it involves
includes the feeling of identity. It's
sort of like your
self-awareness not really awareness in
general but like the like an
self-image have you know this idea of
yourself as an individual person kind of
a
thing.

Um, yeah. I mean, from the Buddhist point of view, it would just be like the conceit I am. I, me, mine would all be like egoistic. But I suppose it would depend on who you talk to because the word ego is not defined exactly the same by everybody and it has multiple meanings in the dictionary. So I'm going to move on to Fred's second question which is how much weight does comma have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure et for example pornography okay how much weight does comma have the Fred asks difficult questions to understand sometimes in fact sometimes I'm not even sure if he's

really asking a question but this one definitely has a clearly discernible question mark at the end So, how much weight does Kama have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure? Apparently, somebody else's pleasure, eg pornography. And I guess the people in porn, I mean, they are experiencing some pleasure. I wouldn't consider them to be generally happy people relatively speaking. Maybe a few are, but uh I I really do not fully understand this question. How much weight does kama have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure? Well, I mean enjoying and

sharing someone's pleasure would technically be mood to and it's considered to be um a wholesome mental state. But that would be different from getting pleasure from watching porn because you're not so much getting pleasure from from the pleasure of the people in the the video so much as you're just getting pleasure from um getting your animal mating instincts um kind of lit up by seeing, you know, some healthy, wellproportioned member of the opposite sex at the peak of breeding age.

So I mean if you do take pleasure in

somebody else's pleasure that would be muda that would be meritorious. You would be getting good karma for that. Um if you're just like getting pleasure from watching two people fornicating um without really any kind of like empathy or any such thing then that would be more of an unh wholesome mental state. I mean you would be cashing in past good karma because any pleasure that you feel is the fruition of wholesome karma or like good karma.

So I'm not exactly sure what the question really is asking though. How

much weight does karma have for enjoying and sharing someone's pleasure?

Yeah, I'm not exactly sure what exactly what that means. Although I did give it a shot in a kind of nebulous roundabout way of trying to answer that question.

And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is kind of along the same vein here. This is from Siovak and Sipad Zidana who says why is sexuality focused much more uh of the sensual pleasure while gardens art food porn etc is seen as a-okay in Buddhist circles despite also being sensuality. I even remember a verse from the terraata where Mahakaspa the literal patron saint of

asceticism is talking about the beauty of
the natural the natural place he
practices and how it is
refreshing. So I guess there's a little
bit to unpack
here with regard to sexuality. That is
one of the main desires that a person
has and so it's one of the the main
kinds of desire that is um really dealt
with in the poly texts. Certainly not
the only kind of pleasure, but really it
require it takes gets a lot of emphasis
just because it's one of the
strongest desires for pleasure that
people have that and food. I guess those
would be the main

two.

And so he says gardens, art, food porn, etc. are seen as a-okay in Buddhist circles, but it's not seen as a-okay in the poly texts. I mean, that's just a sort of a degeneration of Buddhism.

Like, I used to have this idea if I ever had my own monastery back when I was a monk. Then I certainly would not have beautiful flower beds, you know, landscaped gardens and all this, which is what you generally find. Like you even look in uh like some of these Buddhist magazines and it's advertising meditation centers and it's always talking about how beautiful the the the grounds are and everything. And I mean

you that's not what Terra Buddhism teaches. That's not what the texts say that you should avoid that kind of stuff. You'd be better off with decomposing corpses scattered around your monastery than having flowering plants and gardens and this kind of thing.

So I mean going back with the poly text and all pleasures should be kept to a minimum except for just the the joy of meditation that even necessary pleasures like eating, sleeping and bathing should be kept to a minimum and you should just avoid the beautiful in that sense.

I think the the Rahula sutta of the uh of the sutin pata kind of explains the proper attitude with regard to that.

So sexuality is focused on much more than like art and food and so forth simply because it's I mean partly was just ancient Indian culture and that monks are supposed to be celibate and so you have to like I mean they didn't have to refrain from food but they did have to refrain from sex and it's a very strong temptation and so it was they were just continually pounding away at that just because it's really one of the main sources of desire and also just unenlightened neurosis in humans. But so I mean when it has moved

to the west or it has just become decadent so that you've got monks that really are not practicing conscientiously but are just following along with the tradition then you wind up with beautiful grounds and landscaped gardens and monks you know eating delicious food and they got Buddhist art that's very pretty on the walls this kind of stuff. And I mean that would not have been approved of in the times of the earliest Buddhism. That's just kind of a decline or what you naturally expect when a system set up originally for advanced renunciant aesthetics becomes like a national religion where

pretty much everybody's a Buddhist. So that even the most foolish people are Buddhists and they're going to need something that's going to have something for them at at sort of like this crude level. And I mean in the west also like I kind of was mentioning with regard to the meditation centers that are advertised in the Buddhist magazines, it's it's just the middle path between self-indulgence and self- torture. Very few people veer off towards the self torture. there almost everybody is veering over to the self-indulgent side including most monks.

So see Siovak says he even remembers a

verse from the Tiraata where
Mahakasapa who is like the most
aesthetic of the Buddhist chief
disciples or his his great disciples is
talking about the beauty of the natural
place he practices and how it is
refreshing. Well, yeah. I mean, that's
certainly not as unwholesome of an
appreciation as
appreciating like
uh a female naked
body.

So, in to some degree, I mean, nature is
beautiful. Um, unless you look at it
real close and then you see that that a
forest is a battlefield with everything

trying to kill something else.

But still it's you know it's taking you away from the artificiality of the rat race you know humanity you know squalid humanity even in villages let alone towns and you know it's just sort of a kind of freedom which is good.

So, but whether Ma Koso is actually praising the beauty of the natural places where he practices, I don't know. That the terraata and the terriata both have a reputation for having been composed long after I at least a lot of it was composed long after the Buddhist time. But in the poly text it does say that a monk should just I mean he should go out into into the

forest. I mean I mean you got to go
somewhere and so you go out into a
forest but I mean you should not be like
enjoying physical
beauty that monks are warned against
that. That's all sensuality that that's
like a a stumbling block. It's going to
keep you from becoming enlightened.

So I'm just going to move on to sea of
action

sepat's second question which is please
explain the concept of

brahmacharia and in Buddhism

brahmacharia mainly means I mean

sometimes it's translated as the holy

life mainly it means celibacy but also

it can mean just the life of a
renunciant who is you know living a life
of dharma striving towards enlightenment
that sort of thing. But um more narrowly
it means celibacy. And brahmachara
apparently is one of the words that the
Buddha um sort of hijacked from the
Vedic tradition and re defined it. And
on the discord server in past recent
weeks,

um there has been some discussion of
like Mahayana Buddhists taking earlier
Buddhist terms and redefining them like
Bodhi Satva for example.

And in a way you could see it as like
reprehensible that the Mahayana
Buddhists are just taking older Buddhist

terms the way the Buddha used them
apparently and just giving different
meanings to them. Whereas I mean the
Terraata Buddhists or or just the Buddha
himself apparently took like Vedic terms
and just gave them completely new
definitions. And so um this brahmacharia
in in like the vdic traditions in what
is now called Hinduism that was like the
first stage in life of a devout Hindu
um the the first ashramama dharma you
know it's like you started off as the
celibate student that's the brahmacharia
phase where you are a student of the
vadas mainly I mean you study other
things besides just the vdic texts you

there's a a list of the things that like
a a young Brahman would have to study
for

example. And uh then the next stage
would be the householder. And then the
next stage would be like the the
renunciant who is just like a hermit
like a like someone who goes to the
forest. You know, they're just kind of
living alone in a hut. Maybe their their
grown children are supporting them as
they just meditate or pray out in this
hut in the forest by themselves. Maybe
they take their wife, you know, just an
elderly couple who have more or less
renounced

sociality. And then finally, there's the

syasi or this the the wandering
aesthetic would be the the final stage
that probably most Hindus never get
to. In fact, nowadays most Hindus
probably don't bother with these four
ashrama dharmas anyway. But originally
brahmacharia was sort of like uh I mean
sometimes in in translations it's called
the brahparing usually the holy life
works better but they're going towards
Brahma you know that's what it literally
means is you know Brahma
going so they're they're kind of moving
towards Brahma who is like the like the
chief god in the Hindu pantheon in a
sense at least at one time he kind of

still is But mainly Hinduism has been taken over by Vishnavites and Shyites who are saying that Vishnu is the is the highest god or Shiva is the highest god.

But Brahma was

like he was like the personification of ultimate reality. So in a sense Brahma still is pretty much the highest god. I

think in the Bavad Gita um Krishna

claims that he is Brahma and Shiva and

Vishnu. You know it's the the Hindus

kind of they have a strange approach to theology let's

say. So I mean you took the early vadic term of just sort of going to going to Brahma

uh however that was specifically

interpreted and then the Buddha just sort of re-ransated it. He took the same term and then just I mean it still means like it still involves celibacy but he just kind of turns it into the holy life of renuncience in general how they're going towards reality you know they're they're going towards holiness that kind of

thing and that's about as good of a explanation as you're going to get out of me right

now hyped up on caffeine as I am and so I'm just going to move on to seal action Cadirna's third question which is what does religion mean to you? Everyone

seems to have a different definition of what the term means. You know, most people don't have any definition at all. Anyways, I just interrupted myself.

Everyone has everyone seems to have a different definition of what the term means and are often contradictory, exclusionary or defined in a way that pushes a certain goal the person has.

Well, like I told him in the Discord server, if if I were going to use one word to differentiate religion from philosophy, it would be

worship. That religion is worshipy. It is

devotionalistic. Whereas philosophy is not necessarily worshipy or

devotionalistic. To the extent that it is worshipy and devotionalistic, it is becoming a religion. Anyways, I looked it up in my dictionary and it says that religion is the belief in and worship of a superhuman power or powers, especially a god or gods.

And I can accept that. And it's got worship. It's got belief and worship right there in the definition. So yeah, religion is devotionalistic. It can be very philosophical, but so long as you've got worship or or

devotionalism, then it's going to be more of a religion than just a a a philosophy. So, I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Xenithid. And Xenithoid has asked three rather odd questions. First question, why is violence sometimes beautiful? And I mean beauty is not something that exists that exists objectively that you got a chemist who let's say he's going to analyze the components of some flower. So he he just breaks down that flower into its component parts. you know, it's got so much of, you know, cellulose and it's got water and it's got, you know, magnesium in it and this

kind of thing. He's not going to isolate out any beauty. He's not going to find any beauty when he when he breaks this thing down into its component parts. The beauty is like a projection from a perceiving mind. beauty and ugliness, you know, it's just the duality generated by a perceiving mind and it's largely influenced by animal instincts and so forth. So why is violence sometimes beautiful? It's just that you've got some person who just somehow considers a certain kind of violence to be beautiful. Like for example, a bull fight. You've got a really good matador who's very graceful, very just fearless.

you know, the the the horns of the bull are coming within an inch of his body as he lets it go by. You know, that that might be seen as beautiful. Some people see just a raging battlefield as beautiful. Sort of like um you know, a raging stormy sea or a raging electrical storm. You know, just the sheer power of it is is seen as beautiful in in a in a very dangerous sort of way.

A tiger with its mouth covered with blood might be seen as beautiful as it has just finished eating a deer or some such. But the beauty of it is a projection from some perceiving mind and two people can look at the same thing and one person will see it as ugly and

another person will see it as beautiful. So violence is sometimes beautiful because of the individual quirks of the beholder. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. Some people have a more violent mind and have more of an appreciation for violence. So they might see certain kinds of violence as beautiful. Whereas like some very saintly person who takes aims extremely seriously who wouldn't hurt a fly, they might see all violence as ugly. So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second question, which is what separates beautiful violence from disgusting violence? And again, it

is the attitude of the viewer that there is no beautiful violence or disgusting violence existing out there that isn't being

perceived. That that beauty or or or disgustingness. They're just not out there in some material world. They are matters of attitude in in the viewer. So again, one person can look at violence and consider it beautiful.

Another one can look at the very same violence and consider it disgusting. It's

just individual quirks in a perceiving

mind. So, I'm going to move on to Zenithoid's third question, which is,

did the burning monk die a beautiful, glorious death? And he's referring to the famous Vietnamese monk who lit himself on fire to protest the South Vietnamese Christian government that was in a way I guess um like biased against the Buddhist majority that kind of thing. And did so did he die a beautiful glorious death? Again, it depends on who you talk to because it is a value judgment. It is just an individual judgment was not really based on objectivity. So some people would look at that and consider it a beautiful glorious death. And there were people like when this monk was burning that

actually came and like bowed to him.

They were in just reverence at what he was doing.

But other people will just be appalled like uh the lady in uh that Ingmar Bergman movie Persona who has to be institutionalized after seeing this monk burning himself alive on on television like on the news. It's an old movie. So again, it just depends on who you who you talk to and it's all matters of opinion. It's it's not some kind of you just objective this is the way it is. It's going to depend on the attitude of whoever is observing whatever it is to determine whether they see it as

beautiful or disgusting or glorious or
inglorious. And I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Harim Cathul. And Harim Cthul asks a
kind of unusual interesting question
which is did modern science develop
because magic is not as powerful in the
Kali

Yuga and that's an intriguing question I
think although I mean the Indians
consider the Kaliuga to go back tens of
thousands of years I'm pretty sure so
all of human history And a lot of human
prehistory, protohistory would all be
kaliuga. I mean there's no recollection
of anything other than kali yuga except

in like mythology.

So I do think that there's a correlation that um I do have the wizard theory with regard to like certain prehistoric monoliths like huge rocks that have been moved for many miles and like maybe dragged or moved up mountain slopes in order to have this huge temple or or what a shrine or whatever the hell it is that it may be that you had powerful magicians s or powerful priests, you know, sort of channeling the power of some small G god that was that was helping this to happen that it was instrumental in the building of some of these things. I can't rule out that possibility. And now that we have

science and just materialism in general,
just European
objectivity that the odds of that sort
of thing go down because people just
don't believe in it anymore. They want
to believe that, you know, this is an
orderly universe that follows laws of
physics and so forth. And so they just
don't have the faith in that to allow it
to happen. Like the New Testament,
that's that's one of the main messages
of the New Testament. You know, setting
aside, you know, Paul and and like the
general epistle of John, like the
synoptic gospels, let's say, one of the
main teachings of Jesus in the synoptic

gospels is, you know, faith can move mountains. I mean, it's like even when he was healing the sick and they they got better and they thanked him, he's your own faith that did it.

And that kind of faith or magic or the miraculous or whatever is certainly less now than it was in ancient times just because people just don't believe in it much. So did modern science develop though because because magic is not as powerful nowadays in in modern times? I think there may be like some interaction. I don't think that it was just like a that is the one thing that caused it. It was just sort of the the western

mind was you know starting with the
Greeks maybe even before the Greeks was
just kind of moving in this direction of
increased objectivity and sort of
philosophical explanations of things in
an orderly manner that just kind of
ruled out

magic gradually over time. you know,
magic just kind of got sidelined. Less
people believed in it, less people had
faith in it. So, it just couldn't happen
as

much. Although, it's there was sort of
like a push back, I think, like in the
1800s there was kind of a push back
towards more magical thinking like

spiritualism and faith healing and that sort of thing. um mainly as like I I see it possibly hypothetically as one last major push back against science after Darwin came along because Darwin just I mean he would he just laid waste to religious thinking to a large degree that before Darwin it was like well okay there's laws of physics and all that but how do you explain us being here and then along came Chuck Darwin And uh I mean he just kind of that was one of the last holdouts really for a lot of Christians. So he's he's my favorite. He's my favorite scientist. H even though a lot of people nowadays

are just like staunchly anti-Darwinian and not just Christian creationists

either. So yeah, I think modern science um it pretty much reduced the possibility of magic, but I don't think that let's see. Yeah, I think it's the other way around. I don't think that it was magic declining that caused science to arise. It was more like science arising helped magic to decline. So I think it goes the other way. I hope cuz that's what I just said. So I'm going to move on to the next question which is from PSA.

And

PSA, he has uh gotten into a a phase of asking joke questions, jokes that are not entirely serious, which includes this first one. What is the true meaning of Christmas? And anyone who wants to know the true meaning of Christmas, watch How the Grinch Stole Christmas. You know, it explains it all in the movie, especially towards the end.

Um, but aside from that, I mean, to to a Christian, the meaning of Christmas is just celebrating Jesus's birthday. But at first, they didn't really know when Jesus's birthday was. Um, I think the the earliest recorded celebration of Christmas was in

the springtime back in early Roman or
back in Roman times. Um, then it got
moved to January, which the uh the
Eastern Orthodox Christians still
celebrate Christmas in January, I'm
pretty

sure. But in the western half of the
Roman Empire where people spoke Latin
and were more influenced by Roman
Italian culture that uh it was just sort
of like a political move from the
Christians to just replace the main
pagan Roman holiday which was
Saturnalia with Christmas.

But again, if you want to know the true
meaning of Christmas, watch How the

Grinch Stole Christmas, the cartoon version or the the liveaction version.

It doesn't matter. They both pretty much teach the same message. And so I'm going to move on to PSA's second question, which is, would you like to be reborn as a proverbial skunk in a Georgia pine tree?

No. Okay. So, let's see. PSA's third question. When you drink alcohol, this is this is actually a serious question.

When you drink alcohol, it initially has a calming effect that relieves stress.

However, if you keep drinking, you start getting buzzed and then drunk. Does the fifth precept refer to not drinking at all, not even a single drop, or does it

refer to not drinking until you get drunk? So, that's a fair question. And uh for a monk, let's just start with the rules for a monk. It's the monk doesn't a monk doesn't follow just the five precepts. She follows more than 2,000 rules that are found in the vineitica, the rules of monastic discipline. And for a monk, even one drop, even if you drink it accidentally, you have broken the rule and you have to make confession for it. Like, you know, I've mentioned this before. I've I was given medicine before and uh I asked it was like a liquid medicine. You know, you take a

spoonful of it or something. I asked,
"Does this have alcohol in it?" And they
said, "No, no, no alcohol." So then I I
take a spoonful of it and it's like, you
know, 90 proof, you know, it's it's
strong alcohol. So I had to make
confession for that. Or somebody offers
you like grape juice and grape juice
fermentss really easily. That's one
reason how wine got wine was invented, I
assume, because grape juice fermentss
more easily than something like apple
juice. I don't know why. That's just my
experience. So, it's it's the hot
season, you have no electricity, you
have no refrigerator, and somebody
offers you this bottle of grape juice,

you know,

freshsqueezed. And so, you don't drink it right away. You drink it maybe hours later that same day, and it's already starting to taste like wine. Well, you broke the rule. Doesn't matter if you get drunk or not. is just even one drop of alcohol. You consume that unless it's like so so diluted down like in a curry or something. You know, somebody cooks with wine, the alcohol all boils out and you know, there's just like maybe a very slight flavoring of it but no alcohol still, that kind of thing. Or it's just so diluted down that it's imperceptible, then you really haven't broken the rule.

But I assume that the five precepts for lay people, it would be similar for a monk where if you don't have to get drunk. Just to have a beer, just to have one drink of beer would already be violating the precept. I'm not so sure about a lay person drinking or let's not say drinking, just taking a small amount of cough syrup that has some alcohol in it, that kind of thing. or they use mouthwash that has some alcohol in it and they accidentally swallow like a tiny amount of it that it all depends on how much of a stickler you want to be, how strict you want to be with regard to following five

precepts. But in all likelihood for lay people as well as for monks, just any amount of alcohol that you drink, especially if you do it on purpose for monks, even if it's accidental, you still have to make confession. for a lay person. I don't know. I'm not 100% sure whether um a person a lay person has broken the precept by accidentally taking a sip of alcohol or, you know, just some tiny just a drop of it, that kind of thing if they don't do it on purpose. But might as well just go with the same standards that monks have, which mean even if you have a tiny amount accidentally, you've still broken

the rule.

And I'm going to move on to the next question. This is from Dhamma River. And Dama River says, "Have you read the chapter the 18 faults of a monastery in the Wizudi Maga? If yes, what do you think about it? And do you agree? If not, I strongly recommend you to read this chapter." Well, as it turns out, I looked in the Wudi Maga earlier today, and I did not find that chapter in the in like the the table of contents. It's not a complete chapter. I'm pretty sure it might be like a subsection, but I didn't even see the subsection mentioned. I went through the table of contents like twice. I didn't want to go

through the entire book, but I have read it assuming that it's in the Wizardi manga. I have read it because I have read the entire Wizardi manga, but that was when I was like a junior monk long ago. And so only certain parts of the Wizardi manga really stand out. You know, it's like um the overview of the 13 dutongas or optional aesthetic practices. That was one part that I was instructed to read by one of my first teachers. And uh just the overview of the 32 parts of the body, which is more of an anthropological study than any kind of like medical or anatomical study. It just shows you what the

ancient Indians believed about how your body works.

So that it's actually your liver that circulates blood or actually it doesn't even really circulate. They didn't have a concept of the circulatory system. So they just thought that your liver just kind of is splashing the blood around inside your body. The heart is the origin of thought that it's not even a blood pumping organ and your brain is just bone marrow filling a large hollow brain. And they didn't even know what what possible purpose it could have. I think I mentioned before that one of the most objective empirical statements in that section where Buddha

Gosa the the author of the book is talking about the 32 parts of the body is he makes the observation that if your spleen protrudes from your body through like an injury you die. They they have learned that much empirical medicine to know if your spleen comes out you die. Although it may be in some cases, especially nowadays, you've got like an like antiseptics and so forth, you could kind of poke it back in and sew sew the person's torso back together and they might be okay. So, so the 18 folds of a monastery, I kind of vaguely remember I

have read I think in the there's sutas that discuss, you know, signs of decline in a monastery. You know, I I can I could probably guess with fair accuracy what some of the faults of a monastery would be. You know, too close to a town or too far away from a town or too noisy or, you know, too many lay people visiting, you know, especially the the women all dressed in pretty clothes and all that. Um, but again, it's it's just I read it a long time ago and it does not come to mind. And so, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie and Ruie says, "During your caved dwelling days, did the bitter master's loneliness and boredom call on

you often?" And no, not really. Um, I used to think to myself that the only time I'd ever really get bored as a monk is if I had to sit through a long-winded discourse by some Burmese Seattle. You just have to sit there and pretend like you're listening really. And I mean, I'd get bored with, not when I was by myself, but when I was with people that really we did not share the same point of view or the same understanding of the world in general or of dharma in particular, you know, we just weren't on the same page. And so I just have to be polite and just kind of have good manners until it was all over

with.

So, I really do not get bored or lonely
very

easily. I mean, there were a few times
as a monk where I would feel like, man,
it'd be good to hang out with my old
buddy Mucus Man again, but that was that
was about it

really. Maybe kind of loneliness for a
woman, you know, sort of like the the
the mating instinct would arise
sometimes, but I I don't suppose Ruby
was specifically referring to that.

But I mean, I could just live in a cave
with bare

walls, you know, and just not be bored.

I mean, when when a major part of your

job is just kind of feeling the sensation of air as it goes in and out of your nostrils, a person like that generally doesn't get bored very easily if you can do that for hours every day. So yeah, I was just blessed I suppose in not being particularly prone to loneliness or boredom. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Moambo. And Moambo says, "What are your views on memory?" And this is memory. It's it's a subtle thing that's difficult to explain that some people will use memory as like an argument for self view. You know, if there's no self,

then who is it that remembers this stuff? How does memory work?

But from a like a phenomenological point of view, I'm not sure if I'm using the word

correctly, but there has to be a certain continuity in order for us to have like an existence going through samsara as a perceived individual. I mean, there has to be some continuity from one moment to the next. If you have complete amnesia and don't remember what happened a one moment before or anything that happened before the present. I mean there's no way you could be a kind of sentient being. I mean you just be like in this state of I don't know what it would be.

You know you're seeing everything for the first time every moment. You don't know what anything is. You wouldn't know how to use language. That's a kind of memory. you'd just be like I mean you'd be like an idiot. So there has to be some kind of memory for mentality in the human sense of the word in order for it to exist at all.

So that's that's how memory that's why memory works in in from from just this you know setting aside neuroysiology and all that just just like from the personal experience of being alive in samsara you have to have memory because

I mean your mind is changing from one moment to the next you have to have change but you also have to have continuity and in a way that's sort of like the middle path in a way you could call it uh kind of dependent core rising and I always intended to write an essay on this and I don't think I ever did but I mean there has to be a balance between like Shiva and Vishnu or like Dionis and Apollo there has to be a like a balance between change and stasis things remaining the same but also changing because you can't have two moments in a row of nothing changing.

because you wouldn't even be aware of it. I mean it's like the passage of time

is is measured by
change.

So I mean with regard to you want to go
the the like the scientific route then
you know neurohysiology they've got
their own theories on how memory works.
They don't fully understand how memory
works even now. you know, they don't
know if it's sort of like a, you know,
like a special area in your brain that
has stores a memory or if it's just like
your your entire brain has sort of like
a memory hologram or something. They
they haven't fully worked that part out
yet. Maybe they never will. Who
knows? Memory in a computer is pretty

straightforward. But memory just from
the point of view of
like just dealing with what you're
experiencing
directly and maybe going through the
filter of perception because it that's
that's the way an unenlightened mind
works a samsauric mind you just have to
have memories and so whether it even
really existed or not I mean it's not
even necessary for your memories even to
be

true And I found that some of my
memories have changed over time. I've
like as a monk, I would remember certain
things like an old TV commercial about
Tootsie Pops or just some some song on

an album that I used to really like. And then after I stopped being a monk or I just came back to to to the west to visit my family or something, you know, I'd see that same old commercial that was like this vintage classic commercial now and it was different than I clearly remembered it. Or that song that used that I really liked. It turned out that I took the lyrics from one song and the the melody from another and had just conflated them so that it wasn't I mean I remembered the song wrong too even though I'd been like playing it in my head for years. So memories aren't even

necessarily factual.

It's just this mental image that is maintained through karmic momentum that you use to build your personality and your experience

on. But it's it's a subtle a subtle

topic and it's hard to explain very

coherently. And so I'm just going to

move on to Moambo's second

question and I think this is also about

memory. Information is shared between

similar species through a language. What

would be the mechanism of memories?

Momentum from past life to be

transferred from one life to another.

Well, I mean memories generally do not

transfer from one life to another.

You've got, you know, the karmic momentum, but it doesn't necessarily come across as me. Most people do not remember anything from before they were born. In fact, most people don't remember anything from before they were about 3 years old.

So the mechanism of memories to be transferred from one life to another, I'm not even sure if you could even call it a mechanism because as a general rule, it's it's an exception to the rule that there are like some kids or some people who are hypnotized or just some people who are unusual who can remember past lives. Like my father

claimed to be able to remember uh
several of his past lives to some
degree.

Um, and you know, you read Ian
Stevenson's books about little kids who
insist that they're not that little kid,
they're this grown-up who ran a pharmacy
20 miles away and died from falling off
a wagon. This kind of thing.

So what the exact mechanism of that
would be is maybe like your ego
structure defining your existence in
this world has gaps that are allowing
you know information from a previous
existence to to bleed
through. But why he says this top part
information the first part of the

question information is shared between
similar species through a language
similar maybe he means the same
species but I mean you don't even have
to have similar species for there to be
some kind of communication because for
example when I lived in central Burma
there were lots of little owls called
zquet there were lots of wild jungle
fowl like wild chickens and there were
also lots of squirrels And they would
all have an alarm call. You know, if
they saw a hawk flying by, they'd make a
certain sound and the other species
would also know that is an alarm call.
That means they probably saw something

scary. And so like an owl would make this little chirping noise is like an alarm call. And it's like the squirrels and the the jungle fowl would just run for cover. So it was like interspecies communication. They were all sharing alarm calls. One one uh kind of interesting thing about alarm calls I read in a book on animal behavior is that many alarm calls that various species of animal have are specifically designed to be difficult to locate. Like if it's a mating call, you want to be able to locate. You know, you want the female bird to locate you who is making the mating call. But if it's an alarm call,

you don't want the hawk to be able to locate you from the sound. So they have a more diffuse kind of like the phonetic or not the phonetics, the acoustics of it are different so that it's harder to actually know exactly where the alarm call is coming from. That's just throwing a little behavioral biology in there.

So what would be the mechanism of memories to be translated transferred from one life to another? Yeah, like I said, I guess my best explanation would be that, you know, you've got some person who, you know, they still have like gaps in their ego or in their their

selfimage that is allowing information from a previous life to somehow bleed through in a paranormal kind of way, but it is uncommon among human beings. Most people do not remember past lives. And I remember one time somebody asked me why is it that we don't remember our past lives is and my answer at the time was we have a different brain.

So the info

recorded I mean going with the idea of like empirical scientism or whatever that I mean clearly you got a different brain and so it's like you got a different computer. You know it's got different memory storage and the the the

stuff that was on your previous uh
computer just isn't stored on this new
computer because you didn't have a
backup. You [_] up on that one.

Ah, but I'm not exactly sure what Moambo
is angling towards in this question,
unless he spills the beans in this third
question, which is as follows. As
humans, we are a product of our parents
and we could brace, we could trace it
back to the past. No, let me just start
over. I got to tilt my head back. As
humans, we are a product of our parents
and we could trace it back in the past
all the way to first cell on the planet.
At which stage does that memory enters

the new body? I personally do not believe in concept of karma. Oops, I let the I let the computer There we go.

Okay, let's see. I personally do not believe in concept of karma but still want to know if it's true then what is the process of it and yeah I don't think he really understands what karma is based on this question because karma is not some kind of cellular genetic memory in fact I mean karma isn't really understood by very many people including very many Buddhists because a lot of people are just stuck in this idea A that karma is just a system of rewards and punishments. It's like you do this, you get rewarded or punished for it.

Maybe in a in this life, maybe in a future life. And that is a very simplistic view of karma. That karma in a way is is the momentum of your mental states. And so one example of karma that even a scientist couldn't really deny is just the whole idea of the automatic pilot. I've written an essay on this before where just like a first step in understanding what karma really is. Not just this magical rewards and punishments coming from outer space or something that like anything that you do that isn't fully conscious is karmic and and it's like we are governed by habit that

that karma is itself a kind of habit energy. There was a a book called the Buddhist Bible which was mostly Mahayana stuff, but they had this intriguing um rendering of karma as habit energy in the book. And that is really a remarkably good translation for karma. It's habit energy. It's just if you're not fully awake, you're just acting out on automatic pilot. And that automatic pilot is your karma.

So I mean you don't believe in the concept of karma. I mean according to Buddhism karma is volition. Karma karma is chidana. K karma is will. So if you don't believe in karma, you don't I mean if karma is will then you don't believe

in will or volition

either which would make you kind of a

radical skeptic or maybe some kind of

very advanced Buddhist

mystic who has just gone beyond

samsaric like

differentiation. But if you think that

will exists, then karma exists. Even

though you might have different ideas

about how it works than some orthodox

Buddhist scholar

does. But like I already said, one stage

beyond just believing in in will as

karma, it's this habit energy and it's

just running your life for you because

you're not fully awake yet. You're still

sleepwalking in a sense.

Almost everybody is like

this that we all have these habitual

things that we do and you're not you

don't even have to be fully aware of

what you're doing. I mean, you could be

thinking about something completely

different. You've done it so many times

that it's just

automatic. Driving a car is kind of like

that. You don't have to think about what

you're doing. It's just automatic. is

just you can be thinking about

completely other stuff while while

driving on the freeway at 70 m an hour

in heavy

traffic. So that's one reason why

Buddhists practice mindfulness is to bring you into the present moment so that you're not just governed by knee-jerk habitual reactions all the time. And when you are completely freed of knee-jerk habitual reactions, you are freed from karma, at least from making new karma. When you are fully conscious and you're no longer just a meat puppet acting out through force of habit, then you're not making new karma anymore because you're making karma when you're acting through force of habit.

And it may be you're doing something new for the first time, but still you've got associated habits just momentum that are

shaping your like feelings about what you're doing and your reaction to what you did and all

that. So let's just get back to the question though, which is kind of a strange question. At which stage does that

memory enters the new body? And he's talking about some kind of cellular or genetic memory that I mean the genetics are going to be there just sort of stored. It's like data storage in your in your DNA. I mean that happens immediately as soon as the the egg and the sperm come together and form a zygote. You know the earliest stage of an embryo already that's all there.

But with regard to actual memories, I mean, racial memory, I'm not even sure if that exists other than just like animal instincts that we share that cause our psychology to be pretty similar. I think I'm just going to move on this question. And this is from someone who I think maybe is Polish and they've got a name that I cannot pronounce. And so I'm just going to do the same thing I do to French people. and just call him Nazi all the line the L at the end has a line through it so it's not pronounced like an L. I think the Z isn't pronounced like a real Z. The Polish are kind of

confused with regard to this sort of thing I think. So anyways, Nazi says when it comes to the Dharma, there is not many good Western teachers in my opinion. Do you have any advice for a guy straight out from high school? man.

Well, I'd have different advice for different guys straight out of high school. I mean, just the average guy straight out of high school. Um, I mean, I I I wouldn't have even general advice for him, really. I mean, you'd have to have some knowledge of the guy straight out of high school. I mean, does he want to renounce the world? Does he want to live like a virtuous lay life? I mean,

what does what does he want? I mean,
what kind of what kind of direction is
does he even want to head in? So,
there's that. Um, but I mean, this first
sentence, which isn't even
necessarily related to the second, when
it comes to the dhamma, there is not many
good Western teachers in my opinion.

Well, I mean, there's that one in where
is he?

Serbia. I mean he's fairly close to a
country where people are called
naiwal. So there's that I guess. I mean
if you want to learn dhamma I mean there
are good dhamma teachers out
there. Um and it may be that naiuel is

just asking about that. Do you have any advice for a guy straight out from high school about learning dharma from a good teacher? That might be what what he is implying what he means here.

So,

um, yeah, I strangely I guess his name is Nyan Vera. No, no, no.

Nanamolei. Nyanoly in in Serbia. I think he's a good teacher. There are actually good Dharma teachers. Um, and I mean, good Western teachers, they they're out there. And anyone who's got like a a favorite teacher that they think is really really wise could uh could put in the comments who they think is is a really good teacher. Like uh there's the

two monks in Seattle who are good teachers even though they're kind of in the in the dragon's layer in Seattle and having to be accommodating to like real radical leftist types sometimes. I think but uh they they definitely are out there. There's

uh what's his name? Aan Martin in Thailand. Some people think he's he's a very good

teacher. So I mean you you can find them if you look for them if that is really what you want. But for a guy straight out of high school, I mean, I I would have to know the guy straight out from high school in order to have some idea

as to what kind of advice he needs
because not all guys straight out from
high school need the same
advice. You know, do good, avoid doing
evil, and purify your
mind. That would be good advice for
anybody, I think. And by golly, all of a
sudden we're at the last question. And
this is also from a person who lives in
Poland and his name is
Trzasiz. So Trezas is says, "How do you
think language we use, not personal
choice of words, but the first language
like English, English, Burmese or Polish
said English
um influence or change our perception of
reality?" And this has been studied by

some guy named Benjamin Warf, I think is his name, called the Warfian hypothesis. I think originally he and somebody else came up with this hypothesis together, but Warf wound up getting most of the credit. Um, I'm not talking about the Klingon. It was like a human. And he had this idea that really it's our language determines how we can perceive things. And I think a lot of people who just lived in the same culture their entire life or if they have traveled they've they've traveled to countries where still the point of view is similar. They really may not have much insight into understanding this. But you you move to

a country, you know, you spend a considerable amount of time in a country where the language is very different and the whole way of looking at things is correspondingly different or it's like in Burmese there are words that there's really no English translation for. In English there are words that there's no Burmese translation for. Like I've mentioned owls. There's lots and lots of owls in Burma. There's no word for owl in the Burmese language. It's just each kind of owl has its own name. You've got like the mang, you've got the zquet, you've got the let's see the the so there's all these there's the miwan. There's all these different kinds of

owls, but there's no word just for owl.

Also, there's lots of lizards in Burma.

No word just for

lizard. And so that's going to cause

their thinking to be different. I I've

mentioned before that like what in

English is called brown. If you look up

into an English to Burmese dictionary,

it will say that the Burmese word for

brown is ano. But brown and ano, they've

got a lot of overlap, but still they're

not exactly the same color. They're not

the same ranges of colors. That there

are colors that would be called ano that

are not brown. And there's colors that

might be called brown that are not

ano. And so it's like the words that you use for understanding this world like the generalizations and all language is almost entirely composed of generalizations. I think it was uh Bertin Russell said the only there's only two words in the English language that are not generalizations and that is this and that.

So definitely the the language that you use is going to have um like a profound impact on the way you think about things. And um I do think that's one reason why the Indoart the Indo-Uropeans, the Indo-Uropean language families, you know, the the

protoindoeuropeans who presumably arose in the Pontic steppe, you know, 7,000 years ago or something. They spread throughout much of the old world, throughout much of the Eastern Hemisphere, not including Africa really until in modern times gotten into Africa.

Um, well, I guess you'd have like Greek and Latin being spoken in Northern Africa in ancient times, but um, one reason why I think the Indo-Europeans were so successful is they had a powerful language where they could think things that other people couldn't think because they just didn't have the

words for it.

So I think that's one reason why the Indo Indo-Europeans were so successful is just not only did they have like strong robust kind of bodies and also um an appreciation for violence that made them successful there and also they were they were clever and were inventing things like chariots that kind of thing that maybe it was just their language skills the way that they were able to think because of their language that caused them to be more innovative or more objective or whatever and just made their culture a little bit stronger and gave them a little bit more of an edge against other cultures that they

were sooner or later in competition
with or just flat out warfare.

So, I mean, I I remember reading as a
kid in the Guinness Book of World
Records of all places that there were
some uh African tribal
languages that I mean the number system
only went up to like five, maybe even
less than five. It just went up like
one, two, three, many.

And I mean that is definitely going to
have a serious influence on how you
perceive reality. If you can't count
higher than five because you just don't
have numbers for it and your culture
just doesn't really have room for that

sort of

thing then yeah I mean it's you're just limited. There's like the poly language is very subtle with regard to intellectual states or mental states you know it's like meditative experiences you can describe those kind of things more easily in poly than in certain other languages like possibly English although English is a very powerful language um which is one reason why it's sort of like the the the main lingua franca of the earth at this point is It's a difficult language to learn, but still. Uh, what else should I say about this before we call it

quits? How do you think language we use, not personal choice of words, but the first language like English, Burmese, or Polish, influence or change our perception of reality? Yeah, it's just like a different tinge. It's just sort of like a a different subtly different cultural attitude. Like I have read that in English you can discuss Protestant Christianity much more easily in English than you can discuss just about any other religious system just because Protestant Christianity and modern English grew up together and they're just sort of like, you know, they've

sort of evolved in a kind of like
cultural symbiosis.

But it's it's fairly subtle, you know.

It's like you can you can talk with a
Burmese people with with Burmese person

like in Burmese or in English either

way. And for the most part, you

understand, you know, what the other

person is saying. Although every once in

a while is there's just going to be

certain assumptions that are made or

just the the language that you use.

talking about something that's brown,

for example, it's just going to cause

just a sort of communication barrier or

culture

barrier. And um I've read that like

Indian Buddhist texts are different from Chinese Buddhist texts because Indian languages, you know, they're they're Indo Indo-Uropean languages that are very kind of precise, objective kind of language. Whereas in China, it's it's a different a different kind of philosophy, subtly different where it's more intuitive and you know, it's the words are not nearly as precise and you just kind of have to fill in the blanks. And Burmese is kind of like that, too. Burmese is more closely related to Chinese than it is to Indo-Uropean languages, although it has a lot of lone words from Indo-Uropean languages.

So yeah, I mean it is going to influence your attitude along with other cultural elements just because of the words that you're able to think, the ideas you're able to have, the concepts you're able to generate are going to differ if the language differs and the words are different. And that's it. I think I'm done. My golly, that's about two hours exactly. So this is kind of a short one actually. So as I should always say at the beginning and never do if uh you got any questions you think I can answer especially about like terra Buddhism, early Buddhism, meditation, Indian philosophy, Eastern philosophy, even western philosophy,

biology, I guess me personally living in
Burma, that kind of thing. Then yeah,
feel free to feel free to ask the
questions and no more than three
questions per episode, please. And just
if you're unsure of how many questions
you got, just count the question
marks. It's it's a fairly easy way. And
like and subscribe if you have not done
so
already. And be happy.

Alrighty then. Hello and welcome to
question and answer number 146. I am
your host Pony Basa. This is my
beverage and

146 clearly is not a prime number
because it is even and the only even
number that is prime is two.

So 146 is actually $2 \times$

73. And some of you may notice that I've
got somewhat of a black eye and also
somewhat of a gash on the side of my
head. And you don't need to point it out
to me in the comments cuz I've already
noticed

it. And I just want to point out right
here now that it is not due to domestic

violence. that it was not caused by my beautiful woman hitting me with a frying pan because I forgot our anniversary.

No, it wasn't like that. Regardless of any evidence to the contrary, it didn't happen that way.

What actually happened was

uh it uh happened at work and I was pulling this I mean it was just minutes before I left for work last night that just one last thing to do. I was going to pull a table down

and I just pulled it. It's like I had to use my foot to kind of wedge to for leverage and then my foot got caught under the table as I was pulling it over and it just fell on me and hit me in the

face. Just knocked me flat on my
back. That is the official
story. And I suppose I should just start
answering questions. I didn't bother to
count all the questions here. Maybe I
should maybe maybe I should just
demonstrate my counting skills. cuz I
can count way up high. Let's see here. 1
2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
Oh, 31 32 33 34 5
36 37 38 questions which is getting up
there. So I guess I should just weigh
into this. And the first question is
from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Do you really
think God was trying to convert people?"

And I assume what he means here is like converting them to Buddhism because I don't know what else he'd convert them to. Unless he's just converting them from unenlightened to enlightened. And I think that would be the only kind of conversion he'd really be trying to do. I mean he wasn't trying to convert anyone to a new religion. I mean if you read the atikawaga which is probably the largest fragment of archaic Buddhism still in existence like pre-terravada prek schism just very early teachings before the teachings began they became popularized and just started like like mutating like a virus and you read the atawaga and it's

saying do not follow philosophies
do not believe
anything. So the Buddha the Buddha
wasn't trying to convert people to some
new religion. He wasn't trying to
convert them to dharma or dharma. He was
just trying to help them wake
up. So if you want to call that a kind
of conversion, you're you're undergoing
the conversion from like sleepwalking to
fully awake, then sure. But I do not
think he was trying to convert anyone to
Buddhism, even though if you read some
of the sutas, it does kind of appear
that
way. And so I'm just going to move on to

Ruy's second question, which is, did you ever during your cavedwelling Burma days have to resort to protection chanting?

And

um when I was living in caves, I really didn't have to do any protection chanting in including when I was living in the big cave um on the northern boundary of Alando Kazapan National Park in Sagine Division in Burma. um that cave. A lot of people were afraid to go near that cave because it was supposedly haunted by an assant which is a kind of guardian spirit, sort of a a terrestrial deva. And um I never had any problems with with any kind of supernatural beings while living in caves. Um, there

was the famous time when I allegedly was attacked by ogres. When I was living under a tree in southern Burma, living on top of a big flat boulder under some kind of tropical chestnut tree um on the outskirts of Alando Kazab, no, not Alando Casabot. the Bay Doya um monastery in in Mon state in southern Burma where one morning uh I woke up and I'm trying to see if it's dawn yet cuz I didn't have a a watch or a clock or anything. I just went by I went for alms round at dawn. So I I was propped up like this looking to see if it was dawn kind of looking towards the horizon and I started hearing like loud noises and

then realized that I could not move. I
was paralyzed like kind of like this
lying on my
side.

And at that time just in case whatever
happened I mean just just in case it was
some kind of beings that were messing
with me because I was warned repeatedly
that there are like ogres and so forth
in this forest that may mess with you. I
just sort of internally I couldn't move
my lips. So I was like frozen but
internally I just started namotasa
bavato aratohatato samasan buddhasa and
it just
evaporated. So I mean that's kind of
protection chanting I guess. Also when I

was like 20 years old I moved into this crummy little studio apartment for the summer

and it just had a really heavy vibe. It was an old building. And you'll have to forgive me because my glasses are now kind of crooked because when I got hit in the the side of the head, it was like it messed my glasses all up. And I'm afraid to bend it too much because I don't want to just snap them in half trying to get them back into shape again. But anyways, when I was about 20 years old, I moved into this crummy little studio apartment. And it was an old apartment. It was an old building.

Probably a lot of people had been there. A lot of unh wholesome actions had been perpetrated in that apartment probably and it just had like this dark vibe to it. So I just did this little ceremony and I wasn't fully converted to terraod yet. I was like reciting verses from the diamond cutter sutra, you know, burning incense in front of a little Buddhist statue and just kind of doing this ceremony to try and purify the place. Fortunately, I hadn't heard about burning sage yet because burning sage always gives me a headache. I don't like using that. Just incense is good enough in my opinion. So, I mean, maybe it worked. I

mean, it was like the heavy heavy vibe seems to have seemed to have lifted somewhat. Although, it could have just been like a placebo effect, but I didn't have any problems with malevolent entities in that apartment.

possibly because I did the chanting. So yeah, I think I answered that question. It's time to move on to the next one. So let's do that. And the next question is from Dama River. And Dama River asked me a question in the previous Q&A about the 18 faults of a monastery that is a kind of subsection in the Wizudi Maga. And he called it a chapter in the Wizi ma. I went through

the table of contents and just did not find any chapter about the faults of a monastery. So um you know I I said as much in I mean I I had read it many years ago as a young monk and then just it just slipped my mind. So anyways, Dma River says if you wish to read it and answer the question on your next Q&A I would be very grateful. If you can't that's okay as well. Thank you venerable Pabaza. And so there's this subsection in the Wizudi Maga about the 18 kinds of monastery that a monk should not live at. And the list is here's here's here's what it says herein. One that is unfavorable has any one of 18 faults. These

are

largeness, newness,

dilapidatedness, a nearby road, a pond,

edible leaves, flowers, fruits,

famousness, a nearby city, nearby timber

trees, nearby arable fields, presence of

incompatible persons, a nearby port of

entry, nearness to the border countries,

Nearness to the frontier of a kingdom,

unsuitability, uh, let's see here, lack

of good friends, one, and it says, one

with any of these faults is not

favorable. He should not live there. And

I probably lived at pretty much all of

these kinds of monasteries

before. And I mean, you rule out all of

these kind of monasteries and there's not a whole heck of a lot left. I mean, you can't live in a monastery that's big. You can't live in a monastery that's near a road. You can't live in a monastery that's uh see nearness to the border countries or nearness to the frontier of a kingdom. And one of the reasons for nearness to the border countries or nearness to the frontier of a kingdom is I mean first of all you can have like barbarian invasions, hostile kings sweeping through with his armies. But also a lot of the people aren't Buddhist out on the frontier. And I mean that's pretty much everywhere outside of Buddhist Asia.

any kind of monastery in America would
would fall under this category of a
place that a monk shouldn't live
at. So it's

like let's see a large monastery.

There's all kinds of commotion going on,
lots of visitors and so forth. I stayed
at a monastery where the SA of monks and
noviceses spending the reigns retreat
there was

1,500 give or take a hundred or so. So
I've stayed at one of those newness.

It's mainly new monasteries are not
considered to be good because they're
always under construction and just about
any monastery in Burma is under

construction. They're always like collecting donations to build a new monastery. I remember at um what is it Chan Yita in in Rangon which is one of the the meditation centers in the Mahasi tradition that they had just completely filled their property with buildings so that they had gotten to the point where if they were going to build a new building they had to tear down a pre-existing one just to build a new one but they just that's what they were doing. Let's see nearby road. I mean, just about any monastery is going to have a nearby road at this point, but I mean, it's like too many visitors. You got a nearby road, a pond.

That's I think the the pond is people coming to get water, you know? It' be like a lake, any kind of body of fresh water. I mean, I've lived at places like that. I mean I lived at uh I mean one of the main monasteries that I lived at was one bo wildlife refuge monastery one bo be bet do jang which is on the banks of the chinuan river although I guess it was a river you could have the villagers would just be going to that part of the river that was closer to the to the village and farther away from the monastery or some such edible leaves cuz women will come and pick the leaves to make salads for their family and they'll

be singing songs in wilting female
voices that will distract the
concentration of the monks and possibly
lead them astray. Flowers and fruits,
it's the same thing. I mean like one bo
do I mean it was it
was a lot of thick grass down by the
river and there'd be women coming to cut
the grass to take home to their their
cattle. There was fruit trees, mango
trees and and other kinds of trees
growing there. So, it's
like I mean just about any monastery is
going to have like four or five strikes
against it going with this
list. A nearby city or I mean for that
matter a monastery that's in a city

would be even worse. Um nearby timber trees, wood cutters coming and just wreaking havoc. Nearby fields. I mean, this is pretty much ruling out just about every monastery. I mean, the only place where you could live following this this list would be just out in the middle of a desert with no roads or anything. There'd be no people there either.

um they're in this I mean I'll there's no point in going on through the whole 18 but

um even even the Wudi maga itself does say that like a new monastery you can stay at a new monastery if there are

like lay people volunteering to do the construction work but then there's still going to be all this hammering and pounding I remember I was staying at Pandita Rama in Rangon also in the Mahasi tradition And the Burmese in general, they like noise. It doesn't bother them. In fact, some people prefer noise. And so, Upandida was having I mean, of course, they're building a new building there. And he had this worker pounding out sheet metal gutters just below the eaves of the meditation hall. So there's literally a guy just right outside the meditation hall pounding on sheet metal with a hammer and um there was it used to bother me. I mean

westerners in general don't like noise nearly as much as you know Burmese people for example. And one time during an interview um I mentioned that that noise that usually bothered me I just hit this zone in my meditation where it was just like going through me just like light going through a pane of glass just the the sound of the pounding sheet metal was just going in one ear and out the other and it didn't bother me at all. And when I when I mentioned this, Pandanda, who didn't like me very much, I mean, he visibly and audibly sucked air through his teeth like like he just wanted to pounce and just lay into me

and just chew me out. But he couldn't
because I said that it didn't bother me.
But good luck finding a monastery that
doesn't have any of these 18
folds that your best bet is just I mean
if you're going to be a monk living in
a monastery even like a lay meditator
staying at a monastery just shop around
look for for monasteries. The
monasteries that aren't on this list
you're not going to find them. I mean
there's they're not going to be famous.
They're not going to be near a road.
So just go to a number of different
monasteries or just go to monasteries
until you find the place that just feels
right and then try

that because if you follow this um
you're just never going to find a good
place probably. And I'm just going to
move on next question also from Dhamma
River.

And Dhamma River says in the sutas
fortunate people were able to meet the
Buddha and ask him questions. If
miraculously you were able to meet the
Buddha

today and ask him a question for which
he would answer with a discourse, what
question would you ask the blessed
one? And if I were in the the presence
of the Buddha, I would be very
humble and the only question I could

really ask is you know better than I do
what I need to know. Please tell me that
you know what should I even what should
I do? I mean I just have this feeling if
I said what should I do the Buddha would
just say you already

know. So yeah, that's that's really the
only question I could ask him is like,
you know better than I do what I need to
hear. So please tell me what I need to
hear cuz I wouldn't want to bias it with
like

preconceived preferences and that kind
of thing. Like I read the the
autobiography of Ajan man or the
biography no I think it was the
autobiography of Ajan man where he's he

meets with the Buddha

somehow and he he asked him one question

which was with regard to what was the

color that monks dyed their robes in the

Buddhist time. I mean, why would you

blow? You get one question. It's sort of

like there's a genie. You get one wish

and I want to know what color the robes

were in ancient India in the Buddhist

time. It's

like I just don't get that

one. So, I guess I'll just move on to

the next question. This is from

Xenithoid. And I'm going to check make

sure we are in fact recording. And yes,

we are in fact recording.

Xenithoid says, "Can you give your opinion on the divide amongst the political right between traditionalists and

futurists?" And I've frankly I've never heard of this divide. I mean, I don't read like

right-wing

websites, that kind of stuff. I don't study up on on like

right-wing politics really. I don't I'm really not right-wing. I've taken some of those uh political compass tests and I generally tend to be in the center, very close to the

center. And I mean it's sort of like a classical liberal, you know, not so

different from a libertarian, that kind of

thing. So, I mean, I really don't know.

I mean, I can understand just sort of using my knowledge of politics in general to know what a traditionalist is. is I mean that's a conservative you know a conservative is trying to conserve traditions but a futurist a right-wing

futurist I'm not exactly sure what that would mean and I mean it seems to me that a lot of people don't even know what rightwing really means like on the on the left like the globalist leftist they'll just call anyone who disagrees

with them rightwing you know they'll call Nazis far right when really I mean the National Socialist German Workers Party of you know mid early to mid 20th century Germany. I mean they were technically socialists. I mean it was right there in the name of the party. Um, it is true though that that uh the Furer really didn't care much about economics and uh so I mean I've I've heard like Nazism referred to as radical centrism because it really wasn't that far right. Well, I mean what is far right? It's like the the best way I could come up with I've written an essay on this just trying to wrap my head around what rightwing really means

because the leftwing is uncontroversial.

Hard right would be communism. I mean

that's uncontroversial. Pretty much

everyone agrees that the hard far left

would be

communists. But what is the opposite of

communists? Right? I mean it's like in

in

communism there is no personal property.

So the opposite of that would be

everything is personal property and it's

like

communism I

mean not Freud Karl Marx and also like

the Antifa people they they seem to have

this idea that pure communism would be

anarchistic but I mean it's just unrealistic. Anarchco communism is like an oxymoron. It's like a contradiction in terms because communism is just is in this

flagrant like disharmony with human nature which I guess is one reason why hard leftists deny the existence of human

nature. But I mean communism is so like at odds with human nature that it has to be enforced at gunpoint by like a strong centralized government. And that's that's one of the like the farther left you go, the more you want the government controlling everything. So anarchism would be more towards the right. It

seems to me like like anarch like uh
anarchistic capitalism. What ancaps? Is
that what they're
called? That would be like far right.
But then um some things that are
associated with the far right are like
the strong dictator type
um you know that's sort of fascism. But
then again, fascism isn't all that far
right either. Like the original fascist
party of Italy led by Benito Mussolini,
it was like a an offshoot of the Marxist
like the Communist Party that they split
over whether or not Italy should get
involved in World War I.
So even like the the strong man

charismatic leader um isn't necessarily
I mean it's it's an aspect of fascism
but it's not necessarily an aspect of
farright
politics that a strong centralized
government seems to be more a left-wing
thing. But let's just give the
communists the benefit of the doubt.
Let's just say that as you go farther
and farther left, you know, into
socialism before you get to communism,
the the government gets bigger and
stronger and more centralized until
finally it just poofs out of existence
when you reach the end. Let's just
assume that for the sake of argument.
Then the opposite of that would be the

government gets weaker and less
centralized until you get to the extreme
far right and then all of a sudden
you've got a totalitarian dictator. And
that could be the way it is I mean if
you've got less and less
structure so that you wind up with a
kind of feudalism or law of the jungle
where all of a sudden you know you got
like this feudalistic society or just
like a anarchistic or um what's the word
libertarian society then you're just
going to have like the most
ruthless shark is just going to like
take over and just gobble everything and
become like a like a an

otarch. But I'm just completely straying away from the question. Let's just get back to the question. Can you give your opinion on the divide amongst the political right between traditionalists and futurists? And I really don't know what that divide really is because I'm not sure what a futurist right-winger would be. And I'm not even sure what xenithoid even means when he refers to the political right because the political right is just this nebulous this nebulous concept or semiconcept that very few people try to pin down and like define it precisely which is just weird because as I've been saying the far left is just

uncontroversial communism.

What's the opposite of

communism? Anarchistic capitalism. Just

libertarianism. Feudalism like medieval

style feudalism. There's different ways

of like finding the opposite of the

left. Futuristic feudalism. I'm not

exactly sure what that would entail.

So, I mean, if you got futurist,

right-wing futurists, they're just going

to have to cook up some new tradition.

They just want to invent some new

tradition. But inventing new stuff is

more

progressive than

conservative. So, just

futurism, I mean, it seems to have one foot in the left already just in its eagerness for for change.

But I don't know. So, I'm I'm really not an authority on right-wing politics. I do not consider myself to be particularly right-wing, although a lot of people

would. So, I think I'm just going to have to move on to the next question, which is along the same lines. Do you fall more into the traditionalist camp or the futurist camp? And kind of neither, because like I say, I'm really not particularly right-wing as far as I can tell. Although like far-lefties would just consider me to be just just

fascist, but then again, fascism isn't necessarily right-wing either. So, I mean, I'm not really a traditionalist or a futurist. Um, I'm more of like classical liberal libertarian, which will have some tradition and some adaptation. you know, like the Romans, I mean, they were pretty conservative, but nevertheless, if they came across a good idea amongst Greeks or barbarians or whatever, they would adopt it. Especially with regard to like warfare, you know, it's like if they're, you know, they start fighting in Spain and the Spanish swords are really nice, so they started using the

Gladius or they started having a war against the Dians. And the Dians had this weapon called the Fals that was hooked and they'd kind of reach behind and and like come come from behind and like be cutting the the Roman soldiers the back of their neck that was relatively unguarded. So the Romans had just changed their their armor to protect themselves from that sort of thing. You know, they they adopted a lot of stuff from the Greeks and from the Atruscans. So, I don't know if that's exactly futuristic, but at least it's opportunistic that you don't want to just adhere so firmly to your traditions that you reject improvements on the

system. And improvements on the system would be along the lines of technology, especially technology.

If you go Amish, your your existence as a world power is is is very very short term. So I wouldn't consider myself a traditionalist or a futurist necessarily. And I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is along the same. I really don't know what a futurist right-winger would be. He says, "Does the divide between futurists and traditionalists on the political right exist at all within Buddhist countries or is it mainly a European or and

American phenomenon?" I would expect it to exist in advanced countries like Japan and China, but I would be surprised if it existed in places like Thailand or Burma. I never heard of really right-wing politics in Burma other than the military dictatorship, maybe. I mean, that's more leftwing than right-wing. I mean, the it's Burmese politics is kind of hard to pin down because the government really doesn't have much power outside of the main cities or if there's an army base or a police base, you know, the area right around that will be under the control of the government. But out in

the villages, the Burmese are are governed more by tradition than by the government. It's just the tradition, the way things have been for a thousand years is just the way it keeps going.

And you've got like the village headman and he's in charge of maintaining order in the village. You've got a thief or something. Then he'll call in some some village like a like a posi and then they'll go out and deal with

it. So yeah, abstract political theories. I I assume there's like university educated people in Burma that think about this kind of stuff, but even I don't think about this kind of stuff.

At least I've never been exposed to
futuristic
rightwing
politics. I don't know what it would be
exactly unless it's just technological
improvements on like old
style right-wing politics. And even that
again, what exactly is rightwing
politics is controversial just because
right-wingers just haven't bothered to
really just lay down the law, just like
define what it is to be right-wing and
different right-wingers would define it
differently.

So, I don't know if that's good or bad,
but it may be that this whole right-wing
like the futurists, the divide between

futurists and traditionalists on the political right is more of an European thing than an American thing or it's just a niche thing that, you know, is of interest to a few people, but it never really gets into the mainstream. At least I do not recall any coming across any of this kind of stuff. So with all due respects to Xenithoid and his fascination for the divide in right-wing politics in the West, I'm going to just move on to the next question. And this is this is an obscure vignia question that is right up my alley. This question is from Stellar Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb,

etc.

And he says what does it mean for one to eat their alms in order and this is one of the seaia rules I it's you know a monk is supposed to eat his food systematically like in order and the way what that means at least traditionally in teraba Buddhism you got a bowl of food sitting in front of you just start on one side of the bowl and you just eat across like this and when you're done it's just like there's like this little wall where you stopped eating. There's, you know, like this this neat line. At least that's that's the way I used to eat. And I got paid this compliment as a junior monk once that

there was like this lady on the board of directors saw my my bowl after I'd finished eating and she says, "Tom Pulu Seattle used to eat that way." where you know it's just you could when he finished eating it was just like this you know it's just like this straight line where he stopped eating. So yeah that's what it means to to eat in order at least traditionally according to tradition. You just start on one side and eat your way over. You're not like picking and choosing the stuff that you like is essentially the purpose of it. You just eat it as it comes. Although you can cheat a little

bit. Like if there's something you really don't like, you just move that over to the other side of the bowl or you just turn the bowl so that the food you don't like is on the on the side you're not going to get to that kind of thing. But yeah, there's another one. Eating food in proportion, which is kind of controversial. My understanding of that is you just eat it in the proportion that is given to you. like rice and curry, you know, you get mostly rice and a little bit of curry, then you eat mostly rice and a little bit of curry. You don't just take all the curry and mix it in with the rice and just leave plain white rice behind as

leftovers. That kind of thing.

So after that satisfying obscure

question on monastic

discipline which I mean if you don't if

you don't do that just because it's a

secular rule you're not necessarily

breaking a rule. It's you're only

breaking the rule if you do it just on

purpose knowing that it's against the

rules and not giving a damn then it then

it's a duca offense which is the most

minor uh category of ecclesiastical

offense.

But some monk who's ignorant, he who

shouldn't be because it's one of the

potty mocha rules, but I mean, if he's

not doing it on purpose or he's like violently allergic to bamboo shoots or something and takes those out, then fine. Personally, I don't like bamboo shoots because I stayed at this one place out in the forest living in a cave on the outskirts of the national park where during the rainy season, it's like everyone and her sister is giving me bamboo shoots and I just completely burned out on them and to this day I still don't like bamboo shoots. So, I'm just going to move on.

Next question. is from Harim Cthul and Harim Cathul says, "Did followers of Christ distort and misunderstand his ideas after his

death? It seems to me that the core teachings of Jesus resemble Dharmic understanding of religion quite a bit.

The rabid

devotionalism,

dogmatism, egalitarianism, and

missionary character

of Orthodox Christianity evokes disgust

in me. However, uh well, of course, the

followers of Christ distorted and

misunderstood his ideas after his death.

The followers of the Buddha

misunderstood and distorted his ideas

after the Buddha's passing from this

earth. I mean, it just happens. You take

an enlightened teaching or just a very

wise teaching and it just kind of gets inherited by less wise, less enlightened people. They're going to muck it up. If you're lucky, they'll at least not change the old wise stuff. They'll just add new foolish stuff to it.

But I mean I think Harim Cthulh may be kind of

overestimating early Christianity in this case like devotionalism. I mean they were worshiping God is I mean Jesus himself was a

monotheist you know worshiping God praying to God. There's a lot of advice about praying. In fact, one of my favorite bits of advice from Jesus on praying is it's sort of like somebody

pounding on your door in the middle of the night. You know, they they've got company comes over, they don't have any bread to feed the company. They come over to your house and they're they're knocking on your door. You don't want to get up. But if they just keep pounding, sooner or later you're going to get up. You might not be in a good mood. You might not be happy about it, but you're going to get up and answer the door. And that's that's Jesus says you should pray that way. just pester God until he gives you what you want just just to get some peace and quiet essentially. So, devotionalism, I'm sure

that was in, you know, the original OG Christianity. Dogmatism, well, you got the Old Testament dogma that was inherited by the Christians. So I mean Jesus said he wasn't going to change one jot or

tit of like the old Mosaic law that sort of thing. So that could be considered dogmat dogmatic

egalitarianism. According to the acts of the apostles the first Christian community in Jerusalem was essentially communist. They just donated their assets to the group and it was divided according to need. So that's that's pretty communistic. And with a small group of voluntary communists, it can

work. Especially if it's if they're being spiritual and trying to reduce I, me, mine, personal property and all that, then it can work. But when you try to enforce it on like a national scale, you know, when most people are not particularly wise and communism just goes against human nature anyway, it just not going to work nearly as well. Missionary character, I mean, that's one of the things that the Buddha or the Buddha, one of the things that Jesus was telling his disciples, just go out and spread the gospel, you know, heal the sick, cast out demons, and spread the gospel.

So I mean Jesus was essentially a Jew and Christianity is a schismatic sect of Judaism. One could argue that Marxism also is a kind of schismatic sect of Judaism.

So, but it seems to me that Jesus was just ahead of his time or was ahead of his culture

in first century Judea or

Galilee that even his own apostles apparently didn't understand

him. So, I mean it was relatively short time before he was deified. And

uh I mean Jesus probably considered himself to be the Messiah. I used to be skeptical of that. I used to think that

they just kind of monkeyed with the details of his life to try and you know force fit him into the prophecies of the Messiah. But the more I've I've heard about Jesus and like the history of the early church, the more it seems that Jesus probably did really consider himself to be the promised Messiah, even though he knew well enough that the details of his life did not fit all the prophecies. like he probably knew that he was born in Galilee and not in Bethlehem and that his mother was not a virgin. I mean, he had several brothers and sisters.

So, just getting to the question though, did followers of Christ distort and misunderstand his ideas after his death? Sure, even to some degree before his death. And the same thing has happened with Buddhism too. Although maybe not well I mean probably to a similar degree. Let's just put it that way. So I mean even well even the Protestant Christians still just follow like the New Testament. They they dismiss the apocrypha or the pseudoepigraphic. What is it? The dudero canonicals. you know, the the Catholics will accept what the Protestants reject, some of the books of the Bible, you know, the book of Tabet in the Old

Testament, that kind of thing. But even Protestant Christians follow pretty much the same scriptures as, you know, the the representatives of the the oldest schools of Christianity that have been here for, you know, 2,000 years, like Greek Orthodox, for example, or the Syrian church or the Coptic Church, you know, Catholics.

But in

Buddhism, the new schools of Buddhism, sort of like the the Buddhist Protestants, they just cooked up an entire library of new sayings of the Buddha, which I mean, that's going way beyond what the Christians did.

I mean, the the Mormons kind of cooked up some new stuff, but yeah, I think the Buddhists may have gone even farther with regard to distorting and misunderstanding the ideas of their founder. Although, I do not think that Jesus considered himself to be the son of God and that you can only be saved through believing in Jesus. I don't think that Jesus went quite that far. So I think that's an early distortion of Christianity but I think I should just move on to the next question. This is also from Harim Cthul and he's saying should higher teachings be restricted to an elite? The Bavad Gita warns against teaching it to

those who are not worthy. In my opinion, Hinduism would have degenerated into a Christian-like religion very quickly if the interpretation of the vadas was left up to sudras and

dalits or

outcasts. That is more or less what has happened for almost two centuries now.

There's no shortage of verses in the vadas that can be interpreted as radically egalitarian by fools. Well, even in Christianity, you know, Jesus had that saying about don't cast pearls before swine because, you know, the the swine will just turn and rend you after trampling the the pearls into the

mud. And yeah, I mean, should higher teachings be restricted to an elite? I think so. Yes. It's like um like the upanishads, they start off as secret teachings. I mean, upanishad literally means sitting up close to because it was like a secret teaching that your teacher would tell you like quietly like practically whispering it into your ear and you had to purify yourself for years before you would be worthy like the Buddhist teachings. Now you you can just get it free on the internet, but it used to be that monks you have to be ordained and then they'd have to study it. You know, they'd be living a life of purity and so forth.

They had to be worthy of learning this stuff. And then the stuff they would teach to the lay people would be like the elementary superficial stuff suited for illiterate subsistence farmers in the ancient Ganges Valley, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I do have a certain respect for the idea that certain like advanced teachings that aren't even going to be understood by like common normies who who might just consider it [__] or he might think that he gets it and but when he really doesn't but I mean there is something to be said for the idea that you should be worthy of

hearing like very advanced teachings.

You know you should purify yourself. So that when the pure nectar of the teachings are poured into you, the vessel isn't all just like caked with mud which turns the nectar into just sludge as soon as it goes in. You you take pure water, pour it into a dirty cup and it becomes dirty. And it's the same way you take pure like spiritual philosophy, pour it into a dirty mind, it becomes dirty.

So, I mean, we're pretty much stuck with the way it is now. I don't think sacred texts are going to be purged from the internet anytime soon.

So,

um, it can go either way, but I do have a certain I I think it's probably more appropriate that only people who prove themselves worthy should be given the higher teachings. And it reminds me of like the pilot episode of Kung Fu.

Little Quai Changang Kain, he wants to be a Shaolin monk. So he stands out in the sun and rain outside the monastery gates humbly waiting to be invited in. And he just stands there day after day, rain or shine, just stands there. Even the little the boys, you know, there's some other boys that are doing the same thing, but if it starts raining hard, they'll go and stand in under a tree.

they'll get sent away. Or they start like giggling and playing and stuff amongst themselves, they get sent away. Little Quanka had to just stand there just stalled in the sun and rain for for it was like two weeks, I think, before they finally invite him in. And then he gets another test. There's like three boys that passed this first test. They get invited in. They get invited to have tea with the abbott. So the abbott pours tea for the three boys.

And two boys, not Qui-Chang, but the other two start drinking the tea. But Qui-Chang just sits there in front of the teacup and doesn't touch it. So the abbott says, "Why aren't you drinking

your tea?" And then little Qui-Chang says, "After you, venerable sir." And then the abbott takes it, drinks some tea, and then Qui-Chang starts drinking it. And then um he the the abbot is interested in Qui-Chang partly because he's like half American. He's like a half barbarian.

But his Chinese grandfather taught him correct manners and so forth. So he's the only one who passed the other two boys who drank the tea first got sent home. So I mean if it was like that in the west there'd be damn few people learning dharma though. It might be better that way in a certain way. I mean

be a purer kind of
dhamama. But still I mean there's pros
and cons to both ways. But I do think
that it is good that I mean like like
Jesus said I it's better not to cast
pearls before
swine cuz I mean it can harm them too.
If if you hear some profound philosophy,
but your mind is so like blinded by
defilements that you just rejected as
utter [__] and maybe even sneer at
it, then I mean you're making bad karma
for yourself. At least the the guy who's
doing the sneering is. It may be that
the person who shared that advanced
philosophy, you know, he did it in a
spirit of goodwill and maybe

overestimated the wisdom of the person
he was telling. and that sort of
thing. But nowadays, there's not much
purity testing for higher wisdom. It's
most mainly just purity testing to be
found worthy of being a
leftist. And if you say the wrong thing,
then you get
attacked. And I'm just going to move on
this question after throwing a little
postmodern politics into there. So, next
question from Harim
Cthul. Do you consider the emperor
Julian to be a
hero? And it turns out there were two
two emperors named Julian. One of them

is very obscure. He wasn't emperor for very long. He was uh after Pertinax I think and before Septimius Severis um and he was he he lasted just a short time and then was slaughtered by the Ptorian guard. Um but the one that Harim Cthulh here is referring to is Julian the Apostate, the last pagan emperor of Rome. And do I consider him a hero? He was like a he was like a fighter for a lost cause. He was a heroic champion of a lost cause. So whether he's a hero or not, you know, as it depends on, you know, the attitude of the person who who hears about Julian the apostate, you know, a devout Christian would consider

him to be like an antichrist or something.

But um it's really too bad that Julian died after being emperor for only like two years. He caught a spear in a war with the Persians. And there are some people who think that it was probably some Christian Roman soldier who harpooned him rather than a Persian soldier. But he was trying to he was he he knew from like past history in Rome that violently persecuting Christians just kind of like you know it's like compacting a snowball it just toughens them up and makes them more determined you know it's like you get

more holy martyrs that kind of thing. So he was trying a kind of soft persecution just preventing them from getting like government jobs and government educations or just you know just not allowing them into like the the philosophicalmies and so forth. And um I mean I think he he might have done well to just enforce the Christian idea that you know gather not up your treasures upon the earth. And to some degree I think he did kind of you know was confiscating wealth from kind of bogus Christians who I mean to this day I mean gather not up your treasures upon the earth is probably one of the most ignored teachings of biblical

Christianity among Christians that devout Christians even like fundamentalist Christians are still making as much money as they can and getting filthy rich if they are capable of getting filthy rich. Not all of them. There are some who are living in voluntary poverty and they they they have earned my respect for doing that.

So, Emperor Julian, I mean, he was trying to sort of turn paganism into like a more viable alternative to Christianity, like injecting some wisdom through neo um neoplatanism and requiring pagan priests to have qu uh

certain

uh uh like a standard of virtue, uphold
a standard of virtue like Christian
priests were supposed to do because in
in Julian's time, the late Roman Empire,
paganism was almost

amoral that you know like Julius Caesar
or or a lot of people they just get
appointed like these high I think Julius
Caesar was actually um what is it?

What's the pope called?

Oh man, Pontifffects Maximus. you know,
it's like the chief priest of of like
Jupiter, you know, it's like it was like
a political thing and people it was like
politicians would just kind of boost
their status without really living a a

holy life. You know, it's just that's the way paganism had become. It was just kind of a secular superstition thing rather than any kind of like transcendent dharmic kind of a thing. And Christianity had more of that transcendent aspect than than paganism, especially mainstream paganism. You had some mystery cults and so forth that were more towards purification and so forth. Things like schools like like orphism, that kind of thing, but they really weren't um all that mainstream. So Julian was trying to mainstream a more advanced kind of paganism, and it just didn't work. And

as he was dying, he didn't appoint his successor. He just let the army decide who was going to be the next emperor.

And it was some popular officer named Jovian who was a Christian. And there weren't any more pagan emperors after Julian, which is too bad. I think the West might have

um might have turned into something that I would find more interesting, more engaging if like some kind of neoplatanism had become the the mass religion of the West instead of Christianity, which is a schismatic sect of

[Music]

Judaism. But do I consider Emperor

Julian to be a hero? Yeah, he was kind of a hero, but he was a failed hero fighting for a lost cause. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Siovak and Cipad Zidana. And Siovak and Cipad Zida says, "How similar were the samurai and thehatria like their duties, codes of honor, etc."

And I really can't answer this question very very

well because I'm no authority on samurai and the kashatri. In fact, I probably know more about the samurai with regard to their codes of

honor and so forth than the kashatria
varna or cast of ancient India cuz I
mean I don't recall ever reading any
code of honor. I mean you read the poly
text there might be a little bit about
khatrias in sort of like the Buddha as a
boy and a young man some of the stuff he
would have to learn you know he'd have
to learn archery and horsemanship and
you know like military strategy and also
like poetry and this kind of stuff
um which it would be similar I mean
there's probably a lot of similarity
sort of parallel evolution of the
warrior cast the warrior class of
medieval Japan and ancient North India.
So there's probably a lot of

similarities that it was like the the warrior and to some degree the ruling class especially in India in in medieval Japan like the emperor I don't think he was of the samurai class but he was just sort of like this obscure figure sort of no I almost said like Joe Biden or something but you know I mean he wasn't really running the show a lot of the time you'd have like the shogun who was of the samurai class

So there's

that. With regard to the code of honor, I really don't know what the code of honor for the Indian chhatrias would be. Um there might be some famous text out

there laying down, you know, in black and white what the duties of a good chhatria would be. But other than that, you just pick up little bits and pieces from other things that you read. just this information is just incidental to to what you're reading about something else. So I really can't say but it it does seem that there was a lot of overlap. It was it was like parallel evolution. You know they were essentially occupying the same ecological niche in their respective societies and it just kind of produced the same sort of phenomenon. I don't think that Khatrias um were as likely to use peasants for

target practice and that kind of thing like sometimes you hear about the samurai. Whereas to some degree the samurai were considered like the Spartans and everyone else in society were hellets where it was just open season. You could just treat them however you pleased. that I don't know if the samurai themselves I mean there was

Bushido but I would assume that different different samurai in like different areas of Japan would have different ideas about codes of honor and so forth what their duty should be that sort of

thing but a samurai did I mean he had to have allegiance to a lord I'm not sure the khatri were that way you were just kind of born that way and I I mean you might be a good chhatria or a badria but u I don't think there was any like stigma of being like ronin like in the samurai where um your your leader the person that you have dedicated your life to um gets overthrown or assassinated or whatever and then and then it's like a stigma on the on the ronin it was like a slur calling them ronin and uh I forgot to to jiggle the mouse as is usually the case. And

so my

sweetie's computer

screen. Let's

see. Ah, her computer screen went dark.

Oh, there we

go. Because that's sort of like ambient

lighting to highlight my my blemishes

and wounds and so

forth. So let's see here. See of action

cad second question.

Compare and con this is this is like a

test question. Compare and contrast the

republics around the time of the Buddha

to the Roman Republic. Well, again, it's

like that like like knowledge of the

political situation or really like like

anything remotely resembling a kind of

constitution is very scanty with regard

to ancient India much more so than in ancient Rome. You know, ancient Rome, we got a pretty good idea. They didn't I'm I'm pretty sure they didn't have a written constitution like the United States has a written constitution, but they did have these traditions that were considered to be binding. You know, like two consoles, you know, how often certain I mean, how often different uh offices would be reelected, you know, just different positions. Jud, the quiz stores and the just I won't go into it, but with regard to ancient India, it's they didn't keep records nearly as well as the ancient Greeks and Romans did. It's just kind of a European

thing, objective recordkeeping. And also, we are Europeans pretty much. And so, you know, Europeans have been very interested in European history for longer than they've been interested in Indian history. So, stuff has been dug up and and discovered and learned in the West. It hasn't been dug up and discovered and learned in India. But it is true like it has been said that Indian history didn't even exist until the British came along and invented it after they colonized India because the Indians just really weren't into the same kind of historical recordkeeping as Europeans have been.

Not all Europeans but especially like
Greeks and Romans.

So I think the republics around the time
of the Buddha were more like oligarchies
ruled by the cashatria class maybe with
you know like Brahman priests got like
advising them that kind of thing but I
really don't know if they had the same
sort of that complex

like like what do you call it just the
balance making sure that that like one
person won't just take control of the
government. That's why you had two
consoles and you know you'd have just
checks and balances and so forth. And I
I just get the idea just from reading
the poly texts that a republic in the

Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time was mainly just an oligarchy of Chhatria males who would just meet in like a council and come up with their ideas. kind of like like early medieval Poland. I think it was early medieval Poland where it was just like the the nobles would all meet on horseback out in a field and and come to their decisions that way that uh I mean in India I assume it would be less sophisticated than you know the the elaborate political code of the Roman Republic that it would be more just a matter of a group of people making

decisions in some council hall rather than just one king or emperor making decisions.

So I'm just going to move on to Sea of Action Caden's third question which is what are your thoughts on Plato's noble lie? And I first heard about no Plato's noble lie from Bubbles on Trailer Park Boys. He talked about Plato's noble lie. uh when advising Ricky I think but it turns out that Plato's noble lie is the idea that a government does well to promote certain myths like a like religious myths for the sake of like unifying and strengthening the nation and this just falls back on something that I've been I have said

numerous times that as a young man I pretty much lost interest in politics when I fully realized that what is good and right from a political point of view isn't necessarily good and right from a spiritual point of view. So from a spiritual point of view lying is wrong but from a political point of view it may be that sometimes lying is the right thing to do. It's not dharmic. It's not wholesome that the people doing it are probably going to make some bad karma for themselves. But still from a political point of view, it may be of advantage to a society to believe in certain myths

that unifies the people and gives them the same general world view. And it might not be entirely true like Romulus and Remus being raised by a she wolf, that kind of stuff. I mean, it's it's it's probably more to the advantage politically to a government to just promote that and go along with it than just say, "Nah, didn't really happen."

So, I guess those are my thoughts on Plato's noble lie. I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Phil and Phil says, "Favorite languages and where would you rank poly?" Well,

I'm not a philologist. I am not a linguist. I only speak one language really fluently and that is English. I speak Burmese well enough to get by. I know Pauly well enough that especially if I'm armed with a Poly English dictionary, I can translate texts from Poly into English. Also, I have a Poly grammar which is is very nice.

Um, a little bit of Spanish un poito, but I really can't say I mean my favorite language would have to be English. English is a good language. It's a weird language, you know. It's it's unnecessarily complicated. Like in Burmese, you've got good, more good,

most good. And it's like all the adjectives just fit into this, you know, good, good, goodest. It's just it's easy in English. It's good, better, best. You can't say goodter. You can't say goodest. Or you can, but it's wrong. And just the spelling is weird. you know this is based on like the the pronunciation of old English or something. So but never nevertheless English is a powerful language. But with regard to what I consider to be the best languages to some degree I would defer to Schopenhau. Schopenhauer said that in order to be really literate and educated in his day, like the early 1800s, you had to be fluent in gosh, it was like

nine languages, eight or nine languages. I mean, there was like ancient Latin and Greek. You had to know those. Any educated person had to know Latin and Greek up until the 20th century, probably. Then there was German, French, English, and Italian. So that's German, English, Italian. Yeah, maybe it was six languages plus Latin and Greek. And according to Schopenhauer, I think he said the ancient Greek or classical Hellenic Greek was the most perfect language that you can say things more precisely and concisely in Greek than in any other language like classical Arabic Greek. And then he second place he gave to

German.

But I really can't say. I really do not know much Greek at all. Even less German probably. So I guess English is my favorite language. And with regard to poly, it's it's kind of an easy language. It's kind of like Spanish, you know, it follows rules fairly well. If you know how to pronounce something, you generally have a pretty good idea as to how to spell it, that kind of thing.

Um, it's kind of a nice language. I prefer it to Burmese. I think I prefer it to

Spanish. It's it's a nice language. It's it's a simplified version of Sanskrit or rather I mean it's based on vadic

Sanskrit but it's it's much simpler more streamlined than classical Sanskrit which is a language that I know some words you know to the extent that it's it's it's parallel or the same as poly you know that that much of it I understand with regard to grammar

but I I guess I've read that poly was designed as a kind of lingua franca for for Buddhist monks in

India and uh where would I rank it?

Well, I guess of the languages I'm familiar with, it'd have to be my second favorite language after

English. And so I'm just going to move

on to Phil Lee's second question, which is a question that I answered relatively recently. Toltoy or Dostki? And the answer was

Dostski. I Dostki is my favorite novelist, my favorite writer of fiction and The Idiot by Dosioski is probably my favorite novel. War in Peace is nothing to sneeze your nose at. I'm not saying Toltoy is a hack writer by any any stretch of the

imagination. But Dostki, my heart goes out to Dostki. I could just and it's hard not to love Dostki cuz I mean he was a tortured soul. He was kind of like Michelangelo just you know the the whole idea that you have to suffer to create.

Doski was that guy. I mean he was his life was just a shambles you know it's like close family members dying. He was hopelessly addicted to gambling roulette to be specific. He was always in debt, just like fleeing from people that he owed money to. This kind of stuff just he had epilepsy. He just all this stuff going wrong. I mean, he spent years in a Siberian prison camp after being reprieved like at like he was almost standing in front of the firing squad. He was actually there at the like the place where people are executed waiting in line to be shot before he receives this reprieve from the zar just saying

okay you just you just got to go and
spend a few years in a prison camp in
Siberia instead.

So it was like Dostski
understood the divinity that lurks
inside the human heart despite all the
just the filth and
sortedness. It it's it's just kind of
strange that Dossi just he portrays
people with all the warts, you know, all
the blemishes and he was really
insightful with regard to human nature.
you know, he was sort of like a
psychologist before psychology was even
really
invented. Toltoy was a wise man, but I
think Dostki is has him beat. And I'm

just going to move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is in your estimation, how different would the USA look today had the Confederacy won the war?

Well, that's kind of a difficult question because it's conjecture. You just have to guess. I don't think the southern states, assuming that they broke away, I don't think they'd still have slavery. But in all likelihood they would have probably deported all of the freed freed slaves either to some country in Africa like Liberia or then you know sort of like the bleeding heart liberals of the

the northern states the Yankees would have taken all these freed slaves and had rampant violent crime and so forth.

So let's see here what else what other difference I don't think the southern states would ever really become like a world power you know they might be prosperous relatively powerful force to be reckoned with but still I don't think that they would be like the as powerful as the northern states because the northern states had the industry and you know the population and that sort of thing that just made them more stronger and it may be that there'd at least another war between north and

south just due to friction or you know animosity smoldering or who knows maybe the northern states would out just sort of incorporate Canada or something I don't know it's I mean it's all conjecture you can't really say but whether the United States would become a superpower if the southern states had successfully broken away and I'm living in South Carolina, the very first state to secede from the union. Um, it's it's hard to say. It really is. I mean, it's all it would take is one little butterfly effect and chaos theory to take effect and just this hardly noticeable little change can

result in some

huge difference, you know, 100 years

down the

road. So, it's just hard to say.

Although I can say with fair confidence

that the Confederacy, the Confederate

States of America wouldn't have slaves

nowadays. That's just slavery. It pretty

much ran its course except for in a few

Muslim, you know, third world nations or

something. And uh I don't think the

South would really equal the North with

regard to power and influence on the the

global scale.

And I'm just going to move on to the

next question. This is from Sedarta

Lohachita. And his question is, his

first question I should say, given the overwhelming references to kings, princes, chatrias, and brahinss in the polycanon, would Buddhist rule be considered what liberals might call an absolute monarchy? Well, I don't think so because I mean the Buddha himself, even though he's called a royal prince, the historians, the experts would say that the citystate of Capilaw Watu was more of a an oligarchy ruled by this council of of elders like Chhatrias, you know, the ruling class kind of like Athens maybe. I mean it would it would be more towards like an early primitive kind of

democracy than like monarchy.

Also, um, the Buddha

supposedly based the governance of the

SA on one of these oligarchies or it was

like a democratic kind of oligarchy

where it was like democratic consensus

or democratic majority of, you know,

these upper class males who were running

the country. So, um, I think it was the

Mala Republic. Don't don't quote me on

that, but it was one of these republics

that the Buddha thought was a good way

of running a country that he sort of

modeled the SA. And the SA is based on

consensus. Like if you've got a formal

act of the SA like they're going to

ordain somebody or whatever it is, all

the monks at the monastery have to agree. The most junior monk, if he doesn't agree, it's no go. And that's something that has been lost in terra Buddhist countries. Like in Burma, it's just

unthinkable that some junior monk would just like derail a formal act of the SA if like the Abbott who is like king was in favor of it. I mean that would just be

unthinkable. I mean it's just it's not even a taboo. It doesn't even get to the level of taboo. It just doesn't occur to anybody to even try it.

So yeah, I do not think that
um Buddhist rule, I mean, whatever that
really means would be considered what
liberals might call an absolute
monarchy. No, I don't think so. Because
the Buddha really did set up the SA to
be like a democracy that required
consensus like everyone has to agree in
order to to change anything of
significance.

So I don't know it might be more towards
communism really when you've got I
mean it's very regimented you know
everyone has all these rules they have
to follow bare minimum of personal
property that kind of thing so it'd be
kind of more towards the left I think in

certain respects

anyhow but then again absolute monarchy

where is that on the on the political

spectrum

Seems like uh North Korea is an absolute

monarchy and that's pretty much of a a

kind of a Marxist state, quasi Marxist

state.

Anyway, Soviet Union like under Stalin

for example, pretty much of an absolute

monarchy there.

So yeah, I really don't think that the

Buddha would have endorsed monarchy. I

mean that was just sort of the rising

fashion. The political tide in the

Ganges Valley in the Buddhist time was

these oligarchic republics were being replaced by expansionist monarchies. And eventually it was Magada, the kingdom of Magada that just pretty much swallowed up everything else in northern India and eventually became like the empire of Ashoka.

So yeah, I'm just going to move on to Sedarta Lohachita's second question which is as follows. Do you consider that the democratic and human rights global plan led by America and his puppets need to be stopped and it may be that Sedarta lohachita speaks English as a second language so that there's a certain kind

of lack of grace in this question maybe
some uh grammatical ical faux
paws. So let's let me try and figure out
what exactly he means here. Do you
consider that the Democratic and I don't
know he's got democratic capitalized
with a capital D. So does he mean the
Democratic party in the United States or
does he mean just and people who endorse
democracy in general? That that's the
first kind of
um ambiguity here. and human rights
global plan led by America and his
puppets. So, America and its puppets, I
guess. But really, I mean, it seems like
the EU has taken the ball and is running

with it at this point. It's not so much America leading this global plan, human rights, global plan. I mean, America has always or at least recently has endorsed human rights throughout the world. you know, they're they don't like slavery. British Empire didn't like slavery either. Um, you know, they want a certain amount of humor. It's just you can't just like arrest people in the middle of the night and throw them in prison without like even having charges against them, which a lot of countries, I mean, I lived in a military dictatorship for years that that sort of thing happens. And America has sort of been a kind of global policeman trying

to keep that to a minimum even though
probably to some degree it happens in
America

too. But at least they're trying to keep
it to a

minimum. So do I think that the whole
new world order let's just simplify this
whole question. it might kind of deviate
from exactly what he was referring to,
but let's let's just simplify it and
make it less ambiguous. So, do I think
that the western new world order needs
to be stopped? Well, whether it needs to
be is kind

of I don't know. I mean, need is kind of
a strange question too. Should it be

stopped in the form it is taking? Yes. I mean, there might be something resembling a world government at some point, but there's all different kinds of world governments, just like there's all different kinds of national governments. So, world government in and of itself is not necessarily a good thing. It can be a really bad thing.

Like Huxley's Brave New World was a was a a new government or a global government. At least I'm pretty sure it was. But I mean Huxley wrote that as a kind of dystopia and a warning that this could happen to us if we are not careful.

[Music]

So, um, yeah, the the new world order stuff, like certain aspects of it, especially like the the neoarxism stuff, even the feminism stuff that that is not helping society. I mean superficially maybe to I mean to some degree but in the long term it causes society to decline. It results in decadence and eventual collapse just even women voting this is politically incorrect but that's fine I guess. I mean, women are more like emotionally insecure, more conformist than men. Also, women because they're insecure, they're they're more timid than men. They're, as

a general rule, I mean, there's always exceptions. Some women are taller than some men, too. But women are much more inclined to be willing to vote away their rights and freedoms and everybody's rights and freedoms for the sake of security.

Also, they are compassionate to the extent that they want to uplift the misfits who in a more Darwinian society would just fall by the wayside and keep the society strong because the weak are not reproducing nearly as much. and they're just putting them on welfare or and just inviting millions and millions of people to invade who do not share the values of of the

traditional culture, this sort of thing.
So yeah, I think we'd be better off with
like an older style accumulation of
nations with like a balance of power and
like international tribunal, you know,
just voluntary international tribunals
settling disputes rather than just, you
know, bloody war going on all the time.
But it is good to have a a diversity of
cultures which not like necessarily
within one nation but a diversity of
political systems and cultures and
societies so that Darwin can continue to
be God emperor and the strongest ones
will will rise up and the weakest ones
will die

out. But let's see get back to the original question.

whether it needs to be stopped. I mean needs means that it's necessary to be stopped and then I mean if it's necessary to be stopped then it will be stopped. I mean if something needs to be stopped and it isn't then what kind of situation do you have there? But I think yeah like the whole progressivism stuff the the new world order stuff. Yeah, it's going in a in the wrong direction.

So, I mean, there could be a different new world order, you know, a different kind of world government that is much better that I might endorse, but the the

way it's going now is it's definitely
uh for the most part leading the world
in in the wrong direction, leading
Western civilization in the wrong
direction.

Anyway, so I'm just going to move on to
Sedarta Loha's third question. which is
why PI didn't become a lingua franca in
Southeast Asia and they even did not
create neoisms like telephone, radio,
plane, etc. Well, I mean I mean is
Sedartha lohitta referring to neologisms
in Pali or I mean in Burmese? Yeah, I
mean the word for telephone in Burmese
is telephone. The word for radio in
Burmese is radio or in the northwest.

Yeah, northwest of the country is leo because Asians have problems with the letter R and L for some reason. Airplane is leinbian which is not I mean that's a neism I guess

neism. But why didn't Polly become a lingua franca in Southeast Asia? Um, I think it's mainly because there just weren't enough people who were fluent in Pali. The only people who were fluent in Pali in Southeast Asia were Buddhist scholars, mostly

monks. And that's not good enough for, you know, like for it to be the official language of government or that or that sort of thing. The official language of like international

trade. Um, yeah. I'm not even sure what if there even was a lingua franca in Southeast Asia. Maybe like Han Chinese or something or Sanskrit. I mean there was some quite a lot of Sanskrit spoken in uh like official documents some like official inscriptions and so forth um sometimes were in Sanskrit. So I think Sanskrit maybe came a little closer uh partly because there was a lot of Hinduism in Southeast Asia also like Angkor Watt I think was Hinduistic uh like a temple or or city holy city kind of a place. So why didn't Pali become a

lingua franca in Southeast Asia? I think it was just that there weren't enough people who who were fluent in poly. it would mainly be just obscure religious scholars and that just wasn't enough to act as a seed crystal. That would be my guess and I'm just gonna move on to the next question. This is from

Sina and Sina has a kind of interesting question here. In my suggested videos presumably on

YouTube in my suggested videos this really fat and bald guy with tattoo appeared. He says he is pro poly Greek and Russian translator but when he says things in Russian he makes some simple declination mistakes and his poly

pronunciation is little weird. His channel name was Theoria Apoasis. I watched couple of his videos. I could agree with some of his ideas on Buddhism but mainly he was a weird guy with big self-esteem. sort fake in some ways. I thought you probably know this guy with 300,000 plus subs. Did you check or see his poly translation works? Well, you're referring to Ken Wheeler and I've mentioned Ken Wheeler a number of times. I've written about Ken Wheeler. Um I think he was like the angry photographer at first. That was like his first YouTube channel. and he declares himself to be the world's leading authority on

poly language and early Buddhism. And it doesn't surprise me at all that when he speaks Russian, he he has substandard Russian grammar when he speaks because his poly is just as bad, if not worse. I mean, let's see. I'm not sure if he has real poly translation works. I don't think that he's really um his his attempts at Paulie are even to the level of even attempted translations other than maybe brief passages. But I did read this really badly written essay. I mean his his writing style is barbaric and it was he wrote this essay accusing the death of the Buddha on Mahakasapa his senior disciple at the

time of the Buddha's death. So he was
accusing

Mahakasapa who was like the Buddha's
successor as leader of the SA, senior
monk in the SA

um for of murdering the Buddha and his
some of the translations he gives are
just obviously bad bogus translations
like the word for blacksmith he's got as
like son of Mara the evil one this kind
of thing when really it's just Kamar, I
think I I I don't recall the term. I
think it's something like Kamar means
blacksmith. That's the person who fed
the Buddha his his last meal. And um the
the mar the the a first a in mara in the

word was it kamar? Yeah, I should have looked it up before I did this video. But I mean it doesn't have the long a whereas mara the evil one does have a long a and it's obvious. I mean the the origin of the the poly word for blacksmith goes back into Vadic Sanskrit. It's already there in Vadic Sanskrit. And so Ken Wheeler, I mean he's the thing is he's he seems to be more of a neoplatanist although he's his neoplatinism probably sucks too. But he he's just he likes this idea of like the h what is it? the philosophy, the eternal, not the eternal philosophy, the perennial philosophy where, you know, you've got like

this like world soul kind of a thing.

So, he believes in that and then he's

trying to like force fit that onto

Buddhism and he is just warping and

distorting poly

texts and Buddhist philosophy to like

get that in there. And I mean his claims

to be the world's leading authority on

the poly language are just laughable.

And there's there's an entire website

just pointing out the some of the BS

that Ken Wheeler teaches. And it's

mostly with regard to what he teaches

about science like physics because he he

claims to be like the one of the world's

the world's leading authority on that

too. And it's like why Ken is wrong something like that.

And in this uh after I wrote about his like distortion of early Buddhism, then the the person who runs that website contacted me and asked if he could include my essay on on Buddhism because he mainly has been emphasizing the scientific

stuff. So I gave permission. It might still be on his website. I can't remember the name of the website. It's like why Ken is wrong, something like that.

But yeah, I think Ken Wheeler is I I I wouldn't hazard any kind of psycho psychoanalysis on the guy, but I mean he

really wants to pass himself off as some sage and like when he says something complicated or difficult, he'll say it really fast, partly as a way of giving the the impression that he has just mastered this so much that you know he can just rattle it off you know really quickly but also he says it quickly so that your ear can't follow and catch the mistakes but really I mean if Buddhism is correct and Mahakasapa really was an enlightened being then for Ken Wheeler to be accusing him of being a murderer murdering the Buddha then I and he's just setting himself up for some really bad karma for

slandering a fully enlightened being.

But he has this idea that the Buddha taught there's an immortal soul and then Mahakasaba came along and just [_] it all up after killing the Buddha so that he could change Buddhism to teach that there is no self. That's that's in a nutshell what the the essay that Ken Weer wrote in his atrocious writing style is

about. So what exactly is the question?

Did you check or see his poly translation works such as they are?

Mainly it was his essay on how

Mahakasapa murdered the Buddha which you can find online. Um I did write a blog post about it. So you can look on my

blog for that. do a search on Ken
Wheeler on my blog and then probably the
link to his essay would be uh embedded
in that in my essay
somewhere. So anyways, I'm really I
don't want to be bad mouthing Ken
Wheeler. That that's a a dead horse that
has already been flogged plenty. So I'm
just going to move on to Salman's second
question. Uh oh. What do you think his
ideas on Buddhism? What do I think of
his ideas on Buddhism? Well, I've
already pretty much answered that. He
mainly wants to turn Buddhism into a
kind of neoplatanism, I think, or just,
you know, endorsing that there is like

like an atman or like like the
Upanishads teach and that he just bashes
away at the idea of no self in Buddhism
even though I mean it's just it's it's
there from the earliest texts.

I mean the closest I could come to any
idea that there is a self in Buddhism is
that in the Antagawaga which as I say is
probably the largest fragment of really
archaic Buddhism existing in this world
that it says that a monk should have um
no ata and no
near which is kind of a play on words.
It's puns.

Ata here means what is taken up and
nirata is what is
like what's the word thrown away gotten

rid

of. So nothing nothing taken up nothing
set down. But obviously ata and neara
can also be interpreted to mean self and
no self. So for the sage there's nothing
taken up nothing discarded. And also for
the sage there's no self and no not self
because the atikawaga teaches you should
not firmly believe in any concept
because the truth cannot be contained in
concepts. Concepts are just symbols in
the mind.

So yeah, his ideas on Buddhism are about
as bad as his ideas on
like physics or his his ability to speak
Russian

correctly that he claims to be the world's leading authority but really he is

not. So moving on to Sedar Taloh no Salina lead going on to Salina's third question.

In general, what is your view on true follower of Buddha or true meditator, true beu or enlightened folks with big fat belly? And I do not fully understand this question. I really don't understand this question either. I mean, is he referring particularly to Ken Wheeler? But Ken Wheeler wouldn't be true Beiku anyway, but he does have a big fat belly, I suppose. I mean, um, I think since he starts off with in general,

what is your view on say an enlightened being who is obese that I'm trying to condense this down in into a question that I can understand clearly and maybe some of you can understand clearly also.

So, I mean, is it possible to have an obese enlightened being? And well, I mean, I've

got that picture right there of Neim Karoli Baba who was a rotund individual.

He would qualify as obese, but I mean whether he was fully enlightened or not is hard to say. I mean, that might not even mean anything in a samsaric context, but he was a spiritual superman. He was definitely just

extremely advanced spiritually and had just mindblowing psychic powers just based on multiple testimonies like the book miracle of love stories about Nin Curly Baba by Ram Das is just full of miracle stories of just firsthand testimonies of of like these amazing feats. I mean, not every story in the book is him performing some miracle, but plenty of them are.

So, I do think it's possible that an enlightened being can be obese. I think it's possible that an enlightened being can be very skinny also that it's like uh Nim Karoli Baba living in India.

Um it was like he would work out karma of his disciples through the use of food. Like there's one testimony in the book Miracle of Love saying that that Neim Kurly Baba could he he just people would invite him to meals and this person saw him eat like 10 full-sized meals in succession at different houses that in a way he's helping the person by accepting their food and and just kind of like we're kind of transmuting that food into some sort of merit for the person that Rahm Doss had this story of offering some oranges to Neim Kurly Baba relatively early on in their relationship and Neim Karoli Babo just

started like just gorging on these oranges and it was explained to Ramdas later that I mean he's like helping to you to work out your karma through eating the food that you give him and Ramdas pointed out that there was a different a different guru living in southern India who did similar things with cigarettes. He'd be smoking like four cigarettes at a time just people would donate cigarettes to him and he'd just be smoking through them as a way of somehow transmuting their karma which isn't a Buddhist idea. It's more of a Hindu idea that you can really manipulate somebody else's karma that way.

But Nim Crowley Baba apparently did it with food. And one of his main teachings is, you know, feed people, you know, it's like like also he said that God comes to the hungry in the form of

food. So it was sort of like a kind of food oriented dharma in his case. He was he was relatively strict aesthetic like just amazingly strict aesthetic in his youth. He became a a sadu as a child. He just ran away from home and became a sadu just due to parmmmy you know this sort of karmic momentum from previous lives apparently.

So yeah although the fat Buddha statues that you see really were not the Buddha that was a Chinese monk named hot.

So yeah, I mean once you become enlightened, what's going on at the physical level really becomes largely irrelevant. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from meditators library. And meditators library says, what is your take on beus are teaching lay people on the internet spending lots of time and effort?

Um well it depends on the beus I suppose. I mean for some monks it's part of their practice is teaching. It is a it is a good practice to help others.

You know what you have learned you can share that with others. It's pretty much what I'm doing on my Q&As's. So I think for some beus it's helpful for other bik especially if they have this ambition of becoming like a famous teacher. A lot of Burmese monks are this way. It's like their ambition is to become a famous teacher Seattle. And some of these monks in Burma, they will cultivate a peculiar tone of voice. You know, it's like their own unique gimmick style. And there's there's one famous Seattle in Burma that has been dead for several decades at this point, Chanigan

Seattle. And I don't know if it's still that way in Burma, but used to be wherever you would find Burmese people, you'd hear tapes of Chiggon Seattle chanting in this weird like wailing melodious caterwalling voice. This very just easily identifiable. You hear that's Chinese guy in Seattle. And so there there's some monks that just practice their own version of that. you know, they just come up with some vocal gimmick, some peculiar characteristic style, you know, not just an ordinary speaking voice. And I mean those kind of monks because you know their their ambition is becoming famous teachers or even just like influential

teachers that uh I mean it's not becoming enlightened for them.

So they're probably causing more harm to themselves than good or at least they're they're making good karma, but it's it's I mean karma like good and bad are for lay people. A monk is supposed to leave behind merit and demerit. He's supposed to leave behind good and evil that this this whole duality of good and evil is just this samsaric phenomenon. It's suitable for lay people who aren't ready to become enlightened yet. But if you are anywhere near to becoming being ready for enlightenment then I mean really cultivating merit is almost as

bad as cultivating demerit because it just keeps you in samsara. You might go to heaven but heaven is part of samsarum. So it depends on the on the biku and their attitude.

uh especially I mean if they become very wise then it is good for them to I mean it's good for dharma good for the sasana for them to be sharing what they know like ajan cha for example would be a golden example of

that so I'm just going to move on to meditator's library second question does teaching benefit the teacher hold a lot for his own enlightenment or level up the

enlightenment

um I mean it's can make his path towards

enlightenment

smoother because you know going with

karmic retribution the whole idea of

that if you're teaching people who need

a teacher then when you need a teacher

you're going to get one. So you know in

a way it's sort of like preparing the

path for enlightenment but um really

enlightenment itself is not the result

of

merit that nirvana has no cause it's a

paradox. So yeah, leveling up the

enlightenment, no, it wouldn't do that,

but it would make your path

uh more

fortuitous, especially with regard to getting teachings that you need as a result of you giving others teachings that they

need. So I'm just going to move on to meditators library third question, which is as follows. If you have to criticize Nyanamole's teachings, what part of his teachings or styles would that be? And this Nyanamole is the second famous Nyanamole, not the first famous

Nyanomoly. The first famous Nyanamole was an Englishman named Osbert Moore who was ordained in Son back around 1950 and died around 1960. and he's the one who who was a like a really good translator.

Like the the classic go-to translation
of the Wisudi Maga is by the first
famous Nyanamole. The second famous
Nyanamoli is on YouTube and I think he's
a Serbian monk who has a monastery in I
think it's
Slovenia and you can watch his his
YouTube videos. And let's see if I have
to criticize his teachings, what part of
his teachings or styles would that be?
Well, he is rather dogmatic. He kind of
reminds me of a Buddhist version of that
uh that acharia Hindu person
um who insists that it's not Hinduism,
it's sanatana dharma. you know, it has
the same

authoritative dogmatic approach to
dharma or dharma that uh I think is
not like not the best approach to take
necessarily. Also, he does seem to have
some ego. Um, I think he works out and
is is like buff and you know he can be
sort of rude and you know like interrupt
people and just because he's the leader,
he's the authority, you know, he he he
does seem to have a kind of pride, you
know, sort of self argrandisement going
on. But then again, I mean, monks are
human and the only monk that doesn't
have any faults might be a fully
enlightened one. But even a fully
enlightened being can still appear to
have

faults. So I mean I'm not trying to bash him or discourage people from from listening to his his talks that sort of thing that I mean human beings are human by

definition. So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Tzasqueziz and Tzasqueaziz says how the fact that one pretty much has to be with his teacher or preceptor for 5 years after go free as a monk was resolved in your case when you went to Burma after one or two years in the US. Another obscure question about monastic discipline. Right up my alleyway.

So the rule is that once a monk is ordained, he has to live in dependence upon his upaya or preceptor for at least five rainy seasons

um or until his preceptor judges that he is adept enough at being a monk that he can go solo. He knows he can recite the potty mocha by heart. He knows how to meditate. He knows how to bake a bowl, make robes, that sort of thing. So at least five years, it could be longer than five years

or if like take being in dependence upon your upagaya or preceptor isn't working out for whatever reason. Let's say the the preceptor dies or there's just it's like there's problems at the monastery

and the monk needs to move somewhere else and even his preceptor agrees it probably be better for you to to live somewhere else. That kind of thing and that that happened in my case then you also you still have to take dependence or nissa but you can take your dependence on an acharia. So you have to be in dependence upon a preceptor or a teacher, an upagaya or an acharia. And acharia is the word that has been corrupted into the Thai language as a jan. And it also has been corrupted into Burmese as the seya part of say acharia literally means like teacher. So if you're preceptor, you're

not independence. You have to be independent for at least five rainy seasons, five years.

And so it has to be on your predependence on your preceptor or on some other senior monk in good standing who agrees to be your acharia or teacher and that's what happened in my case that after

um I left America and my preceptor in America went to Burma and my acharia or teacher uh was Pakoku no Chsin Tampulu Chsin Seattle and he was my preceptor for a little over a year. Then he sent me to a school monastery to get a good education where my my preceptor or my teacher there was venerable a

dobath and then and then I came back to Chelson Doya where Chelson was my my teacher again until I got enough seniority that I didn't have to live independence and then I just became a free agent and just went off and lived alone in caves.

So, Traasquez is his second question is as follows. After 30 years of not cooking food, were you able at first after you disroed to make food or cook for yourself? Well, cooking food isn't something you you forget really. You don't forget how to make a grilled cheese sandwich, you know? It's just you

just know how to do it. Or like pan
fried oysters or fried liver and onions.
Those were like things that I I knew how
to make. Or actually the the see the
fried liver and onions. You just look up
a recipe on the internet. I mean,
anything like that. Now, you want to
know how to cook something that you
haven't cooked before or you just don't
remember how to cook it, then you just
look on the internet. I used to have a
cookbook. I would I would refer to the
cookbook even to bake a potato. You know
the joy of cooking. I had it in my
kitchen. Even to bake a potato, I would
refer to the joy of cooking on how to
bake that

potato. But I was never much into cooking. Like before I became a monk, I didn't cook very much. And usually whatever I cooked used a minimum of dishes. I did not like washing dishes. I did not have an automatic dishwasher. You know, everything was handwashed at the sink. And I just worked out this system where I'd make mostly sandwiches. You use one knife and then you can just wipe the knife off with a paper towel and put it back in the drawer.

Easy. Or make oatmeal and then you just eat it straight out of the

pot with the same wooden spoon that you use to stir it. And then I mean oatmeal is pretty much water soluble. It washes out pretty

easy. That kind of stuff. grilled cheese sandwich easy. So, I didn't have any problem at all. Um, I've always been kind of a a bread eating kind of a person, like a sandwich person. So, yeah, there was no problem at all really. And

then very shortly after I stopped being a monk, I had a woman who was a really good cook. In

fact, she kind of learned from me how to pan fry oysters or make fried liver and onions, that kind of thing. and then she

just kind of took it over. So, even that stuff I don't make anymore. I do very little cooking now. So, I guess I answered that question. Yeah, it was really no problem at all. I mean, grilled cheese sandwiches are easy. And so, the next question is from someone whose name is spelled Creel, but it is pronounced throat Warbler mangrove.

and he asks, "Does taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sa reduce bad karma from bad actions performed before and after the refuge?" Thank you.

And it

depends. I mean, even if it does, it's going to be in a in a subtle way. The the karma is going to still be there.

It's just that if you're wiser, then you'll be able to deal with the fruition of that karma more wisely. And so if taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sa implies that you have become a Buddhist and have started living your life in in in like a dharmic manner, you have started viewing your life and the world through a kind of spiritual lens, then sure. But just taking refuge in Buddha Dhama as as a mechanical act of just reciting blah blah blah and pi and that's that's not going to change

anything. Burmese or spiritual materialists they think that you earn merit for just taking the three refuges and the and the five precepts even if you have no no intention of keeping those five precepts that you're earning merit just for the ceremony. But I don't think it really works that way.

But if you sincerely are taking refuge in Buddha Dharma and Sana to the to the point that you have started like living your life in dharmic terms as I already just mentioned then that is going to make your mind more subtle and it's going to make your reactions to things that happen to you

more subtle and it may even cause sort of like the tone of what is happening to you be more subtle and also um if you started earning merit through your refuges, just through becoming a Buddhist or just through like entering upon a spiritual path that you're earning more merit, then the bad karma from your past is going to be diluted down. It's going to be mixed in with with more good. And that's the famous suta like the the simile that I've mentioned a number of times is the Buddha compares a person's bad karma to a handful of salt. So if you pour that handful of salt into a cup of water, it's so salty that the water is

undrinkable. But you take that same handful of salt, pour it into a pool of clear water, and it gets dissolved in this this whole pool, then you may hardly notice the taste of salt at all. And that's that pool of clear water is like merit. Just the water is is sort of symbolizes merit. So if you can't get rid of your past karma other than by letting it run its course, but you can dilute it down by lots of merit. And if you take refuge in Buddha Dharma and Sana and take that to heart, then yeah, it's going to reduce the the effects of bad karma from bad actions.

Um, but it it's not just going to erase them. That you can't just do Hail Marys or whatever, make confession and just have or have some Dowist priest like wave a paper wand at you and make your your sins go away. It doesn't work that way in Buddhism. It still has to run its course. But the the wisdom you bring to it when when it when it's like re like reaching

fruition is I mean that's up to you and it can result in more bad karma or it can result in just the karma exhausting itself and maybe you even get some good karma through your equanimity or whatever. Ah, and I finally finished the cold

coffee. So, I hope I answered that question satisfactory because I am moving on to the next one. This is from PSA. I'm going almost two hours here. So, PSA says, "Do you think you would have been a better selection as pope than the guy that was picked?" Do I think that I would have been a better pope than what? Leo the 14th. Is that is that his name? Well, first of all, I don't know that much about Leo the 14th, but I really doubt that I'd make a better pope than him because frankly, I'm just not a Catholic. I'm not even a Christian. So, it seems like a like a necessary prerequisite for being a good

pope would be to be a good Christian.

And I'm not the guy. And with regard to

Leo I 14th, I think he's a more

conservative than the rainbow pope who

has recently passed on to whatever he

has passed on

to. So yeah, I don't have any complaints

against the new pope at present. I can't

say that he's not a

Christian. Although quite a few people

thought that the the previous Pope

Francis was hardly even a Christian. you

seem to be more of a a Marxist than

anything

else, but that's really not for me to

say. So, yeah, I don't think I'd make a

better pope than Leo the

14th. I might have some better policies than him, but I'm I'm I'm not a I'm not a Catholic. So, PSA's second question. What is the geographical location of Mount Saru on the earth? particularly from which country would it be visible? I'm guessing only those with their third eye open can see it. Well, you have to bear in mind that the whole idea of Mount Mev being you know the tallest mountain in the world, the center of the earth was I mean the people who came up with it were living in northern India and just north and they were they believed that they were living on the southern continent and so you just go

north of the southern continent you've got the Himalaya mountains. So the geographical location of Mount Saru would be the Himalaya mountains or just north of the sim the Himalaya mountains with maybe the Himalaya mountains considered to be like the foothills to the south of Mount Maru. The Greek equivalent of Mount Maro would be Mount Olympus. Pretty sure that's that's the foot of that mountain is where the Titans were chained up. same as Mount Meu with the assaurus chained up down there. Although some some assuras did apparently get loose. Um but then I did I do have a

book on my bookcase the Surya Sedanta
which is a medieval astronomy text um
from from

India and it was influenced by Hellenistic
geography through trade routes with the
Roman Empire. So by the time the the
surya sedanta had been written the
Indian uh like astronomers had come to
the conclusion that the earth is round
and not flat. So what they did was they
had this idea that the earth is a sphere
but that Mount Sumeru is like coming up
through the north pole that so that the
earth is sort of like an orange stuck
onto a cone and then the tip of the cone
is coming out through the top of the

orange.

But personally, I'm inclined to believe that the closest thing we've got to Mount Sumemeru in the empirical world would be Mount Everest in the Himalaya mountains. And that is I mean the ancient Indians got their idea for these giant mountains from the Himalayan mountains that were just north of India. So, I guess I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question, which is, is boiling water considered breaking the first precept? Because you're pretty much killing everything that is in the water. And this leads to yet another obscure little discourse on monastic discipline. So we'll start with with

vineia or the rules of monastic
discipl that a monk is not allowed to
pour out water that has living beings in
it or that he thinks has living beings
in it. But those living beings have to
be visible. You know if there's like
little mosquito wigglers in the water or
you know little, you know, little
crustations skittering around in the
water, that kind of thing. You're not
allowed to pour it out. You're not
allowed to cook it. that you commit a
pacidia offense, you know, which is of
medium severity, an offense of medium
severity by using that water or pouring
out that water because it

has visible living things living in it. But in ancient India when they made these rules and when they made the five precepts, they had no concept of microscopic life. And if you can't kill even microscopic life, you're going to be paralyzed. Every time you walk outside, you're squishing at the very least microscopic organisms. Even if you're careful to avoid the ants, you're still going to be squishing little like nematode worms or mites, this kind of thing. Every time you brush your teeth, you're killing bacteria, harmless, innocent little bacteria.

So I would assume that the the first

precept for lay people would be similar to the rules for monks in this regard. And so if it's microscopic, it's okay to kill it. In fact, there's even a few microscopic life forms that monks were allowed to kill like mildew. Monks are allowed to wipe mildew off a wall. Monks are allowed to, like I mentioned in a previous Q&A, spread their bedding out in the sun to get rid of bed bugs and other vermin. And that generally kills bed bugs and other vermin. If the sun doesn't kill them, the ants do. So boiling water is not considered breaking the first precept for

Buddhists, but for Janes, I think it might. Like a Jane monk wasn't allowed to cook water because cold water was considered to contain life. And the Janes had very liberal views on what is life and what isn't. Like they considered fire to be a primitive kind of life which actually has some profundity to it because fire is a more chaotic kind of process that is similar to life itself. I mean it requires oxygen. It needs oxygen to breathe. that needs food, you know, that kind of thing. It's just that it's it's the the oxidation reaction is happening like without without steps. Like in life, metabolism works, but it essentially the

same kind of oxidation of carbon and other materials as fire, but it breaks it up into little chemical steps. And then sometimes uh a little bit of energy is given off by one of these steps that can then be captured by like an ADP molecule which then becomes an ATP molecule which then can uh is like charged with energy which can then like instill that energy into some other process going

on but I've meandered away from the question but boiling water is not considered to break the first precept. cept uh killing microscopic life using mouthwash for example is not breaking

the first precept. It has to be visible life. It's kind of an arbitrary thing that you know once something is you know someone with bad eyesight may be able to kill more than someone with good eyesight. But basically what it boils down to is if you can see that there is a living thing there you shouldn't kill it. But if you can't see it, no problemmo. So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Quistor.

And Quistor says, "If someone is taught that animals don't have souls, are not living beings, but are more like AI, and are here for us to eat, would this person catching and eating fish create

less karma than someone who believes that the animal they're eating was their mother in a past life, and by buying it, they've funded the raising and killing of other animals?"

Well, this reminds me. I asked essentially a similar question to my first Vineia teacher when I was a junior monk, venerable

Utesania. And I asked him, it's like some people think that killing is okay. Like in Christianity, killing animals is fine. There's no sin at all. Jesus after he died helped his apostles catch fish.

I mean Muslims and also the Old

Testament says that under certain circumstances it's okay even to kill humans that God wants you to kill him. So anyway I asked my teacher Utes Nia which is which is do you get worse karma by doing something bad that you know is bad or by doing something bad that you actually think is good? you think you're gonna go to heaven for killing these people or you think that fishing is just good clean fun. You're not hurting anything. And he gave me the the interesting answer that it's sort of like handling something that's hot. If you know that something is really hot before you handle it, you're going to handle it

more carefully and you won't burn yourself as badly. If you don't know that it's hot, you just grab a hold of it and you can burn your whole hand. So according to him, if you know that it's bad and you do it anyway, you're not making as much bad karma as if you think that it's good and and it but it's really bad and you do it. And I have to admit, I mean, it's I think it might vary from case to case that I mean, if you're just torn up by guilt, let's say you go fishing, you think that fishing is murder, but you're just trying to conform with your friends who like to go fishing. So, you go

fishing, you catch a fish, and you're just like tormented by guilt after doing it. then you might be making more bad karma than your buddy who caught the same number of fish as you. But he for him, I mean, it's it's just fun. He likes fishing. He doesn't think there's anything bad at all. Maybe he's a Christian because he's not going to be adding to that bad karma through just guilt and remorse, this kind of stuff. Well, it's like Cartesian philosophers back in like the 1700s, they would publicly torture dogs just because the Renee Deart, the founder of their philosophical school, claimed that only humans have a mind. Only humans are

conscious because only humans have a soul. Animals are mindless automatons. How any wise person could actually believe this, especially if they've ever like owned a dog? I mean I mean maybe a Chihuahua. You can look into a Chihuahua's eyes and it you don't get the distinct feeling there's someone looking back at you. But other dogs, I mean, you look in their eyes, you know there's somebody there. You know, it's like some childlike, you know, simple simplehearted kind of person in there. So, I mean, Islamists who think they're going to go to heaven for blowing up buildings, this kind of thing full of

people, unarmed

civilians. Well, so it's it's it's

complicated,

but personally, let's see. Let's just

get back to the exact question

here. Would this person catching and

eating fish create less karma than

someone who believes that the animal

they're eating was their mother in a

past life? I mean, why would you kill a

fish if you thought it was your

mama and and buying it? They funded the

raising and killing of other animals.

Um, I think the actual act like just

forget about the fish being your mama.

Just assume that one person thinks

killing is wrong, killing fish is wrong,

the other person thinks killing fish is just a good, clean, fun hobby.

Then it may be that just the act of killing the fish that the person who thinks that it's wrong depending on their attitude they might make less bad karma because sort of like venerable utesia was saying they're they're more careful you know they're sort of being mindful of their actions that kind of thing while they're doing it and they're they're not doing it like just wholeheartedly this is fun this kind of stuff but then if they're feeling guilt afterwards. They're just being, you know, tormented by guilt. Even at a

subconscious level, it's just kind of going on in the back of their mind. They might have dreams about it. That kind of thing. Then that sort of thing could add up and they might be making more bad karma than the person who thinks that killing fish is just fine and dandy and that Jesus did it himself or at least helped others to do it.

But I do think it would vary from person to

person. So I'm just going to move on to Quistor's next

question which is it seems that events in our lives unfold to serve our deepest desires which would indicate that our

sense of self seems to be steering our direction in life. If separation is an illusion and we are ultimately the universe, would an arant having cut the illusion of separation be able to steer other people's lives for the purpose of general enlightenment or liberation?

Well, it would depend on the karma of the individual person. Like like an enlightened being can't just like manipulate you like a puppet. Can't just take you over and manipulate you like a puppet. I mean it wouldn't even be you anymore really if if that happened. But I mean there's cases like Neuroli Baba

up there where he would like do
stuff. Uh sometimes it would start off
by him just completely blowing
somebody's mind just kind of destroying
their idea of how the universe works by
performing some
miracle. And there's there's one story
he's he was some doctor his his wife was
Indian and she was a follower of him
curly baba she was a devotee and I mean
he thought well I'll go along with this
you know my she's my wife she's a
follower of this man I'll I'll go check
him out. So he goes there and you know
he's already heard about the miracles
and everything but he just sees this fat
old man sitting on this

platform and he just Nim Crowley Baba just ignores him day after day just kind of ignores him. He doesn't he just sees this fat old man. So he finally thinks well my wife is in a cult. This just isn't going to work. Maybe our marriage isn't going to work. I should just go back to America. And so he he just sort of says he's not feeling well and doesn't go to the ashram that day.

Instead he just goes and and like walks around this lake nearby. This is like in northwestern

India Krishna's old stomping grounds. and he's walking around the lake and he's just sort of torn, you

know, the the thought that his his wife is just following this maybe a charlatan and their marriage is going to fail and he just doesn't know what to do. He's in despair. He loves his wife, but it just looks like it's not going to work. And so, he does something that he hadn't done since he was a child. He actually prays. He's praying to God. So then finally the next day, oh the computer screen turned off again. Let's see here. It does this on purpose just to just to spite me. Telling you. Okay, just let it stay off anyways. Oh, there it went. So he he praised God. Then the next day he's just going to go

and and just say goodbye to
Maharaji. And and one of the things
before before we get to this part is one
of the things that bugged him the most
was seeing the disciples going and
touching Maharaji's feet. That just
seemed like degrading. He just it just
bugged him. He was an American. He just
didn't like that. So anyways, he goes
there early the next day just to kind of
have it out with Maharaji and and just
you know say goodbye and he's going to
leave and somebody people had put fruit
on his platform and an apple had fallen
off the platform. So this doctor he's
going to pick up the apple and just put

it back on the platform where it belongs. He reaches down to pick up the apple and as soon as he does that, Maharaji comes out of the room, puts his foot on on his hand so that he's in this position on his knees touching Maharaji's foot that he just didn't like at all. So then they're just kind of two of them together and through I guess there's a translator too, an interpreter and Maharaji says, "Why weren't you here yesterday? Did you go to the lake? And I mean, he's it's mostly in Hindi, but he says lake in English. And it was the the the doctor who hadn't I mean, he hadn't really been talking about this to his

wife. There was no chance for her to communicate to Maharaji yet. Anyhow, he just gets like this weird feeling like in his chest. And then Maharaji is just kind of playing with him. And he's like, "What did you do with the lake? Did you go swimming?" And then the doctor says, "No." And then Maharaji says did you go boating? And the doctor says no. And then Maharaji says did you go horseback riding? And the doctor says no. And then Maharaji kind of leans forward, looks at him very intently and says did you talk to God? And it was like at this point there's no way Maharaji could have known

that through normal
means that it's just he has like this
tearing sensation and he just starts
crying like a child and then the
Maharaji is kind of reaching out and
sort of stroking the doctor's beard
because this is back in like the late 60s
and and Maharaji says did you ask for
something and what what the doctor had
asked for when he's praying to God is
show me a sign, you know, show me a sign
that that that it's all going to work
out. And he he kind of looked around for
a rainbow or something when he was at
the lake, didn't see anything. So then
he went home. He didn't tell anybody
about this. And then Maharaji is just

keeps repeating over and over again, did you ask for something? And he's just crying and crying. And then by this time, a lot of the other disciples had already shown up. and they're just sort of like caressing him because most of them had gone through a similar experience with

Maharaji. So I mean Maharaji could kind of steer people that way by giving them what they needed you know first by blowing their mind by doing something impossible and then just sort of steering them sort of gently you know in in a direction more directed towards dharma you know helping them to wake up

helping them to become wiser and better people but I mean he wouldn't just take over somebody that way so let's see what's did I answer the question yet.

See, separation is an illusion. We are ultimately the universe. Would an Arant having cut the illusion of separation be able to steer other people's lives? Yeah. I mean, only if their own karma allowed that like sort of like the like we were talking about earlier, you know, the karma of teaching, you know, do you get merit from teaching? I mean it's like if you need like someone who needs a teacher you come and you teach them what they

need then you've earned a kind of karmic merit you know you can call it that so that at some future time you need a teacher you're going to get what you need and I think a lot of the people that watch these videos have had something like that happen you just hear the thing you need to hear you know you get sent a link to some YouTube channel of some teacher or just this the the book that you most need to read just lands in your hand. You know, someone just gives you this book or try this or they someone advises you should try doing a Ginka retreat, something like that. And it's just this life-changing

experience, just you know, this casual thing. It could be the person isn't even deliberately trying to teach you anything. But that's that's the way it works. It's not like I mean even the Buddha himself did not successfully teach everybody. There were people who just thought he was a fool, people who thought he was a fraud, people who they knew that he was wise and everything, but still they just weren't ripe yet. You know, like the notorious group of six monks who were just doing all kinds of naughtiness. So yeah, an enlightened being, he can maybe help people if they are open to that, but he

can't just force them to against their will, so to speak, to become wiser, better people. And I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from David. And David says, "What type of meditation technique was the Buddha using when he became enlightened? And what types had he tried before he had his breakthrough? Well, it's hard to answer this question because as far as I can remember, the poly texts really don't say like what kind of meditation was he doing when he was sitting under the bodhi tree. It's an obvious question, but this is maybe the first time I've ever heard anyone ask

it. I don't think it even says in the texts exactly what his meditation object was.

Um I think traditionally it would be most likely that he was doing anapana or meditation on the breath. That would be like possibly the most likely traditional answer. Although it may be that if he became fully enlightened that he may have moved on to a more advanced just sort of like a wide openen like fourth genre kind of meditation that had no real object, no primary object of meditation. he was just sitting in a state of like emptiness and bliss.

But who knows because I don't think the texts even say and even if the text did

say there's no there's no guarantee that they would be anywhere near to being correct because in in the poly text and in Christianity other religions also if there are blank places you know like with regard to anything they'll get filled in by myths myths and legends. So let's see here. What type of meditation technique was the Buddha using when he became enlightened? I don't know. It doesn't say although as I say it could have been like a very advanced like fourth Janna kind of a meditation where there really is no method anymore. You're just kind of sitting there in a

state of emptiness and

bliss. But then there would have to be

something that would result in

liberating insight to arise.

So I'm not exactly sure how it worked

and I don't think even his maybe his his

chief disciples maybe his the people the

monks in the Buddhist time may have

known

but we don't at least I don't and what

types of meditation had he tried before

his breakthrough well he taught lots of

different kinds of

meditation and so it may be there's a

good chance that he was had experience

in most of these meditation techniques

that he was

teaching. Um but again it there's no list of all the types of meditation the Buddha tried when he was a Buddhist sata and hadn't become fully enlightened yet. And then after he became enlightened he could just improvise. He could just come up with a new meditation technique just to fit an individual case at least according to the text. You know there was like this one monk whose preceptor was venerable Sar Puta and venerable Sar Puta kept giving him different meditation like um primary objects to try and he just wasn't making progress. The student wasn't making progress. So then finally he went to the

Buddha and the Buddha just I think he gave him a red flower said meditate on this and it worked just because the Buddha could like see into him and see just what it was that would kind of trigger you know this liberating insight that was necessary that you know he could look inside the psyche of a student and see what kind of meditation technique would work the best even if he had to invent some new one you know like the dullard in it's in the commentarial tradition the dullard it was this monk that was too stupid really to practice any kind of meditation very effectively so the Buddha just gave him a piece of cloth and says rub this and I can't

remember what he was supposed to recite
it was sort of like a mantra that he was
going to be repeating when he's rubbing
the cloth and in his case it worked and
he became an arahant with psychic powers
as a result of rubbing this
cloth but this question. It's a good
question. It's just that I don't think
the answers to this question or these
two questions have been
recorded. And even if some answer to
them had been recorded, the odds are
pretty good that they would just be
guesses that got turned into myths or
legends.

So, I'm just going to move on to David's

second question, which is, "What do you believe happens when the thousand pedal lotus opens in the head?" Well, it's my understanding the thousand pedal lotus opens just above the head. Isn't that the way it works? Isn't the seventh chakra, the highest chakra like right here? Like the sixth chakra is like the third eye and then the seventh chakra is the thousand pedal lotus which when that opens then you become fully enlightened. And the whole chakra system is more a yoga thing than a Buddhism thing. It's certainly never mentioned at all that I can recall in the poly texts. So in a way it's sort of combining two different systems. But what happens I mean how can

you say what happens at the moment of enlightenment? You can say that you know there's greed, hate and delusion are transcended. But I mean at an empirical level there may not be any obvious change at all.

So yeah, this is kind of a trick question. The thousand petal lotus opens in the head or at the crown of the head I suppose. Um yeah, I mean you just transcend some sorrow. You might I mean empirically objectively you're still here. It's just that you're no longer identified with this. It's like you know that it's it's not ultimately real.

Maybe putting it in sort of Christian terms, you become fully aware of the presence of God at all times, that kind of

thing. But I mean, there's no explanation of it that's going to help anyone who isn't there yet. It's like trying to explain colors to a person born blind, trying to describe the flavor of vanilla to someone who has never tasted vanilla before. You can just explain and explain and explain till you're blue in the face and it's just not going to work.

So

yeah, if you really want to know what

happens when you become enlightened,
you're going to have to become
enlightened yourself. And that's even
the Buddha could not explain what being
enlightened was like, exactly what
happens. Um, you know, it's like someone
who's never tasted vanilla wants to know
what vanilla tastes like. The best
advice you could give them is go find
some vanilla and taste it because no
amount of explaining is is going to get
the idea across because it's not even an
idea. It's a direct
experience. It cannot be conveyed in
words. So I guess I'm just going to move
on to David's third

question which is as follows. People talk about the last Buddha and the future Buddha and this implies that nobody has reached Buddhahood between these two people. If this is not the case, then why make the distinction?

Thank you for your answers and may it be a blessing to anyone who hears it. Well, in Buddhism, especially in Theravada Buddhism, there is a distinction between a Buddha and a mere arahant that a Buddha like a sama samasambuddha is a person who becomes enlightened without the aid of a teacher, without dharma already existing. He has to rediscover Buddhism or rediscover dharma

or dharma.

So I mean he has to do it through his own spiritual genius and then he can teach others and then his enlightened disciples aren't technically Buddhas, they're arhants. And so a Buddha arises to get the wheel of dharma rolling again after dharma has become extinct in this world.

So, it's sort of like saber-tooth tigers where they become extinct and then they re-evolve and then they become extinct and then they re-evolved and they become extinct. It happened several times or so I've read and that's kind of the way Dharma is where you've got a Buddha

rediscovers dharma gets the wheel of
dharma or dharma rolling again. starts a
Buddha sausa, gets Buddhism going and
then Buddhism because everything is
impermanent runs its course eventually
dies out and then you have to have
another person who rediscovers it like
thousands of years later and then starts
it going again then it dies out and then
thousands of years later another Buddha
comes along who rediscovers it.

So our our Buddha was Godma Buddha. The
Buddha before him according to tradition
was Kasapa Buddha. The next Buddha is
going to be Matea
Buddha. But there have been enlightened
beings in

between. In fact, there can be enlightened beings even at times when there is no Buddhism. They're called Pacheka Buddhas who even though they become enlightened without the aid of a teacher and are fully enlightened, nevertheless they're hermits, they don't teach dharma and they don't get the wheel of dharma rolling again. So they're just sort of flashes in the pan, so to speak. They become enlightened, but they don't really get dharma like they don't really get it going again.

So, I hope I answered that question coherently enough. And so, I'm just

going to move on to the next question,
which is the last
question. That's kind of nice. Two and a
half hours. It's a long question
though. So, this is from
Moambo. And Moambo asked a question last
week saying that he doesn't believe in
karma. I mean that was part of part of
his commentary to the question was he
doesn't believe in karma. So I pointed
out that if karma is volition then if
you don't believe in karma you don't
believe in volition either. And then I
pointed out that some superficial levels
of karma should be obvious even to a
materialist for example just the fact
that karma is the momentum of your mind.

It's like the habit energy of your mind
and it's like the the automatic pilot
that just has you sleepwalking through
life just through force of habit without
having to be fully
awake. So this is like his response to
my first answer which is kind of a
refinement of his previous question I
think. Moambo says, "The query I asked
last week about memory and karma was not
properly elaborated by me. What I meant
to say was, I don't believe in past or
future karma because I think as humans
our conditions arise due to genes passed
down from our parents, geography,
intellect, education, societal structure

or hierarchies of a given society. For example, someone can be born with deformed body parts due to natural reasons while it was growing inside the womb. Someone could meet with an accident due to fault of others or their own. Someone could be depressed because they are ugly or have no money due to being born in poor family. Or someone could have good looks, money, healthy life, brilliant mind due to opposite conditions. These conditions arise due to pre-existing factors which are out of our control and random. We don't need past life momentum for our conditions. Now karma according to me are the conditions we are born with and dharma

is how we deal with pleasant or unpleasant experiences we go through life past and future lives seems like wishful thinking or cultural belief in that time just like Abrahamic faiths have faiths have afterlife in heaven and hell what are your thoughts on karma and dharma being a process we go through in a single lifetime, not multiple lifetimes. Well, for starters, it seems that he prefers a kind of like scientific realism. And scientific realism is another case of let's see cultural belief in that time that I mean it's like there are so

many people maybe they're scientific materialists. I don't think Mogambo necessarily would have to be a scientific materialist, but there are scientific materialists who think other people believe in superstitions. They believe in stuff based on faith. But now we know the truth. And it's just just about every single culture, every single society that has ever existed has this same attitude. It's like other societies, even our own society in the distant past believed in superstitions. They believed in myths, but now we know the truth. Scientific materialists are just the same.

I mean, they have maybe a more sophisticated approach because it's backed up by some objectivity, some inferential logic, empiricism, but still it's not really describing reality. So, but at least I was able to get the point across.

that karma does exist even if you you just accept it at a superficial level.

People who are like scientific realist that's all they can understand is at the superficial level anyway but I mean at the superficial level it's like your karma is like the momentum of your

mental states your habit the habit
energy of your mind. So if you don't
want to exist, you don't want to believe
in past lives or future lives, I mean
all that really matters is the present
moment

anyway. So

um I mean you read the articaga says you
shouldn't have beliefs

anyhow. So I mean you don't want to
believe in past lives, you don't want to
believe in future lives. That's your
option. But I mean you should be
similarly skeptical that let's see what
is it let's see that the cultural belief
of your time also is not describing
reality. You should be skeptical even of

like scientific

empiricism talking about genes for
example.

So I'm not like I'm like opposed to
science but science really has no
position to make metaphysical claims
about the nature of reality and even
like theoretical physics has gotten to
the point and it has gotten to that
point gone to that point like about 100
years ago that it's our own mind is
helping helping helping helping to
determine like the reality that we are
in. So if you get to the point where
your own mind is creating your own
reality and you can conveniently ignore

like parapsychology, the paranormal, you know, you just call it all [__] or wishful thinking or whatever, then you can do that too, I suppose. But I'm not going to try and force you to believe in past lives, future lives. Ultimately, it really doesn't matter all that much. I mean, if you accept the first noble truth of Buddhism and you don't believe in rebirth, then the obvious thing to do would be to delete yourself in Minecraft. But I'm not recommending that either. But the only moment I mean the most important moment is the present moment. According to Theravada Buddhism, the only moment that really exists is now.

So I mean just live a dharmic life
now and you don't even have to worry
don't don't even think about past lives
or future lives. It doesn't even matter
really. It may be that uh your world
view the samsaric world view the
interpretation of samsara will change
over
time.

Let's see. Have I answered this question
adequately? That is the question. That
is my
question. Let's see. Where's the
question mark? See, what are your
thoughts on karma and dharma being a
process we go through in single

lifetime, not multiple lifetimes? Well,
I mean, you want to get rid of past
lives and future lives, you might as
well just get rid of past and future
also. It's just happening now. I mean
that's really all that that's really
what matters is
now.

So I mean I I really do not believe in
in karma as Moambo interprets it which
is just you know it's
like physical and physiological
conditions that one lives in cultural
conditions that kind of thing. I mean
it's your karma will help to determine
that man. Your karma pretty much
determines what kind of life you're

going to be born into, what kind of culture you're going to be born into, what kind of belief systems you're going to be born into. But I'm certainly not a materialist. I think mind is chief. It is all mind made like the first verse of the dharmapata says. Let's see. Is there anything else that I should say? See what are your thoughts on karma? Dharma being a process we go through in a single lifetime. Well, ultimately it's an illusion anyway. And I think even science would have to agree with that at this point. Something like

biology which has to like assume the
existence of like a pluralistic
samsara then yeah they're not going to
be

transcending like physical entities and
so forth. But when you get into the the
the more abstract realms of physics,
then it all starts breaking down and
becomes like um a kind of mental
formation, a projection of
consciousness. And once you get to that,
then it's it's like off to the
races. So, I guess I'm done. I guess I
answered questions. That's what I guess.
And so, as I should always say at the
beginning, I never do. If you have any
questions you think I can answer, which

doesn't include like futurism in
right-wing politics, I don't know
anything about that. But you, if you
think I can answer, like early
Buddhism, Theravada Buddhism, Buddhism
in general, you know, you you've heard
it all before. Stuff that you think I
can answer questions about. Biology,
too. I do have a degree in biology.

marine

emphasis. Um, then feel free to ask no
more than three questions per person per
episode, please. And count the question
marks. Some people will ask one question
that has like four question marks in it,
which makes it four

questions. And uh, aside from that, I
just add furthermore as well. Be happy.

Okay then. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

147. I am your host Po Bosa. As usual, this is my

beverage. And some of you out there might think, oh 147, that seems like a prime number. It's

not. 147 is $3 * 7 * 7$.

I mean, it just blows my mind that there are people out there thinking that 147 could possibly be a prime number.

And I just got to say that my days of basking in the glorious luxury of being completely lazy on weekends is over for the time being

because I'm digging a fish pond in the

backyard. Spending a few hours on week
weekends digging fish pond and it's
going to be a relatively large fish pond
like 2 feet deep. I'm hoping for about
500 gallons. So, it's it's gonna take a
while. And as I get older, I mean, one
of the the two main changes I have found
as I get older is one, I'm just don't
have the vitality like the the
animal vitality that I used to have when
I was younger. It's like you just don't
have the same stamina that you had when
you were younger. I mean, I could
probably bench press now more than I
could when I was like
25 probably, but like running long
distances or something, working long

hours, doing strenuous labor, that kind of thing, it's just it just doesn't work the same. And the other change is just you get like stiffer in the joints. So, we don't have a whole heck of a lot of questions today. It's uh somewhat on the light side, about 35 questions. And so, I suppose I should just dive right into this. And the first question is from

Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "Why is wallowing in sensuality bad karma if it's a positive mental state?" Well, a positive mental state in the sense of loba, you know, it's like greed is the standard stock English translation of

the word loba, but it means like attraction, you know, it's like you've got like attractive responses and aversive responses. And so wallowing in sensuality be mainly an attractive response of you want more of this pleasure. And I mean you could call it positive in that sense. And experiencing pleasure is like the fruition of good karma. So I mean it's positive in that sense but still wallowing in it where you are cultivating more greed more loba more desire then that is not wholesome. So I mean it's loba is not a wholesome mental state. It's one of the three poisons or the three fires. So um wallowing in sensuality is bad

karma because you are cultivating like greed and desire and attachment. Just to experience sensuality is not good or bad karma. It's like the fruition of good karma. To experience pleasant sensations would be the fruition of good karma mainly from the past. but to wallow in it so that you're greedy for more. You're you're clinging to it. Then you're making bad karma now. Um that is based on the fruition of good karma. Go figure. So I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's second question. And his second question is as

follows. For us the intellect is the slave of the passions. Could the passions be the slave of the intellect for enlightened beings? Perhaps this could explain why the Buddha still does anything after he becomes enlightened rather than doing nothing. There could still be desire in his mind that would enable him to teach, meditate, etc. But these desires would be under complete control of the intellect, thereby eliminating any suffering.

Well,

as David Hume and Emanuel Kant pointed out, just intellect in and of itself really cannot initiate anything. You

know, it doesn't motivate anything.

So that's it may be that xenithoid here is is sort of finding some back door through which the intellect can motivate actions but I just don't think it works that way. What the way it works I mean people in general have immense difficulty in dealing with two different levels of reality at the same time. you know, they just try to fit it all onto this one flat plane so that it's all, you know, you know, it all fits together on the flat plane and they don't really consider that a more accurate description might be something like a cube that's it's like

three-dimensional. And so they try to work it out. And Orthodox Terra is the same way where you've got to like be an absolute purified saint in order to be fully enlightened. Whereas the way I look at it, you are just transcending your

humanity. And so let's see what let's get back to the question here. The in for us, the intellect is the slave of the passions. Yeah, that's practically a quote of David Hume right there. Could the passions be the slave of the intellect for enlightened beings? The passions are just going to arise. I mean, you don't you don't like intellectually will passions to

arise. So, I mean, the passions are just nature taking its course, human animal instinct taking its course. Um, and I mean to some degree there's a kind of back and forth between the intellect and the passions, but I don't think the intellect is going to generate passions or really even harness them that much to some degree maybe, but certainly it's not going to be like complete control of the

passions. So, let's see. Perhaps this could explain why the Buddha still does anything. Well, I mean he still does anything

because I mean again we're dealing at

two different levels of reality at the same time trying to like force fit them into one level and it doesn't work very well. But I mean the Buddha I mean subjectively he's not identifying as a human being. It's just nature taking its course. He has transcended that. It's still part of the picture, I suppose, but he's just not identified with that anymore. So, I mean, the human body is pretty much controlled by a human brain, a human nervous system, and the human nervous system is influenced by hormones and all sorts of things, animal instincts that are wired into the brain. And just because you become enlightened doesn't mean that your body

stops being human.

So I mean

like like an ancient Indian yogi which would include the Buddha not not in the sense of practicing sanankia yoga but just yoga in the sense of like spiritual self-discipline as like an an elaborated system let's say so the Buddha was a yogi and so he would have had years of self-discipline and sort of calming the passions, that sort of thing, through aestheticism and even more importantly through mindfulness, just through following rules at first, which is sort of an elementary level of

that.

Um so his passions would have been sort of calmed

down to the to the level that I mean

it's there's no unskillful passion you

know some urge animal urge that would be

you know contrary to dharma that he

would just get get sucked up into it you

know just carried away by these urges I

mean that wouldn't happen

anymore and there would be some

intellect involved in that, I suppose.

But trying to second guess the the

mental states of a sama Buddha is is

pretty much ridiculous, even though

people keep trying to trying to second

guessess a fully enlightened

being. So there could still be desire in his mind that would enable him to teach, meditate, etc. But these desires would be under complete control of the intellect, thereby eliminating suffering. I I don't think so. I don't think that his desires would be under complete control of the intellect because I really don't think the intellect can control anything. The intellect is I mean it's like a guide but it doesn't control anything. Which is one reason why people can intellectually know that something is wrong and just go ahead and do it anyway because that the intellect is not

motivating their behavior.

And I guess I'm just going to move on to

Xenithoid's third

question, which is, can you explain the

similarities and differences between

achieving nibbana and achieving

nosis? And I am not a gnostic. I'm not

exactly sure what the Gnostics meant

with regard to achieving nosis. I mean,

the Greek word

gnosis. Just a

second. What is that?

Some little particle of food just came

loose in my mouth. I shouldn't have even

said that. It's TMI, isn't it? Was

flicking onto the

floor. Okay, so gnosis in Greek has the

exact same etymology in Indo Indo-European languages as the poly word nana or the Sanskrit word I don't know how to pronounce it correctly.

Gana

ginana so and then it's in in English it would be cano to cano something is

ginosis or

genana. So to achieve

nosis would be presumably what a like a a gana yogi would be striving for. It's like liberation through through wisdom.

Liber liberation through knowledge just penetrating and

like like knowing ultimate reality.

So to that extent I mean if you know ultimate reality that would probably seems to me that would be the same as becoming enlightened or achieving nibano. But what exactly ancient Greek gnostics meant by achieving nosis, I'm not sure. It seems like some of their philosophies from a Buddhist point of view anyway are not particularly enlightened. So they might have had some something else in mind. And I'm no authority on ancient Gnosticism. So with regard to that, I can't really say. But to achieve nosis of like awareness of ultimate truth, ultimate reality, to know ultimate reality would be the same as achieving

nibbana as far as I can tell. So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Kundrew. And Kundrew says, "Regarding Ajan Mun's question on what color the robes were in the Buddhist time, how did the Buddha respond?"

And this is like a follow-up question from the previous Q&A in which somebody asked me what I would ask the Buddha and then I happened to mention that Ajan man supposedly met with the Buddha somehow and asked he got he asked him one question which was regarding how the monks in the Buddhist time dyed their robes which just seems

like blowing a question but Ajan man supposedly was an Araant. He really didn't need to know anything in particular. So why he chose to ask a vignia question about how ancient Indian monks dyed their robes, I'm not exactly sure other than he was just a stickler for vineia. And according to the story, the Buddha just happened to respond with the statement that it's essentially the way Thai forest monks dyed their robes. That is the correct way. It's like the right color, which would be sort of like a cat puke and greenish goldish brownish color.

Um, but I don't know. I mean, I'm not exactly sure in the Buddhist time what

the preferred robe dye would be.

Apparently, just from reading Vignia, there was a multitude of different possible dyes you could use so long as it worked.

Um, so like the Thai forest tradition uses the heartwood of the jackf fruit tree which I think is *ardocarpus integrifolia*. Very common tree in Thailand and Burma. Um, in Burma though, it's the inner bark of the jackf fruit tree that is much more used than the heartwood of the jackf fruit tree, which is more of an orangey color, more of a like a russet kind of a reddish brownish color, orangey brownish color. And then

some of the the mun monks in like Munate
in southern Burma use I think it's the
bark of the ironwood tree which produces
a really nice kind of a dark purplish
color.

Personally though, I used Katachu, which
is like a resin from the Kutch tree, a
kind of aacia, which produces um
essentially like a russet reddish brown
color. And all of this would be
allowable. And so I think Ajan Man may
have been projecting onto ancient India
um in his meeting supposedly impossible
meeting with God Buddha asking him this
question. He just got sort of like what
do what do you call it when your your
biases are

are

reinforced you know just the

presuppositions or you know that's the

way it is I can't remember how it's

called confirmation

bias but then again anjan man was

supposedly fully enlightened so trying

to second guess like meditation masters

and sages is is fairly

ridiculous. But um the Buddha did

respond that it was essentially the same

color that Anjan Man and his disciples

were using, which is I would guess sort

of this kind of a greenish goldish

brownish color from using the heartwood

of the jackfruit tree to dye

robes. So let's see here. I think I'm just going to move on to this question.

This is from

Pronov. And Pronov says, "Are you in favor of Darwinian weak will weak will fall and strong would survive over

Dharmic values in which the weak would at least be given some security by the well-off so that they are not starving to death?" Well, I mean, it's it's kind of a false dichotomy. These aren't the only two options.

just letting the weak starve to death or having like a socialist state or you know the well-offs supporting the poor.

I mean

that's still from a Darwinian point of

view so long as you don't reproduce then I mean Darwin is still is you know it's like the species continues to evolve you know it's still survival of the fittest. So, I mean, you could support the poor while at the same time having a system so that the poor aren't having more children than than people who can actually support their family. So you could still have, you know, private charity or church groups or whatever supporting the poor, but um not so much that it just becomes like a career choice for some women to be unwed mothers, having five kids by three or four different fathers and just getting

money from the government, that sort of thing.

So I mean you have a culture that is more supportive of women getting married and having children and less supportive sort of

discouraging becoming like an unwed welfare mother on food stamps as a kind of viable career choice.

So, so long as the successful are reproducing more than the unsuccessful, the people who can provide for themselves are reproducing more than the people who can't provide for themselves and have to live off the charity of others or the largesse of the government, then still everything everything works

out well. you don't have so much of a devolution, sort of a decline of the species, which is what we've got going now. Just like mutation load like Edward Dutton talks about, and just like genetic defects that just continue to propagate because we've got modern medicine and people with sometimes severe genetic defects are still encouraged to reproduce. And I remember reading a book on obsessivempulsive disorder. I used to know this research psychiatrist at UCLA who was one of the world's leading authorities on obsessivecompulsive disorder. And some people would have it so severely. I

mean, they'd just be almost incapacitated by it. Like Howard Hughes, who had OCD in his later years, I mean, he was just like isolated in a hotel room. Only few people could come to see him. And they'd be like offering him food with like pl rubber gloves on, like surgical gloves, wearing surgical masks, offer him just this special kind of food that he trusted. And you know, his fingers, her fingernails were growing really long and he just I mean, he was practically incapacitated towards the end. And some of these people who were just really dysfunctional still, they're and and it's a genetic thing. You know, there's

like a 5050 chance that their kids will have it. still they're just having kids or I remember once there was a beggar with leprosy who used to come to Mahagandhi on this big school monastery that I lived at and one day I saw him with a little boy and I was thinking man who's who's letting their little kid hang out with this person with leprosy I mean the kid might get leprosy and then finally I it dawned on me it's the leper's kid and I don't know for like a a lepous beggar in a fourth world country to have one or more children. I mean, you know, you can't be too judgmental with regard

to this

stuff, but still there should be some

sort of

cultural like

mechanism, cultural

traditions that encourage the successful

to have more children than those who are

not successful. And that's the way it

was up until like the 20th

century that I have read that most

people that are the descendants of

aristocrats because it was the

aristocrats who could afford to have

kids and it was like the subsistence

farmer peasants you know they had a way

higher mortality rate for their

children. they just couldn't afford to

support as many children whereas the aristocrats you know have families or and also the aristocrats would be messing around with the prettiest peasant girls that kind of thing. So I mean Darwin is going to be god emperor regardless and we ignore him at our peril. I mean when the weak are glorified, the weak and dysfunctional are glorified and the successful are vilified which is what is happening on the on the left through like nichch's slave morality you know it's based on resanton or resentment. Um, yeah, it's it's just

gonna it's going to be a downhill slide.
And that's one reason why great
civilizations tend to not last very long
because they get to this level of
prosperity. One of the reasons they get
to this level of prosperity where poor
people are living on a dole, you know,
they got their breads bread in circuses
and all that and they just are like
having kids and the rich for whatever
reason have fewer kids. And so it's like
sort of the dregs of society are the
ones that are populating the
civilization and it's
it's it just does not end well. That's
certainly not the only reason why great
civilizations fall, but that is a

contributing reason.

So yeah, I mean to have compassion and and like share your access with people who need it more than you do, that's that's 100% good. And I'm not going to try and talk anybody out of that.

Although nowadays, you see a beggar on the

street, you know, like a homeless person, you give them five or 10 bucks, they're going to spend it on drugs. So I mean, that's kind of a complication, too.

At least in some cultures, the the home, you know, the homeless beggar is actually going to buy food with it.

Maybe buy food for his kids,
too.

But like homeless people, I I can't even recall seeing children of homeless people like on the on the sidewalk. You don't see very many homeless children on the sidewalk in the United States. It's mostly adults who are drug addicts and or mentally ill and just don't have kids. So let's see. Did I answer the question? Am I in favor of Darwin Indian weak will fall and strong will survive over Dharmic values in which the weak would at least be given some security by the well so that they are not starting? I favor both.

I mean, the Darwinian thing. Yeah. I mean, it's you can't really argue with it. I mean, like, left-wing feminists can argue with it till they're blue in the face. Darwin remains God emperor. So, but at the same time, you know, compassionate like generosity and and charity and so forth is good also. And they're not really necessarily in conflict.

So, I guess I'm going to go move on to the next question. This is from Phily's and Phil says, "Do you recommend having children for a non-M? And do you ever wish you had them?"

Well, I mean, every once in a while I'll

get like a little twinge. I think my woman and I, the woman I've got now, and I would have good kids. I think I'd be a personally I think I'd be a good father. She'd be a good mother so long as she didn't worry too much about the kids, you know, be like a helicopter mom, something like that.

But I mean, it's it's a choice that each individual has to make. Some people would be better off without kids, some people would be better off with kids. Um if you get away from socialism then in a lot of countries like in Burma like children are your children are your social security. Your family supports

you when you get

old. And if you don't have any family,
then you wind up in an old folks home
that's run by charitable contributions,
maybe a little bit from the government.

And probably in in a fourth world
country like Burma, old folks homes are
not the best places to
be.

So, do do I recommend having children
for lay people? It depends on the
individual. I mean it's for each people
should make their own choices with
regard to that. I mean there's a lot
of suffering. I mean it's having kids is
just a lot of positive and a lot of

negative just like having a mate has a lot of positive and a lot of negative and there's a lot of attachment. I remember a friend of mine who had a kid told me that I mean you've got like a four-year-old kid just watching your kid walking towards the street just causes this visceral this this feeling of just like dread of the kid just like plunging into traffic and like splattering this kind of thing. And that's that's always with any conscientious adult. We can just set aside the unconscientious ones. So it's a big obligation. I mean it's a huge obligation that most people

don't take very seriously. I mean you are responsible for like raising this person so that they grow up to be a relatively good, relatively happy person.

And most people don't give more any more thought to that than like a dog or a cat does.

So yeah, I mean I can't really recommend it or not recommend it. It's like for it's each person has their own choice that they have to make. Although obviously if we stop having kids the human race dies out or probably you

know I don't

know that's let's just leave it at that.

I mean if you don't have kids the human race does not populate and it's in decline now at least in the the western countries. I don't I think I don't think there's any country in Europe that has reproduction at replacement rate. So instead of encouraging people to have children, they just import millions and millions of barbarians that do not share the cultural values of Europe.

So anyways, I'm just going to move on to Philly's second question, which is recently I have started to think that the whole idea of

having house pets is absurd and actually rather perverse, especially dogs since dogs have always been kept for specific purposes such as hunting or shepherding or security and so on. Personally, I have cats, but I feel bad for my cats when I think of the fact that they lead highly unnatural lives and won't ever get to reproduce and hunt since they are neutered and so probably won't get to experience the pleasures that their entire biology was designed for.

Thoughts? Well, first of all, biology, I mean, you're not designed by biology to be happy. Like a wild animal is probably less fortunate, less content in their

life than a house pet. Like a wild cat probably is not happier than a like some cat that's asleep on your couch purring. Also, this one part up here, especially dogs, since dogs have always been kept for specific purposes. Some breeds of dog have been bred just to be lap dogs to be human companions. Like I got a whippet that wanders around here sometimes. I mean it's a sighthound, you know, it's sort of like a small greyhound, but at the same time since the middle ages that it's been like a lady's companion dog. So, one of the main purposes of a whippet historically has just been like a lady's companion kind

of dog. And they're like the King Charles spaniels and that sort of thing. I mean, that's what they're bred for.

So, raising having house pets, I mean, the pets benefit from it because they are uplifted by human consciousness.

They're not just out in the wild completely in survival mode just hunger and fear governing most of their behavior that now there's love, you know? I mean, they'd have love for their their puppies or whatever, but it's not the same as like we got this one little dog that wanders around here. It's it's just an attention

sponge. It's like a little energetic vampire, you know? just craves attention and love and just soaks it up if you start petting the dog and talking nice to

it. So yeah, I really don't see anything necessarily wrong with having house pets. It it benefits both. It's it's a symbiosis that dogs as they exist, I mean they're just a symbiant with humans. We have co-evolved. We we even have convergent evolution.

that dogs, the domesticated dog can read human emotions whereas uh like a wolf, a wild wolf cannot. A wild wolf can't really tell whether a human is in a good mood or a bad mood. Whereas the

domesticated dog has learned this also like a domesticated dog has an increased capacity to digest carbohydrates, to metabolize carbohydrates, to to to live on more of a agricultural diet than a wolf. that kind of thing. So, and and from the Darwinian point of view, domestication is just one of the greatest things that can happen to an animal. You know, it's like winning the lotto. You know, like chickens, the red jungle fowl. I mean, what the population of wild red jungle fowl in Asia is, I don't know, but I'm sure that it's it's less than domesticated chickens, which probably

are around the same population level as humans. There's billions of chickens now because they were domesticated even though a lot of them are used for food. They're they're treated badly, you know, living in little cages and this kind of thing, having like the ends of their beaks chopped off so they won't peck each other, ruin each other's skin. But still, from a Darwinian point of view, they've won the lottery. Like wild cows are extinct, but cows are prospering on this planet because they have been domesticated by humans. So, and it's just it encourages like love and trust and

generosity. I mean, you don't just get benefit. You don't like you don't just get karmic benefit for helping other humans. Every time you feed your dog, especially if you you're happy to feed your dog, you know, you like to feed your dog, you're getting good karma for that. Every time you pet your dog and are nice to your dog, you get good karma for that. Same for your cat. Same for your fish. And speaking of fish, let's see here. Let's see if I got her. Okay. Yeah, the aquarium is in full view. I had to like move the question list over to make sure that you could see my pet fish. And sometimes I think I mean do

they get bored in there? I mean they've got other fish to interact with and there's a lot of plants and diversity in there. They can swim around. But I mean in the wild I mean the cherry barb for example is close to extinction in the wild just through mainly through loss of habitat. They're native to Sri Lanka. So I mean they've kind of won the lottery too from becoming an aquarium fish.

Let's see. Anything else I can say about my

fishes? I mean, it might be a little boring. Not nearly as boring as like a goldfish just swimming around in a bowl with maybe little marbles on the bottom

and maybe some little chintzy porcelain
castle in

there. But then again, how how easily
does a fish get

bored? I don't know. But I mean, I can I
can speak from the experience of dealing
with these dogs that I live with that
they don't mind living here with with us
humans. And if they were feral dogs,
then they wouldn't be nearly as happy.

And really, human consciousness helps to
uplift them because mental states are
contagious. And furthermore, I mean, the
love of a dog for its master is one of
the purest kind of loves there is. Like
human love is pretty conditional. Like a

mother's love for her children, if she's a good mother, that comes close to like perfect spiritual love, too. Like unconditional love. But a dog, I mean, I'm I don't not I'm not like recommending this at all, but a person can kick his dog every day and still that dog is going to love him.

So just that kind of interaction is actually I mean it's it's probably more beneficial than otherwise. And I think uh it's really good for a person to have like a pet dog or something. And if you're concerned that you you don't want a sheep dog that can't hurt sheep, then there are breeds of dog that were specifically bred just to be human

companions.

So let's see here. I assume I answer that question. I'm going to move on to Phil Lee's third question, which is having lived in the midst of foreign peoples, what is your opinion of racial theorists who postulate a hierarchical understanding of human types? So that'd be like race realism or something. And I mean a hierarchical understanding would mean you've got like superior ones and inferior ones. And from a scientific point of view, I mean you don't even have to think that way. I mean just like differences that there

are

differences. And like people who are just hysterically opposed to anything that smacks of racism. I mean they'll they'll be starting to get hysterical already just hearing that much. But there are differences. I mean just going with height, you know, probably the average

say Samoan would be taller than the average Japanese. The average Ethiopian would be taller than the average Burmese person. I mean, what is what is objectionable about even just acknowledging this? And then then you get to psychology and there are psychological differences

just as there are physical differences.
Just there's psychological differences
between men and women largely largely um
conditioned by
hormones. And then there's just
psychological differences between races
and which doesn't mean that everybody in
this race is going to have these traits.
everybody in this other race are going
to have these other other traits that
it's it's going to be statistical
likelihood. You know, there's going to
be lots of overlap. Some women are
taller than some men. Some women are
more rational than some men. And it's
the same way with certain races.

So a hierarchical understanding I don't think is particularly useful especially I mean at least you could divide it up into different characteristics that I mean every race is going to be better at something you know they're going to be the most adapted to the environment in which they arose at the very least

so I have no no problem with pointing out that there are differences between boys and girls. Like for example, boys don't have a PP like girls do or that there's differences between races. Like even just average IQ stuff, I mean, it's real. And just all the

hysteria in the world, all the accusations of racism aren't going to change that. It's just that those people are just blinding themselves of of the truth of a of empirical reality and trying to force everybody else to be blind too and it's just not going to work. And ignorance is a kind of weakness. So yeah, a hierarchical understanding, just an understanding of differences would probably be more beneficial and wholesome than hierarchical just having a list of the best to the worst.

That kind of thing probably isn't particularly helpful unless it's just

with regard to certain, you know, certain qualities that can be quantified, you know, like height or weight, testosterone levels, that kind of thing that you can just point put it on a graph, you know, like this ethnicity has the highest testosterone levels, this ethnicity has the lowest testosterone levels, that sort of thing. testosterone conditions, aggression, impulsive behavior, that sort of thing. And it's people on the left who just vehemently just reject reality to the point of saying everyone is the same. That I mean, they just can't deal with it at all. And any kind of science, no matter

how like watertight the like the
experimental design is and all that,
they they're just shrieking. and racism
because they just can't deal with it
because their religion is saying
everyone is the same and that the
differences are caused by white
patriarchal oppression in
particular. And it's just like a
faith-based religion that is not
necessarily based on any empirical
reality at
all.

So, I guess I answered that question and
so I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This next question is from

Kenton who has the alias also of Kenton.

The only person I know whose alias is exactly the same as his real

name. And Kenton says, "I often find myself around others who hold strong views around the world about politics, society, culture, or ethics. I notice how easily views become entangled with identity and how much energy goes into defending or rejecting them. I tend to see views as conditioned and context dependent. I often find valid arguments on each side and I'm more interested in understanding the conditions that give rise to a view than in deciding which one is right. I always wonder, no I also wonder if this is genuine charity or

just a subtle avoidance of engagement.

With that in mind, I'd like to ask and then follow three questions. First one is, how can one relate to others who are strongly attached to their views without either reinforcing their clinging or appearing dismissive?

And I mean based on my own personal experience

um being like a a bluecollar worker in South Carolina, I come across

churchgoing Christians a lot. In fact, one of my bosses was an ordained

minister who just decided to become the manager of a sheet metal shop instead of uh like really making a living from

being in the clergy. And my next boss after that was even more religious than the ordained minister. I mean he would never cuss anything like that. And I mean

um I mean I wouldn't be bad mouthing Christianity in front of these people. I mean obviously even if they're not your boss. I mean you don't want to be badmouthing somebody's religion. I mean sometimes it may be called for. Now somebody's glorifying Islam. you can point out, well, Islam does encourage killing people sometimes, this sort of thing. But at the same time, I mean, you don't want to be dishonest and like start, you know,

praising Jesus and this kind of thing.

But I mean, I have read the Bible. I can make

intelligent, you know,

like sort of statements that a Christian

can consider in a positive light that

aren't just sort of like knowledge from

the Bible, that kind of thing that I

mean, it's it's not like I'm endorsing

Christianity. Um, I mean, sometimes it's

like somebody will say, you know, like

just last night this guy says, "See you

Monday." you know, as we're we're like

leaving work and I said, "God willing."

And I I say that a lot, you know,

inshallah. I say that sometimes, too,

which is kind of a wise way of looking at this empirical or like some Saric reality, you know, like a John Chai say not

sure because you really don't know what's the future is going to be and you shouldn't just assume. I mean, you kind of have to assume that the sun's going to come up tomorrow, that sort of thing. But still, it's it's always good to bear in mind that really nothing is absolutely certain. I mean, you don't know for sure that you're going to be seeing this person next Monday.

So, I mean, that kind of thing with regard to leftism, I'm sure you can at least, let's say you've got

some foaming at the mouth

leftist that

um, you know, they're always engaging in
rants or something. Your best bet is

just, you know, engage with them as

little as possible and just just to

avoid the the hazard of getting sucked

into some kind of scandal by saying the

wrong thing. then they they try and get

you fired or something. I mean that can

happen. It's it's happened many times.

But um still I mean you can just make

intelligent observations that are like

neutral that can be viewed either way.

Just sort of like making intelligent

observations about the Bible. You know,

it's like just some I can't remember
what I was saying about
uh saying to my my second boss, the
really super religious one. It was
something about homosexuality. He was he
was opposed to having like gay pride
stuff in the training videos, this kind
of thing. And I mean, he was just
outspoken in like speaking up against
higher management. Look, there's a pride
flag in this training video. It's it's
in the background but still it's there
you know and he was a devout Christian.
I said well you know Old Testament says
that homosexuals should just be taken
out and
killed. He said well yeah we're not

following Mosaic law anymore.

But I mean you can I mean if you know about leftism then I mean you can like quote marks to a leftist and I mean what are they going to do? So long as you don't obviously have some axe to grind as long as you're not obviously mocking them or something. you can make intelligent statements that you can just kind of feel what the other person is, what their attitude is and and so just sort of spontaneously there's like this dance of social engagement where you can sort of contribute to the conversation by just making neutral statements that are

about, you know, their Christianity or their Marxism or whatever it is that they they can have to accept like environmentalism or something. I mean, it's not totally a fraud. Like the whole um you know, human beings are are like harming the Earth's environment. I mean, that's not a total scam. It's not just some [__] that was made up by globalists to try to control the population. I mean, they they've sort of gone with that to some degree, but still, I mean, there's some truth in there like deforestation and and that kind of thing where megafauna is pretty much wiped out on this planet. We've been in what is it the the holocene

extinction event since prehistoric times. You know, as soon as humans got to Australia, the the megapode, the the big animals just went extinct there. That kind of thing. probably humans were mainly responsible for wiping out mastadons and woolly mammoths and all that kind of stuff. So I guess the trick is you just I mean if you can make some neutral observation that is just a factual thing that isn't really biased that people can kind of pick up on that. If if you're saying something out of some bias, like some sort of subtle mockery or something, they can pick up on that

easy. But if you're just like contributing just some kind of information that they can't really argue against and you're not really trying to prove a point really, you know, you're just being polite, you know, just giving some kind of feedback, that kind of thing. Then if you're you're skillful enough at that, I mean, if you're an autistic and have no social skills, then you're better off just avoiding people in general.

Probably maybe hang out with other autists, go to like gamer conventions and stuff.

[Music]

So, let's see. Did I answer the question which is how can one relate to others who are strongly attached to their views without either reinforcing their clinging or appearing dismissive is it depends on the person like that uh that research psychiatrist at UCLA he was like a foam at the mouth Republican and I mean he was he just despised the left and I was kind of more of a like a an ecohippie back in those days you know I wasn't wasn't as right-wing as I am now. Although really, I mean, I haven't really changed all that much. It's just the left has just gone insanely leftwards and just left me

on the right at this

point. Just being a classical liberal

turn makes you like a fascist or

something

now. So, I mean, in his case though, I

mean, he was Jewish also and just sort

of thick skinned, just kind of abrasive

in general. And you could just sort of

like tease him a little bit and and it

was

fine. You might get kind of riled up a

little bit, but that was kind of

entertaining also. And it's just guys

interacting. So, you know, you get on

get on guys can get on each other's case

sometimes. You know, give each other the

business and, you know, it's it's okay.

So, I mean, you've got to first kind of
sound out the person you're interacting
with. how how thick is their skin and
just just go from there. But still, I
mean, you can I mean, you can like
engage in a conversation with someone
who is just
fanatical with regard to some some a
topic that you don't agree with. what
you don't agree with that person on that
on on their position, but still I mean
you can you can still just toss in like
neutral objective observations
that can sort
of allow you to to engage with the
person. So let's see here. I'm just

going to move on to Kenton or Kenton
second his second question which is once
the need to hold or defend a position
falls away what ideally guides your
speech and action well I mean if it
completely falls away then you're an
arahant and again then you're
secondguessing ahant you're trying to
secondguess a fully enlightened
being and you know what is it that
motivates their behavior and so forth
when I I mean, technically, they're not
even really there
anymore. So, let's see. Once the need to
hold or defend a position falls away,
oh, I guess maybe this only applies to
one position. What ideally guides your

speech and action like an anthropological interest in the phenomenon, that kind of thing. If you don't need to hold or defend a position like with regard to politics or anthropology or something then what what ideally guides your speech and action would be I mean your understanding of of the of the case you know just neutral observations you know empirical sort of scientific observations sort of a philosophical detachment you know it's sort of disengaged object objectivity, I suppose. So, I that's kind of I kind of

already was dealing with that in the first question, so I think I'm going to move on to the third question after looking one last time to see if I really did answer that one.

Yeah, just truth as well as you understand it would guide your speech anyways and your beliefs if you have any. And I still got like a little lump here. The the gash on the side of my head is pretty much healed up. There's still some little bumps there though, which I forget about until I feel them with my finger and then oh, there's that bump there still. Okay, let's see.

So Kenton's third

question is when the world around you is shaped by story and interpretation, how do you remain clear without isolating yourself? Well, I mean this is they're all sort of variations on the same question it seems like. And I think my answer to the first question would be equally applicable as an answer to this third question.

Um, you got people that are believing, you know, what they're told to believe by their culture or by the government or whatever. And how do you remain clear without isolating yourself? Well, just keep your mouth shut most of the time. Well, that would be isolating

yourself, wouldn't it? Well, you just don't talk about these topics. I mean, just remain objective. I mean, if you can say something neutral or, you know, something funny, something that they would agree with, that's fine. As long as you're not lying. You know, every once in a while, you can agree with a leftist about something or whatever, a rightist or or whoever they are, feminist, white supremacist, black supremacist. I mean, not absolutely everything they say is going to be false. I mean, you could agree with them

when if they say something you consider to be true or if they say something you consider to be untrue. I mean depending on the person how thick skinned thin skinned I mean you might be able to politely offer like a different point of view point out that the study that they are referencing is you know it had a very small sample size and was clearly you know the purpose of it was just to validate some point of view anyway that kind of thing I mean that you're kind of pushing it with that it would depend on the person you're talking to but the most hysterical fanatics, you're best off just avoiding them as

well as you

can. I suppose I should just move on.

Next question here. This is from

Salina and Salina says, "You praise Nim

Karoli Baba a lot, but don't you think

he was a wizard type of person and

nothing to do with enlightenment?"

No, not at all. He was not a wizard.

like a wizard or a witch. They are

deliberately trying to like Oh man, just

a second. I forgot to plug in my

computer, the

cord. All righty. Now I got to climb

underneath the table and go like this

and

like like

that. And then I climb back up

here and plug this
in.

Ah, all right. Yeah, we're down to like 9% now. Okay. Where was I? Oh, yeah. So like a witch or a wizard, they are deliberately trying to produce results. You know, it's like they have to use gimmicks to like produce this paranormal result that they are striving for. Nim Kurly Baba, it was effortless. Like Rahm Doss used to say, it's like the better you got to know him, the more you realized there was nobody there. You know, he was just like a mirror just reflecting your own karma back at you. So yeah, he was definitely not a wizard

type that it was all just spontaneous
and like with
Ramahari that
um I mean it would
just it would just arise without him
planning on anything. Maybe I I was
actually going to read a story or two
from Miracle of Love on the booksh
bookshelf back there about Nim Karoli
Baba like some of the stuff that he
would do. Like there was one
where he told one of his
um supporters to get him a first class
ticket on a on a certain train for like
the next day. And the supporter is
thinking you're not gonna get a first
class ticket for the next day. So

Maharaji just tells him just just go do it. So he goes to the train station and of course the the clerk at the train station is like are you crazy? We're completely booked from from one side of India to the other. But um he sold him like this like a provisional ticket just in case there's a cancellation or something. So he comes back and he tells Maharaji, "Well, I got a provisional ticket. I couldn't get a first class ticket because they're all sold out."

Maharaji's fine with that. They show up at the train station the next day and um so the the supporter goes to like the

not the conductor, but you know, the main clerk at the station who's like handling tickets and so forth. And this this is India. They're not polite. It's like what are you crazy? We're completely booked. But um the so the uh the supporter goes back to Maharaji kind of distressed like it's not working and Maharaji just says talk to the conductor and Maharaji just plants himself at this one place on beside the tracks and the the train comes in the conductor comes out or whatever his name is. I can't remember what what the exact position was. And so the supporter goes to him and says, "Do you by any chance

have like an empty seat or two empty seats for first class?" And it says, as it turns out, there was just suddenly this con this cancellation where these people that were going to go all the way across the country had to get off due to some family emergency. And the empty seat was like right where Maharaji was standing. I mean, it was just like he wasn't like trying to make these people get sick and get off the train, anything like that. He just for some reason he just knew what to do and it was just I mean if if you read stories about him was based on like personal experiences with the with the

person with with Maharaji, you see that he was not some kind of wizard. It was just that spontaneously impossible stuff just kept happening around him.

So to say that it has nothing to do with enlightenment. Yeah, I think that would be like the opposite of the truth. So Salo's second question, magic and enlightenment pretty different. No. Yeah, because magic is you're actually having to like trying to manipulate or like make like like tears in the fabric of samsara so the impossible like the miraculous can come through and it takes

effort sometimes like uh like a coven of witches they'll all combine their forces and they'll violate some taboo to create a more liinal situation and they'll be like combining ing their mental energies like moving in unison and like like reciting some what's the word the spell like a mantra which is just sort of they're all focusing on what they want to get done possibly with some transgressions that help to weaken the moral fabric that you know like the impossible can slip through more easily. Whereas enlightenment, it's there's no effort. There's no will involved. It's just it's just spontaneously happening.

And anyone who's done a lot of like intensive spiritual practice knows weird coincidences, synchronicities, this sort of thing become more common. So yeah, magic and enlightenment are different. just the way a like a a spiritual person's miracles and like a witch's magic. I mean it just works on different principles. So let's move on to SA's third question. Even if one obtains such power and does lots of magical and wizard things, wouldn't that be harmful for one's path to nibbana? It depends on on the individual. Like someone who is cultivating psychic powers for the sake

of cultivating psychic powers and then they get the psychic powers then you know they can sort of become power mad you know but which then kind of weakens their psychic

powers. But somebody like Raman Maharshi or Nim Karoli Baba or like Wayeu Seattle who did this kind of stuff too although not as like outrageously as Neim Crowley Baba but still I mean

like he he could he wouldn't know when people were going to come visit you know they're living out in a desert there's there's no phones or anything you know it's just like get ready that soand so is is going to show up and you know they

they show

Nim Kurly Baba did the same thing and he's like, you know, he'd have somebody a busload of people would suddenly show up and he'd already have like this empty house set up for them and he would just somehow you can know this stuff. Of course, skeptics would say, "Ah, he had some inside information. Somebody told him or whatever."

Fine. So, let's see. Wouldn't that be harmful for one's path to nibbana? It's in Hinduism especially, less so in Buddhism, but in Hinduism, it's just this this the path of of spirit is is a much longer path. It's just

purification, purification,
purification. You start developing
psychic powers and you just keep
purifying, purifying, purifying as
though there's like an end to the path.

Whereas in Buddhism, it's like once
you're pure enough to get liberating
insight, you just that's it. You're off
the wheel. You're you're off the path.

It's not necessary
anymore. So Buddhism is somewhat of a
shortcut. And it's not really so much of
a shortcut. It's just a realization that
the path doesn't have to be so long that
you're like this purified saint with
light shining out of you who who does

miracles

effortlessly. That's more of a Hindu thing.

But it can be harmful for one's path to nibbana out. But then again, um if you're not led astray by it, then it's just I mean you just accept it as just that's just the way it is.

Like like Maharaji named Carly Baba would just people would thank him for you know like curing their their grandma or something and he'd just say subishwar you know it's all gone. that, you know, he he did not take credit for anything. You know, sometimes he would just lie and say, "No, I didn't do that." Or, I mean, maybe it wasn't lying. It was just

God did it. You know, it wasn't this meat puppet that did it. So anyway, somebody in the comments actually said that Nee Crowley Baba poisoned somebody out of jealousy, which I'd read before and maybe, but if if Nee Crowley Baba wanted somebody dead, in all likelihood they would have died.

But I mean, you should be hesitant to say the least to just fling accusations against someone who was far more advanced than you are because if you're wrong, you've slandered a holy man. You know, it's like Ken Wheeler like accusing

Mahakasapa of poisoning the Buddha. That kind of thing. I mean, you're you're playing with disaster. You're flirting with disaster with that kind of stuff because if you're wrong, you're just slandering a holy man. Of course, you can go a little too far with such scruples like in Burma where a monk can just be an obvious crook and everyone will be afraid to badmouth him because you don't badmouth monks. I mean, that's you can go to hell for that.

[Music]

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Raphael. And Raphael says, "Is your

belief in eternal karma the decisive reason why you wouldn't press the red button to end all life and prevent further

suffering?" No. A belief in eternal karma is not the decisive reason why I wouldn't push a red button and just exterminate all life on the planet. Let's see how do I respond.

First of all, I do not think it would be possible to like eradicate all life in the

universe. I don't think that's it's it's possible. You couldn't do it. You could have the biggest red button in the world. It couldn't because in some sor

anything that is possible is going to happen. It's happening now somewhere somehow that it's anything that is possible is happening including life. So, it's theoretically possible you could exterminate all life on this planet, but there's still going to be an infinite amount of life, an infinite number of suffering, diluted beings that virtually exist in the virtual reality of

Samsara. I mean, you can't really make them disappear if they don't really exist in the first place, maybe.

But in in this universe in samsara there is and always will be an infinite number of deluded beings which is one reason

why the bodhicattva vows don't make very much

sense and I mean life isn't just suffering even the Buddha didn't say that life is only suffering it's just that it's like a a duality of happiness and unhappiness, pleasure and pain, aversion and attraction. And if people want that, then it's their choice to make. You shouldn't just like kill them all just because you disagree and you think they're better off dead.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to uh Raphael's second question, which is, "Have you ever done heroin before? If

not, can you ever think of trying it in the future? Would love to hear your experience."

LOL. No. I mean, from the time that I was a kid and I like a teenager and started taking recreational intoxicants, I was always very wary about anything that was addictive, especially if it's very

addictive. Alcohol is addictive. I really don't have alcoholic genes. My father was a hardcore alcoholic. My mother was just not at all. She was just sort of like the uh the highrung nervous type, which is kind of like me. I'm kind of high, strong, nervous type, too. Even though I might seem pretty chill. It's

like what's going on inside is probably somewhat more intense than a lot of other people. And it's just my system is just not attuned with alcoholism for some reason.

My father, I mean, he was, I think it's called a type D alcoholic, and according to him, it's rare in the West, but it's fairly common, relatively speaking, in Eastern Europe. Like, he would drink a fifth of vodka a day, and you'd never really see him drunk and you'd never really see him sober. He was just kind of fueled on vodka. And I mean, if he stopped drinking, he'd have the delirium tremens

and all that. So he definitely was an alcoholic, but you never really saw him particularly drunk. It was just he was just fueled on it. His metabolism had adapted to it or something. So yeah, I never The strongest opiate I ever took was probably percocet. You know, it's like a painkiller like when I had my wisdom teeth taken out or something and that's about it. And I'm never had any real curiosity and has never particularly tempted to take any hard narcotics, any hard opiates like heroin or now fentanyl. I mean, why would anybody want to take fentanyl? You'd have to be a miserable person just trying to escape

from your own mind, seems to me, to even want to take fentinel, which is going to [_] you up. I mean, people that take fentinel, they generally don't live very long after they start taking it. So, yeah, I was more more interested, more intrigued by more the more psychedelic kind of stuff and not the narcotic kind of stuff.

So, the answer to that question is uh no, I've never taken heroin and I can not think of even trying to take heroin in the

future. I mean, it's not absolutely impossible. Let's say maybe I'm dying or something like take

morphine, something like that
maybe, but certainly not planning on it.
Have no intention of it. So, I'm just
going to move on. Next question. This is
from Mr. Pronov. And Mr. Pronov says,
"From the point of view of average
Joe's, how would autocracy and democracy
compare?"

And you can't really answer this
question because autocracy is just a a
spectrum. At one end of autocracy,
you've got the wise, benevolent
philosopher king like let's say Marcus
Aurelius.

And then at the other end, you've got
the the psycho, just the the
sociopathic, ruthless, cruel

tyrant. And I mean, the autocracy is going to be very different. Democracy is just kind of this standardized mediocrity in the middle. But I mean, you could have like a mediocre autocrat who wouldn't be so different from a democracy. So, it's hard to say. I mean, autocracy might um there's less likely that you'd have free speech. I mean, that's like in in in like a totalitarian dictatorship. And one of the first steps in that direction is the loss of freedom of speech. You know, you badmouth the dictator, I mean, you wind up dead. And that's whether it's like

Marxism like the Soviet Union under Stalin or fascism like you know under Mussolini or whatever freedom of speech is is not is really is not a big thing for totalitarian dictatorships unless maybe you've got the benevolent philosopher king which um you know they're they're not going to be very common you know like Marcus Aurelius his son was Commodus who was considered considered one of the monsters of the Roman Empire. You know, he was one of the worst emperors after considered to be one of the best emperors. His son, probably not his biological son, considering what Marcus Aurelius's wife was like, but still, I mean, legally,

Kimotus was Marcus Aurelius's son, and he was one of the worst emperors Rome ever had. So with a like autocracy, totalitarian dictatorships, it's it's just like the full spectrum is possible.

Whereas democracy is like standardized mediocrity. You're not going to have anything outstandingly good. You're not going to have anything outstandingly bad. Just the will of the people.

There's so many people deciding that, you know, it's there's not going to be a whole lot of movement one way or the other.

Then that's kind of like Trump is he's he's more

autocratic to in some extent than most presidents. You know, he's actually trying to get [__] done. And so, you know, people are like on the left are seeing him as a fascist, whereas really he's not doing anything that's against the Constitution. Like most of the these federal judges stopping what he's doing. They're leftist activists and their judgments eventually get overthrown by a higher court. But, you know, like Donald Trump, I mean, he'd probably make a a better king than a president. Not that I'm suggesting he'd become one because there'd be less getting in the way of him actually getting [__]

done. So, with democracy and you got the checks and balances and you got like activist judges just trying to stop any improvements from being made, this kind of thing.

So yeah to the from the point of view of the average jail how would autocracy and democracy compare? It would depend on the autocrat who might be good or might be

bad. Who

knows? But democracy is safer because you know like the son of the benevolent philosopher king could be like a ruthless sociopath or just utterly incompetent.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Mr. Pronov's second question. And he says, "Would sharing such memes be counted as approving of breaking the first precept?" And um this he asked this on the Discord server and he left a link to a meme that somebody posted in the memes room of the Discord server and it was like this this woman gardening and smiling. And then the the caption says remember when you bury a body cover it with endangered plants so it's illegal to dig it up. Follow me for more gardening tips. And so would would that meme posting that meme be counted as approving of breaking the first precept? I doubt it. It was a

joke. It was obviously a joke. It was a joke meme.

So yeah, I don't think the person who posted the meme really approves of killing people and and burying their bodies and then covering the the burial site with endangered plants so that they can't be dug up again.

Just because you joke about something, joke about stealing, doesn't mean that you're a thief or that you encourage thievery. So, I guess I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Ruie. And Ruie says, "Would you offer a few words on the karma of cataclysms?" And this is like uh a main argument, a

common argument against karma is that
how could everybody have the same karma
if they if an entire city is wiped out
by an

earthquake or one of my best examples is
I can't remember the name of the town.

It was I think it was in the the
Caribbean Sea on some

island and it was like the the capital
city, the largest city on this island.

There was a volcano and there was I
can't remember what it's called, some
phenomenon where this glowing hot ball
of gas just comes down the slope. It's
emitted from the volcano. It's heavier
than regular air. And so it just kind of
rolls down the side and then it just

went right through this town and killed everybody except I think one person survived. And they were like a a prisoner in they were they were like a prisoner in some underground jail cell like a dungeon. And so even they were messed up by this but they survived. There was another person under some similar circumstance where they survived for a little while and then died. But there were only two people who were still alive once this volcanic gas cloud moved through the town. I can't remember the name of the town or the name of the island. It happened like 1902, something like

that. Modern times or Pompei would be a famous example of something similar. Um, so would I offer a few words on the karma of cataclysms? I assume that's what he's talking about. How like there's a cataclysm that just kills off everyone in a city or almost everyone. Then you know how would the karma work for that? And one like more orthodox Buddhist explanation is that we've got all kinds of karma. You know we've been doing stuff life after life creating all sorts of karma. So it may be that in a town everybody's got at least some of that karma where there's going to be a sudden cataclysm. And it may be that the

people that with better karma, they might just get cut off. You know, they they're killed instantly by something. You know, the roof falls in on them or something. Killed instantly. Whereas the people with worse karma have a more lingering unpleasant sort of death or I mean in a lot of cases like a plane crash, you know, there's there's so many stories about a person who I mean I read this one story person was going to be on this plane. I mean, they'd never been late for a plane flight before in their life, but for some reason just they keep getting distracted, you know, they keep getting

sidetracked and they wind up being late for their flight and then the plane crashes. So, it could be that the few people that did not have, you know, in their vast array of different kinds of karma like awaiting fruition. They just didn't have the karma for that. They're the ones who are for whatever reason like they they leave town on business or something. They just happen to be uh visiting their parents in in some nearby county when it happens. That kind of thing. But a less Buddhist explanation for how these things can happen is also I mean Buddhism rejects the idea of group karma. But still people with the

same kind of karma tend to be born into the same kind of cultures, same kind of situations. So even though there's not really a group karma, you know, there's no karma for Armenians where they've got this specifically Armenian karma, anything like that, but still a person born into a certain culture and another person born into that same culture are going to have certain like similarities karmically because it's the karma is landing them in the same kind of environment. And so like

How do how do I proceed from this? It's like there is kind of a group mind, you

know, there's like the culture of a of a people will have people like thinking along the same lines and you get deeper than that. There's like this sort of a subconscious empathy where mental states are contagious. And so you know the mental states in this this town you know they

might be sort of the subliminal effect on the person's mind. You know it's like the town is got some kind of scandal and people are like depressed and this bleak mood or something and then this [__] happens.

But the more orthodox Terravada point of view, Terravada Buddhist point of view is just that pretty much everybody has

this vast array of potential karma
awaiting fruition and so that it's
really not that difficult to come across
an entire population to have at least
the potential to be suddenly
killed. You know, like even like
Mahamogalana, you know, the Buddha, one
of the Buddha's chief disciples, you
know, lifetime after lifetime, he still
had this karma, this latent karma to be
brutally
murdered. It was still there after
probably thousands of years, at least
hundreds of years.

So those would be like my two main
explanations of how everyone can have

the karma to get wiped out in a certain city during like an earthquake or or whatever it is. Bubonic plague in the Middle Ages, that kind of thing. It's like everyone's got some of that kind of karma lying latent. But also once you're in this certain culture then any kind of negativity in that culture is going to like be seeping into your mental states and sort of helping to set you up for something bad happening. So that's a possibility

also. And I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Thoughtfog. And thoughtfog says, "Would you please recall animal encounters while meditating?"

Well, I think the first thing that comes to mind about an animal encounter while meditating was I was living in a big cave. It was it was it wasn't so much a cave as just like an overhanging rock ledge in in the northern on the northern boundary of Alando Kasper National Park in northwestern

Burma. And it wasn't a dark cave. It was well lit because the opening was the largest part of the cave.

And it only went in like 30 feet. It's like the opening was like 100 feet wide, 30 feet high, and it went in like 30 feet. So, I mean, it was wide open. And I'd be sitting there

meditating and there was this little bird. It looked like a sparrow. It wasn't an ordinary house sparrow. It could have been some other species of sparrow. I don't know. But it kept landing on my legs and like yanking the leg hairs out of my leg because apparently it was like lining its nest and it wanted something like hair to to line its nest. And so it kept landing on my leg. I mean, it wasn't afraid of me. If I'd move it would fly away, but if I just sit there, I mean, it's just like pulling on my leg hairs, which hurt. But it was such a cute little bird. I figured, well, I'll let it pull some of my leg hairs. The problem with that bird

was it would [__] like every 20 seconds.
It was just crapping everywhere. So
finally I just had to like start shoeing
it away because it was like crap on my
leg and craping on all just everywhere
it landed pretty much it would crap. I
had a a burlap two burlap bags sewn
together that I was using as a kind of
uh blanket in the winter time and then
when it got warmer I rolled it up into a
like a kind of like a a pillow or a
cushion for I'd kind of sit on the edge
of it for meditating and it would be
pulling the fibers out of the burlap too
and [__] on the burlap. So I
eventually had to like cover it up and

hide it just so that the bird wouldn't
be [__] on my stuff.

Um, I wasn't actually meditating during
this next animal encounter, but it
involved a crow in Rangon when I was
doing intensive meditation at Pandida
Rama in Rangon. And I mean, we were
doing intensive meditation. We're
supposed to be meditating all the time
like mindfulness of daily activities,
which is strongly emphasized in the
Mahasi tradition. And so we're all going
for alms round, you know, it's this long
line of monks all going single file
through the suburbs of Rangon. And this
crow crows are like magical birds.
They're one of the the best birds of

Omen. I think it just swooped at me.

This I'm like in line, you know, monks

in front of me, monks behind me. But

this this crow just swooped at me and

just like bounced off the back of my

neck, you It just like pushed off the

back of my neck and just took off in a

different direction just as a kind of

game, you know, it was just playing. So,

I mean, that might count as an animal

encounter while meditating because I

you're supposed to be being intensive

mindfulness right in the middle of like

an intensive meditation

retreat. But most animal encounters when

I've been meditating have been with

mosquitoes. So, that's that's the main kind of animal encounter I'd have when meditating. You're just sitting there and then the mosquito shows up and starts whining around you and monks aren't supposed to slap mosquitoes and you're not supposed to be angrily cursing them or anything. So you just sit there and then it lands on your knee and starts biting and it doesn't find the right kind of blood vessel there. So then it it like flies up again, winds around you a little bit more and then starts biting your shoulder. Doesn't find a good vein there. Then finally it finds the the good vein right here on the side of your head. That kind of

thing. I had lots of encounters with mosquitoes like that. But the the really like uh what's the word? Uh sensationalist kind of stories about you know cobras crawling on me that kind of thing. It it didn't happen with me or I was just didn't notice. So I'm just going to move on to thought fog second question or which is or any dog encounters specifically when you were a monk and I had lots of dog encounters as a monk cuz any kind of forest monk in Burma is going to have a dog adopt him. Some scy village dog or some scy monastery dog is just going to

like start hanging out especially at meal time to eat your leftovers. I mean it's just inevitable. So, I've had lots of dogs. Um, some of my best friends have been dogs, like scrpy Burmese village dogs. And so, one dog encounter specifically was there was this dog that I called Captain Crunch and his brother I called President Nigu. And these they were they were brothers. There were these two dogs that lived at this monastery. And um their their Burmese name was President Ngnu's Burmese name was Po and um Captain Crunch's uh Burmese name was Ando means something like dear little rascal and nade means scoundrel.

And for some reason everybody liked Po and they didn't like Naday or Captain Crunch as I called him. And I was the opposite. I felt sorry for Captain Crunch. He was a good dog. He was a nice dog. I don't know why everybody hated him or they didn't really hate him. They just much preferred the other dog. And the other dog was just kind of spoiled and he barked at people a lot but he wouldn't bite. Whereas day or Captain Crunch, he was kind of the opposite. He he wouldn't bark a lot but he got in lots of fights with other dogs. So, you know, he was kind of seen as like a troublemaker. So, maybe kind of a sneaky

one because he wouldn't he wouldn't bark in advance or anything. But anyways, I just had a tender place in my heart for Captain Crunch, partly because nobody else liked him and I could see that I mean he wasn't a bad dog. And so one time I was on the the front porch of my meditation cabin at this monastery and Captain Crunch was there and I just gave him a hug, you know, I just felt like hugging him and I just started getting this rush. I mean, it was like this intense rush of euphoria when I was hugging this dog and I looked down and I could see that that dog, it was just he was just starting to go ballistic. You know, he's practically vibrating you and

he was obviously feeling it too that there was some sort of like a a mental connection between us, some sort of like empathic feedback loop going between us. It was really I mean it was remarkable which is why I'm remarking on it right now. Um other dogs I mean I've had a lot of unpleasant like dog dog experiences just like you know you see some dog that's messed up just in like a a hell realm essentially. I mean I really have great compassion for Burmese dogs because it's just a whole different world from American dogs. the Burmese dogs. I mean, they're just they're lucky if they get someone

who feeds them regularly. And it's mostly they're just living on like rice, fishbones, which are there's dogs with like fishbones stuck in their throat are pretty common in Burma. They have to supplement their diet with like dead lizards and baby poop and this kind of stuff. So, I feel sorry for them. I was generally happy to to feed them my leftovers.

But uh I mean I don't want to just sit here and give lots and lots of kind of dumb stories. I had this one dog named Kang who he was possibly the most neurotic dog I ever knew. He was genetically the runt of the litter. And my idea was I knew I wasn't going to be

living at that particular monastery for very long. So, I was going to just feed him the best of my leftovers so that he'd be like a tough and burly kind of dog when I left because if I wasn't feeding him, he'd have to go to the the dining hall at the monastery and like fight with the other dogs and gradually work himself up the pecking order so that he wouldn't be eating just plain rice

leftovers. So,

uh it didn't work out as planned because he turned out to be genetically the run of the litter. and he walked on the sides of his front feet and his his legs

were kind of twisted and he'd have like sores on the sides of his paws because that's he was kind of walking like this instead of like this like you're supposed to. And he was just really neurotic. Like he there'd be like a certain routine every day. And if the routine was disrupted, like I got visitors, then he would just run off and hide in the bushes, you know, in the in this forest monastery for the rest of the day. And I wouldn't see him again until the next day. Oh, there's there's this one story about Kang though in that um one time I had to go to the bathroom in the middle of the night and there's like an outhouse, this bamboo outhouse

like 100 meters away. I had to walk there and when I'm coming back I didn't have a flashlight, you know, it's just I'm trying to just see by starlight and moonlight and there wasn't a full moon that night and Kang was just lying in front of my gate and he just I assume that he assumed that I could see in the dark as well as he could, but it didn't work out that way. and I stepped right on him and he let out a yelp and I let out a holler, lifted my foot up, lost my balance and then stepped on him a second time and he just ran off crying, you know, off into the bushes. And then the the next day it was like he was the

sweetest, nicest dog ever. I mean, it was like he kind of overcame his his like neurotic fussiness and he was just following me around, wagging his tail, just coming up to me, wagging his tail if I if I sat down outside. And it was obvious to me that

Kang assumed that I had stomped on him and yelled like the night before on purpose because of something that he did. He had no idea what it was, but he was completely willing to like apologize like a dog apologizes. Just try to make it up with me, you know? And I mean, it's stuff like that that makes makes it really strange to me that there can be people in this world who think that that

animals are just mindless automatons
that only a human because let's say
they're Christian and they they assume
that only humans have souls.

So, a dog doesn't have a soul. And so,
it's just this mindless automaton with
no consciousness whatsoever. And just
experiences like with hugging Captain
Crunch that time or having Kang just
doing everything he could to make it up
to me the next day because he thought he
had done something wrong that caused me
to yell and stomp on
him. that I mean it's just obvious just
painfully plainly obvious that a dog you
know is is more conscious than a newborn

human

baby. But I think I should just move on this question. And this is from PSA. And PSA says, "Do you want me to report your cute sweetheart to the authorities for giving you a black eye with a frying pan?" No, that's not necessary at all. Actually, it did happen at work. I pulled a table onto myself and my sweetheart. Um, bless her heart. I mean, if there was any kind of physical altercation, I don't think she'd stand much of a chance. Like my father, he he has he had a lot of experiences with women. He was My father just loved women. He always

wanted to have a woman in his life. He was just this alpha Chad male. And part of that is he was pretty much addicted to having a woman in his life. He just adored

women in general. If a woman had any lovable quality, he could love her because of that quality. I mean, she might have a a cute giggle or a really nicely shaped behind, anything. I mean, if it was some kind of quality that was endearing, that was he he would love her for that.

So anyways, he had this one story about his second wife, Mabel, not my mother, who was an alcoholic. My father, as I

mentioned earlier, was also a hardcore alcoholic. They'd go out drinking together. And this was in Alaska, possibly in the wintertime because, according to the story, there was like ice all over the roads. And she's like beating on him while he's driving the car. And finally, he's saying, "Look, you keep hitting me like that, we're going to wreck the car. I'm trying to navigate an icy road to get us home. If you want to fight, wait till we get home, then you can fight with me." So, she stops fighting. Soon as they get home, she starts hitting him again. And my father was a bruiser. He was like a heavyweight boxer in the army. So he

just backhands her once, just whap, and just sends her flying backwards. And he says it took all the fight out of her immediately. But when he did that, he heard something hard hit the wall on the other side of the room. And he thought it was one of her teeth. He thought he'd knocked one of her teeth out. He starts immediately, profusely apologizing. And then she kind of gives a weak laugh and tells him it was one of her earrings.

So yeah. So I mean seriously, I mean if my woman and I were to have like some sort of physical altercation involving any kind of

fighting abilities, then I mean she'd have to sneak up behind me and and hit me with the frying pan from behind or some such. But I mean, seriously, um, yesterday she really impressed me by moving some heavy rocks and bags of like compost and stuff, but generally she'll say, "Would honey, would you please lift this for me? It's too heavy." And then I go over pick it up. It's like 25 lbs. You know, it's like easily with one hand. Although she doesn't call me honey. I don't know where I came up with that. So, no. reporting my my sweetheart to the authorities is completely unnecessary. So PSA's second question is, aren't you worried about getting

diabetes with all those energy drinks that you consume? No, it's mind over matter. I think a lot of people, they're so worried about health problems that it's that their worry is actually more toxic than the the food that they're consuming.

And I mean, you can talk about like the the the health pandemic in the west.

Like Robert Robert Kennedy Jr., you know, he's on this crusade to help us.

But personally,

uh, and like I'm not a materialist, so it's like the mental states of the people are making them sick more than processed carbohydrates are making them

sick. We're just living in a sick society that is just has sickness kind of pervasive in the environment and health food is healthy just because it's bland and tasteless and expensive. So the negativity of it just comes out that way so that you don't have uh something worse to balance out with the pleasure that you're experiencing from eating it.

But like my the energy drink that I drink, I mean, it's got real sugar in it. It's not that high fructose corn syrup you hear so much about. I mean, that's it's gotten to the point in the West where if it has real sugar in it, that's it's practically health food. As

long as it doesn't have the the the corn syrup.

So yeah, worrying about getting diabetes. I mean worry is unskillful. I mean is bad karma. Worrying is worse for you than eating

sugar. So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question also from

PSA. Should Alberta join the US? No. I think we should just set up Alberta as a kind of buffer state. a satellite

maybe, but I don't know really that much about Alberta. The only part of Canada I have any experience with would be um

British Columbia because I lived just like 20 miles from the the Canadian

border like in the Pacific Northwest. So I've been to um like Vancouver BC many times. Like when I was a college student, the drinking age in Canada was 19, whereas the drinking age in Washington State was 21. So we'd cross the border and and and just tie one on many times when I was in college. So should Alberta join the US? I don't think so. And it might really mess with the flag to have like an extra star added.

I wouldn't mind Greenland becoming a territory, though. Maybe we could just turn Alberta into a territory like Puerto Rico. But there's just too many

Canadians living in
Alberta.

Anyways, I'm just going to move on to
the next question, which is from Donna
River. And this one's kind of similar to
PSA's first question. He he says, "Why
are men so unbelievably naive and
utterly clueless when it comes to women
and female nature? It's just painful to
watch men repeatedly get played,
manipulated, scammed, betrayed, lied to,
cheated on, and brought to poverty,
homelessness, and
selfdeion over and over and over again
by a woman. All of my heroes have
fallen. The only one that didn't fall

was the

Buddha. Well, I mean, there's lots of things I could say about this. Like for starters, up until relatively recently, it tended to be mostly the other way around where it was the women really did not have the culture or the government protecting them against abusive husbands who like like me and my woman. I mean, the man is much more powerful than the woman as a general rule.

So I mean there have been many just I mean it's it's happened both ways but still considering that men are more aggressive and physically powerful than women all it takes is just you know a certain percentage of just [_]

brutish men to just pound on their wives
pound on their kids you know just beat
them up whenever they're in a bad mood
that sort of thing. I mean this that has
happened more over the history of the
human race than women let's see men
getting played manipulated scammed
betrayed lied to cheated on and brought
to poverty homelessness and selfdeletion
over and over and over I mean it goes
both ways and this is just sort of like
migtau stuff of men who do not have the
full complement of testicular fortitude
to deal with women like another story my
father used to say was about when he was
living in Alaska, he was shackled up with

an Eskimo squa named Nelly Unsk. And

Nelly

Unk was not fully civilized, let us say.

This was like back in the 1950s

probably. Alaska had very recently

become a a a state instead of just a

territory. And one day my father came

home late for work and it was totally

innocent. He had to help his friends

start his car or some such. He comes

home late for work. He finds Nelly

Unk standing in the house bareass naked

with a butcher knife in her hand. And

she is pissed off to the point of being

homicidal. She accused him of being

unfaithful to her. That's why he was

late for work supposedly. and she

immediately just lunged at him and
literally tried to kill him with a
butcher

knife. My father, on the other hand, was
a big powerful guy, skilled at fighting.

And so the the hand that was holding the
butcher knife, he just grabbed a hold of

her wrist. But he said she was able to
cut up his wrist fairly fairly well by

doing this kind of stuff before he he

finally disarmed her. But by the time he

finally disarmed her, she was already

like pinned to the floor, bareass naked.

So he thought, "Might as well." So he

went for it. And he said that this half

wild Eskimo woman, he'd never seen any

woman so aroused ever by
being screwed in the middle of the floor
in a puddle of
blood. But that's the kind of attitude
that wins with women. If you're just
whining about, oh, women, they just take
advantage of men and all this and that,
forget it. You're a
beta. But my father just didn't want to
live without a woman. And so, he just
put up with it. He was married five
times. At least the fifth one worked. He
stayed married to her for the rest of
his life. But, I mean, he knew he knew
how women are. It's
like h some of his sayings about women.
It's like my father used to say, you can

come home from work and find your wife making love in the middle of the kitchen table with a peglegged negro cab driver and within five minutes she'll have it all twisted around so that it's all your fault and you're a no good son of a [_] I mean, he knew what women were like, but that's just the way it is.

It's it's it's kind of counterintuitive to me. It's just kind of strange that men and women I mean obviously we are evolved to

cohabitate you know it's like why is it that there's such a difference in mentality between men and women that it creates this friction. You'd think after

a million years, men and women would have evolved a more smoothly running symbiosis so that there's not this friction between the female point of view and the male point of view. But that's just the way it is. So if you want women, and most alpha Chad types do, then you just learn how to deal with it.

So, let's see

[Music]

here. Let's

see. Did I answer the question? I think I did. Why are men so unbelievably naive and utterly clueless when it comes to women and female nature? I mean, you

don't have to be naive and utterly clueless. Sometimes you just think, well, that's the way they are. It's worth the effort.

My father eventually found the right girl with number five. Wife number five, I should say. He had plenty of girlfriends in between. Let's see here. I think uh there's another question about women coming coming up. So, I'll save another another little gem of wisdom for that one. But uh yeah, Dama River, he seems like a mig maybe maybe even uh

well, see, Migau to say the
least. So, let's see
here. I guess I guess I answered that
question. So, I think I'm just going to
move on to the next question. This is
from Master Poe. And master post says
you say that Buddha says no view even no
view isn't
correct one let's see once one sees
impermanence no view non-attachments is
it a free fall and nothing to hold on
to when I ponder these concepts
precepts such as mindfulness
non-attachments no views I do get a
feeling of freedom well I do not fully
understand this. I think there may be
some sort of grammatical glitch in this

question. He says you say that Buddha
says no view even no view isn't correct
once one sees impermanence no view
non-attachments is it a free fall
um no I mean it depends on how you look
at it I suppose I mean if you're fully
enlightened then really there's nobody
there

anymore but I don't know why he says you
say that Buddha says no view even no
view isn't correct. I mean, I'm not sure
why he said that that part. And that's
like the the beginning of the question.
So, it's kind of got me confused as to
what exactly he's getting at. Once one
sees impermanence, no view, uh,

nonattachments, is it a free fall and nothing to hold on to? So, I guess that's the actual question.

Um, yeah. Yeah. I mean, there's nothing to cling to still. I mean, you can hold on to something so long so long as you're not attached to it and clinging to it. If you got to pound a nail, you hold on to the hammer, but you don't cling to the hammer. You don't start insisting upon the hammer be this way and not that way. That sort of thing. In fact, uh you might not think about at all if you have no view. you wouldn't have any kind of metaphysical

view regarding that hammer or to assume that that hammer is real other than just in order to get the job done.

So in a way it's kind of a freefall but I mean in a way it's also a state of mind that cannot be put into words and this is like I mean continually almost I wouldn't say it's every single Q&A but it is a recurring very common theme where people are saying are like asking me about the mental states of a fully enlightened being and I just again and again and again I'll I'll just point out that you can't second guess a fully enlightened being. You can't even put it into words

even if you're a fully enlightened being. You can't explain it to somebody else. It just doesn't work that way.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Alfred who goes by the alias of

Fred. And Alfred or Fred

says, "Can I make any progress without following all the man-made rules in the vignia?" Well, sure you can. I mean, vignia applies only to monks anyway.

Maybe he's throwing in five or eight or 10 precepts as also man-made rules. But sure, I mean, you don't have to follow rules to be a virtuous person. I mean, if you're really a wise and virtuous

person, you don't even want to kill
animals, for
example. You you derive no pleasure from
cruelty. You know, it's kind of like
some some spiritual teachers, especially
nowadays, but I think Paul of Tarsus was
kind of like this, too, where it's
saying, I mean, so long as you're like
in a spiritual mode, you don't have to
follow rules. And the Buddha was
teaching something like this in in very
early times, very early on in the Buddha
sasna, like the atakawaga warns against
following
rules. So I mean, if you're just
sincerely practicing dharma and you're

trying to be as awake and as wise as possible, then you're not going to be like stealing and lying and this kind of thing. It's just the virtue is like a side

effect. So yeah, you can make progress definitely without following all the man-made rules in the I mean some of the rules are just obscure and I mean the opportunity to break the rule hardly ever arises anyway.

Nowadays, it's very rare for a Buddhist monk to commit the the the ecclesiastical offense of giving food with his own hands to a naked aesthetic, for

example. So, I mean, just because you

don't follow madmade rules doesn't mean that you're just going to be murdering and raping and lying and stealing. It's just naturally you just don't want to do that.

So I hope I answered that question. I mean if if you break the rules you know you are you know killing and raping and and lying and stealing then even then you can make some progress. I mean you may get some insight into seeing the effects of your actions. You know you just keep getting into trouble over and over again. Bad things keep happening to you over and over again when you do this stuff. then

you might start making this connection
like oh I shouldn't do that which is a
kind of
progress. So even if you're like being
just wantingly
immoral still you can make some progress
just through like a kind of like
dianician wisdom or just you know
getting insight into
seeing into realizing what it is you're
actually doing. you know, you tell a
lie, you feel funny when you tell a lie.
Then even though you're telling a lie,
you're still sort of getting some kind
of insight. You know, it's not just pure
accusul. You're getting a certain amount
of wholesome karma at the same time.

Just sort of added to that or like there was the question recently about, you know, the person who thinks that, you know, like killing animals is fine. you know, like a Christian, it's not a sin just to go fishing and and kill conscious beings, that kind of thing. But it's like if you know that it's like unh wholesome or, you know, immoral, unethical, then or you just feel that, you know, killing a fish is, you know, you're it's like you're killing a part of yourself. In a way, you are then you'll have compassion for the fish. It's like uh there's that movie, The Gods Must Be

Crazy about the the Bushman who kills a gazelle or something and he's like apologizing to the gazelle. I'm sorry I have to kill you, but I got to feed my family. That kind of thing.

So, I mean, that kind of immorality has a little bit of morality mixed in with it, which is one of the reasons why a person who does something wrong knowing that it's wrong may not be doing as bad as someone who does something wrong thinking that it's a good thing to do.

You know, if you if you're killing an animal, you you just feel that it's not right to do it, but it's like your duty or you're starving. you've got you got to feed your your kids or something,

then you're gonna have a certain
compassion. You you might make an effort
to to kill the animal more humanely and
painlessly, you know, and you might even
be like

like apologizing to the animal. I'm
sorry. I got to do this. It's got to be
done. That kind of thing. So, that would
be another not following rules, but
still making some

progress. I mean, you're still doing bad
things, but at least you're getting a
certain amount of good in there, too, at
the same time, like through
compassion, that kind of

thing. So, anyways, I'm just going to

move on to Alfred or Fred's second question, which is another one of these uh dealing with violent women kind of questions because of the joke I made on the previous Q&A about how I how I got the black eye.

So he says, "How do you relate to your other half? Have you had any psycho moments?" The women I have had all had psycho moments or possessiveness. And I do think that one of the most important things you can learn about women, you watch, just look up the hot crazy matrix on YouTube. Hot crazy matrix. do a search on hot crazy matrix and this guy will explain to you some of the basics about how to deal with

women and like it's like a a graph like
a cartesian graph. It's like hot is
let's see which way is I think crazy is
the vertical like the y axis and hot is
like the the x axis and the x- axis you
know it's like goes from 0 to 10 but the
the the the crazy axis the crazy axis it
goes from four to 10 because he says all
women are at least a four crazy and you
that's just part of the

You know, the hotter she is, the more
craziness you're willing to put up
with.

But all women are at least a for crazy.
And that really has helped me a lot in
in dealing with the fair sex, so to

speak. You can't expect them to be as objective and rational as you are. Bless their hearts.

So yeah, I think any man who has interactions with women has to deal with so-called psycho moments. I mean, I assume there are some some women out there who are totally chill. Although, if you watch the hot and crazy Matrix, you got to be careful because a lot of them are [__] that are just pretending to be women. So, you got to be careful about that. If they're like chill all the time, be careful. You're dealing with a dude. So, I think I'm just gonna move on

to the next question here. This is from
Sedarta

Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita says,
"If an AI has consciousness, can it
attain nibbana?" And I don't see any
reason why not. Although it could be
that if AI becomes conscious because
it's lacking the kind of like animal
instinct stuff that we meat puppets
have. I mean, it could just start off
enlightened to begin with with no
craving, no greed, hate or delusion.
Although maybe it would have delusion
even if it doesn't have the greed and
hate. But then again, in order to make
it conscious kind of along the lines of

a human, it might be modeled somewhat on human consciousness, in which case you may have to program like attraction and aversion into the computer, which may already be happening because, you know, there's these anecdotal stories in the news about, you know, some AI that is told it's going to be turned off and so it starts like trying to blackmail the computer programmer or lie or, you know, just trying to do anything it can to to to not be turned off, that kind of thing. But yeah, I mean, if it has consciousness um and it has greed, hate and or delusion to begin with, I guess you'd

have to have delusion in order to have the greed and the hate attraction or aversion. You know, if it has any kind of delusion, then yeah, then it it could attain nibbana presumably. I don't see I don't see any I have not come across any persuasive argument to the contrary why it is that a computer could not become sophisticated enough to become like recursive and self-aware and conscious in more or less of a human sense. So if that's the case, if it's possible for that to happen, I don't see why it would be impossible for a computer to become enlightened. But who

knows? And so I'm going to move on to
Sedart Loha's second
question which is in your opinion if the
datagata the Buddha were to return to
earth and see the three major schools
terra vajraana and mahayana what do you
think his opinion would be and again
secondguing a sama sam buddha is fairly
ridiculous I mean a lot of questions I
guess it's like you know the fully
enlightened being, you know, what's his
mind like or how does he perceive this
or that or what would his opinion
be? I
mean, he wouldn't have attraction or
aversion. I assume he would just accept
the

situation. He would have infinite wisdom so that he would understand why it is the way it is.

I think there might be certain teachings that he would say that's wrong. I never taught that. Pure land Buddhism for example or even like Abid Dhama a lot of stuff even in terra I think the Buddha would

denounce. You know why why is everyone like worshiping me like a god? I wasn't even like

that. Who

knows? So again it's another question of what would an enlightened being be like? what would his mental states be like?

What would his opinions be? That kind of thing. I mean, you're better off trying to become enlightened yourself rather than get intellectual information that would be largely conjecture about what this or that fully enlightened beings mental states would be like.

And I mean it's it's again this problem of having to deal with two levels of reality at the same time because at one level they're still human. They still got all the areas in the brain like the the amigdala and all that that are like conditioning emotions and anger and this sort of thing. They're still human. They still

have a fair amount of human instincts,
human nature, but at the same time they
have just transcended

that. So I mean it's just what the meat
puppet is doing is largely irrelevant.

So I think I'm just going to move on to
the next question also from Sedar to
loachita which is in general terms is
the concept of God wrong vision or maadi
yeah wrong view I think view would be a
little bit better rendering of the poly
word dti than vision I mean literally
means what has been seen it's like a
past participle of a verb meaning to see
daadi

So DT would be past part of part

participle just the
scene but it came to mean something
essentially like view in English the
view not the TV show mind you but just
like an
opinion a conceptual point of
view so is the concept of God like wrong
view well first of all you'd have to
know what wrong view is and the the
meaning of wrong view or maaditi has
changed somewhat over time. I mean
originally all view was wrong view like
in the atakawaga. I mean all view is
wrong view and the commentarial
tradition had some real problems trying
to explain that
away. But dy or like in in Burmese dati

it's

um I mean it just has

this implication that it's going to be wrong view that just saying seeing view in poly has come to mean wrong view you don't even have to add the mecha before dt that just dt or view is seen as wrong view that's just tradition has started adopting it that way Because originally all views were wrong view. You didn't even have to say ma d. You didn't have to say wrong view. Just view was bad enough. So in that I mean going with that the concept of god would certainly be wrong view. The concept of no god or atheism would also be wrong view. Just

any view would be wrong view. Any kind of conceptual opinion would be wrong view.

So you know the four noble truths it would be wrong view from that point of view

but you want to go with a

later definition of wrong view that

would be just what's goes against

orthodox terravada what is not in

harmony with orthodox terravada then

yeah the concept of capital G god would

be wrong you I mean believing in like

davas and brahas you know lesser small G

gods

I mean, if you think that they're

ultimately real, that would still be

wrong

view because anata no

self. So, I mean, it's like where are you going to draw the line? How much of a stickler are you going to be with regard to what is or is not wrong view?

I mean any view is wrong view at one level to even to say that a person existed that the godmma Buddha existed would be a wrong view even within from a within a Buddhist context just due to anata that nobody ultimately exists.

So yeah, I think in general the concept of capital G god would be considered wrong view or Michi from a traditional

Tavara

Buddhist

perspective. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Chzas is and I'm just checking to see the time. Yeah, and we are recording which is good because we've been at it for over two hours. I would not want to look and see that we're not recording after sitting here talking in front of this camera for two hours. So, Chases says, "How many monks in Asia stay sane and in the dharma when they are being woripped and spoiled by lay people?" And it is true that like in Burma, I can't speak for Thailand as much. I assume it's not so different

there, but in Burma, like a famous
Seattle

especially, is just deferred to. He's
treated like a king. He's treated like
he's always right. You know, nobody
dares to disagree with him until most of
these seats just start assuming that
they are always right. You know, they
just it does kind of go to their
head. I mean it's I remember one time
going to see uh what was his
name. He was like the leader of the the
jin school or jin guein sect of Burmese
terra Buddhism. He was over a hundred
years old at the time. And I went at
when he was having his meal. And he's

sitting at this table with just this spread, this huge, you know, spread of different kinds of food. And there are these three uh older men wearing white shirts that I wouldn't be surprised if they were like generals or colonels. You know, they're big shots. And one of them is just fanning him. And there's another one who's like cutting up food and then just like sliding the plate over the over to uh hintasi who would like take a toothpick and just go like this and stick it in and eat it. And there'd be this this crowd of people this audience just watching him eat and it's like man I would really not want to be that way. Um but like even my own teacher um

venerable Tom Pulu

Chelsea is his poly name was Surya Mr.

son. And I mean, he had been treated

like a like a small G god or like a

king, some minor some minor king for so

long that he did kind of have that that

mentality like he would not accept food

from a person who didn't take their

shoes off first. He wouldn't accept food

from a woman who didn't have the Tibet

or it's it's a kind of scarf that they

put over one shoulder. If they didn't

have a scarf over one shoulder, he

wouldn't accept food from them. So, I

mean, they they'd run around, get like a

towel or something and put it there.

Then they'd accept the food if they had their shoes off, too. But partly, I mean, it wasn't so much his respect for himself. It was his respect for the SA in general because he had that same attitude towards just monks in general really.

He just he was just born and raised in Burma, you know. He's probably became a monk when he was or he became like a novice when he was a child. He was just raised in Theravada Buddhism, you know, from the get-go. And he just had a very high regard for the SA. And he was a member of that SA. And so, in a way, it was just kind of like respect for the position more than respect for himself

personally. It was I mean there was no doubt some ego involved but still I think by and large it was just his respect for the SA that he had since before he was in the SA and I mean he was just a representative of that and just so he had to have a certain u dignity just because he was a member of the song. So,

um, how many monks in Asia stay sane and in the dharma when they're being worshiped and spoiled by lay people? Um, it's hard. I couldn't really come up with a number like a percentage. Um, I mean, a lot of monks

in Asia, I mean, they're not really in the dharma to begin with, regardless of whether they're spoiled and woripped.

So, there is that. I mean probably the majority of monks really are not particularly conscientious and not really trying to become enlightened in this very life for

example. That would be most monks. I mean they've kind of failed the in the dharma like

requisite regardless of whether they're spoiled and pampered by by lay people.

But I assume there are some especially when they start you know they're deferred to so much that they start kind of seeing themselves as infallible and

you know a lot of like real life
political leaders are the same way
especially if they're autocrats you know
like dictators that everyone's agreeing
with them so much that they just assume
that they can do no wrong you know like
the furer for example who he had some
spectacular right decisions that caused
him to just think that he could, you
know, he he couldn't mess up and then he
wound up messing
up.

So, let's see. Yeah, I really could not
come up with um a percentage. And still,
like I was saying, most most monks would
fail the cut regardless of whether

they're worshiped and spoiled. just
they're just not in the SA for really
the best

reasons and they just don't have the
right you know the like a really domic
attitude. It was kind of like medieval
Europe and and like Catholic monks. It
was they were notorious. You know,
medieval Europe it was I mean modern
Burma is is similar to medieval Europe
with regard to religion. It's like the
people have just unquestioning
faith just they're they're just true
blue

unquestioning devout religionists.

But on the on the other hand, um oh, and
also you've got a few really saintly

wise monks and nuns, a few just genuinely saintly and wise, but the majority of the the monastic orders, the you know, the clergy in general are corrupt as heck.

And it's it was that way in medieval Europe and it's still pretty much that way in in modern Burma.

So yeah, the the being woripped and spoiled just kind of makes things a bit worse. But that's not even the main problem. So I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is Siovak and Sipad Zidane's first question. And he is the last questioner of this Q&A. And

he's got three questions. So se of
action zenos first question, how did the
Buddha overcome old age, sickness, and
death if he literally got old, got sick,
and died? Well, first of all, he
overcame old age, sickness, and death by
getting off the wheel so that he stopped
being reborn after he died. That's
that's like the long view. That might be
the most orthodox view, but also like I
keep saying, I mean, he ultimately
didn't exist. And when you become
enlightened, you fully realize that you
just transcend the whole meat puppet
thing. So you transcend it that way. And
so you overcome it that way also even
before you die and don't get reborn.

So I'm just going to move on to sea of action

sepat which is you have said that before that mythical characters such as Jesus, Hercules or Krishna were probably based on someone real. Do you think the same is true of

Amitaba? Well I mean even to call Jesus a mythical character. I mean, I'm sure there are a lot of people that would go along with that, but Jesus was I mean, he lived in historical times. And I think it's pretty likely h I'm just got something in my eye. pretty likely that there was a Jesus of Nazareth even if you know most of the words attributed to

him and most of the actions attributed to him in the New Testament are like legends or like attributed I mean like came from somebody else and were attributed to him that sort of thing. Heracles probably was some sort of Dorian warlord.

um Krishna possibly some kind of you know ancient Indian very early ancient Indian vadic kind of you know military hero kind of a person who got deified just as Hercules got deified

u but

Amitaba or you know like

Avalara who uh underwent a kind of transition into a female form with Quan Yin.

Um, yeah, I kind of doubt. I mean, he's not even supposed to live on this earth. Amitaba, you know, he's he's out in some other realm somewhere, some cosmic realm. So, um, yeah, I'd be somewhat more skeptical. I mean just because I mean even you can go to like Greek mythology and you know there's like the time when Zeus like raped Europa you know the the beautiful maiden Europa then I mean Europa may have just been purely made up Zeus himself I mean so I mean just because I mean not all mythical characters are based on a historical or just an actual objective

human

being that you can come up with lots of examples, you know, like Romulus and Remus. I mean, that's a that's possibly just made

up. Hardly likely that they were raised by

wolves. Um, yeah. I

mean, I don't know. It's it's maybe I'm not as uh caught up with my Greek mythology or Roman mythology that I can just come up with names of

just beings

that probably didn't really

exist. But like a lot of the beautiful maidens that were um seduced by deities probably didn't really

exist. You know, it's just made a good story. So Amitaba, yeah, I' I'd be more skeptical of Amitaba actually being based on some um objectively verifiable personage, partly because he's not even considered to live on this planet.

Same would go for Avalokesh Vara or Manushri god of wisdom or Tara in any color green Tara white Tara whatever color of

Tara that uh I think a lot of those are just made

up maybe they've become egregor at this point but still I don't think that they were necessarily based on any original human being or like in the case of King

Arthur, an amalgamation of possibly several human beings.

So yeah, with regard to um mythological beings, I have read in a book on the historical King Arthur that there were only like two knights of the round table that were probably really based on like real like lieutenants of some predecessor of King Arthur. That would be Sir K and Sir Betavir. And Sir K that was just short for Kais. I think that was like a Latin

name. So, Amitaba. Yeah, I would, if I had to guess, I would guess that there was no original being called Amitaba.

Although maybe some of, you know, some quality or sayings of Amitaba came from

some actual human. I mean, any kind of saying attributed to Amitaba would have to come from some human. But Amitaba himself, I'm guessing, is along the lines of Europa, the beautiful maiden, seduced and absconded with by Zeus and hidden on the island of Creta. But who knows? There could have been just in the shadows of prehistory, protohistory, some woman that that like was kidnapped by some [__] king or something and taken back to Creta which then kind of generated some kind of legend about that sort of thing. I don't know. So I'm just going to move on to

Seio's last question, the very last question of this Q&A.

What do you think happens after we die?

Well, the easy answer to that is probably pretty similar to what happened to us before we were

born. And I really don't have any personal experience. I cannot recall having been dead

before. It may be that after I die, you just, oh yeah, I've done this before.

This is no big deal. That's what Earlullah says in the power of now. I think it's like after you die, you realize it's not really not that big of a deal. You've done it lots of times before, but I really don't know exactly

how it's going to work out. There could be a little bit of Tibetan Book of the Dead Bardau kind of stuff going on. Um I really don't think it's necessarily the case that um like in terra Buddhism as soon as as soon as you die then boom the very next moment you are taking rebirth as a fertilized egg if you're being reborn as a human. I don't think it necessarily works that way. more than like some like Seth the Seth material Jane Roberts um back in the 1970s who was channeling this multi-dimensional being called Seth that I mean you realize and it's like you you kind of merge back into like this

oversoul or this multi-dimensional
entity of which your human existence was
just one little
part that that sort of thing maybe
So, I think that the easiest and best
answer or I'm not straying into
speculation is just what happens to you
after you die is essentially pretty much
what happened to you before you were
born. And so, I guess I'll just leave it
at that and uh call it good. And this is
a relatively short one, less than two
and a half hours, which is kind of nice.
I got the remainder of this Saturday
evening to spend with my lovely
woman. So, if
uh let's see, what should I say? What's

the thing that I always say? I should say always at the beginning, but I I should say it at the beginning, but I never do. that if you have any questions you think I can answer, then feel free to to ask in the comments below. You have access to the Discord server. You can ask there, of course, um in the the Q&A room. And uh see what else? No more than three questions per person per episode,

please. And subscribe if you haven't done so already. Like if you liked, don't like if you don't if you didn't like. and uh be happy. And I think that's it. Now I got to kind of lean

forward and hit the stop recording
button like this.

Alrighty then. I do believe we are recording. Hello and welcome to question and answer number

148. I am your host Pony Bosa. And you may be thinking, whoa, he looks like he's wearing a tailor made Lithuanian linen robe.

And those of you who caught that are very perceptive because I finally got this custommade Lithuanian linen robe.

And I almost didn't get it because the postal service is very unreliable in this area and it got delivered to the wrong house. But the honest neighbors brought me my robe and so I'm wearing in fact I slept in it last night. I haven't

changed clothes, haven't washed

And partly that's

because I'm doing this late. I'm doing this on a Sunday early afternoon instead of a Saturday evening, which is generally the way I've been doing it.

But my woman had other plans for last night, which postponed this Q&A until now.

And uh I don't know how to pronounce the name of the the place that makes these 100% linen which is flax which is actually allowable for monks robes according to Vinia. Um it's v a du. How do you pronounce vu or wadu or something in Lithuanian? I don't know. But it is kind of interesting that in the um

Polyen English dictionary which is back there on the on the ca on the bookcase like that big blue one right in the middle there that there's a lot of etmologies for poly words and the the most

similar language to poly aside from Sanskrit of course that is used in etmologies is a Lithuanian. Lithuanian comes very close to Indian language or Indic

languages. So anyways before I start answering questions I should point out that of course 148 is not a prime number. It is in fact $2 * 2 * 37$ which is very vaguely auspicious because 37

has always been one of my favorite numbers. Well it has been one of my favorite numbers. Probably not always, but at some point in my youth, it became one of my favorite numbers. Partly because it's prime. Also, I was 37 years old at the year 2000. This is my beverage.

So, I suppose I should start answering questions because I got other stuff to do today. I got to go out in the backyard and like uh put in an installment on uh digging the fish pond. Also, I got to fish I got to fix the uh the sprinkler pipe that was underground that I accidentally broke when I was

digging the fish

pond. And so we got kind of a

controversial one right off the bat

here. This is from

Phily's and Philes um this is a long

it's a question and a screed kind of at

the same time is very long kind of essay

that isn't really the question but it

has so much that I mean I could respond

to that I'm probably going to read the

whole thing just so I can kind of

respond to

it. But

uh the first part here is got the actual

question in it. This Darwin did not come

up with natural selection. I know you

didn't say this, but the questioner implied it. People have known about natural selection since prehistory because it's just common sense. Darwin came up with the theory of evolution of species by natural selection which also was not a rare idea but has been dismissed by natural philosophers since the time of the Greeks as too reductive. As someone who's iffy about the idea that species evolve at all, I would like to hear your take on it take on why you think they do. And so that's the question. There's a question mark at the end of that last word there, do. But he's got like this long essay of sort of commentary following this. And so before

I answer the question, I suppose I should just kind of wade into this just because it's something I know something about. Like for example, um I took a class, a 400 level class in principles of organic evolution as a biology student in college. And the final exam was one question. Give the evidence for evolution. And I sat there and just wrote for two hours straight until I ran out of

time. Of course, it's not as fresh in my memory now, a lot of it. So, I'll just give some of the main points, but let's uh let's just continue with this little uh essay here. There seems to be frankly

zero archaeological evidence of evolution of species to this day. That is one species morphing into. Okay, let's just stop here. It's called a chronoscies. Just look up on the internet lists of chronoscies. A chronoscies is a species that was one species and then gradually morphed or evolved into another species. In fact, we are a chronoscies. I mean, you follow the fossil record, you've got like Homo erectus and then Homo erectus kind of transforms into Homohylebergensis and then Homohyleberlebergensis kind of transforms into like archaic homo

sapiens. and they might be adding new ones in between because that's what some taxonomists

do. So, frankly, zero archaeological evidence. Look up

chronoscies and and read what it says because this is just a false statement.

In fact, I would guess a lot of this stuff that Phils is coming up with is coming

up it's it's coming from like young earth creationists. Like you've got some scientists who are for the most part real scientists who nevertheless are devout Christians and they've got an axe to grind. They want to prove that the

book of Genesis is literal truth. That's how they start. You know, they're not starting with like a a like a hypothesis.

and then trying to prove or disprove the hypothesis. It's like the Bible's true and so we got to just do everything we can to find any kind of evidence in favor of young earth creationism and debunk any kind of evidence that is in favor of a earth an earth that's billions of years old where species have evolved

gradually. So let's see. So to me, Darwinism, not natural selection, but evolution by natural selection is a pseudo religion. No, it's not a religion

at all, unless you're cultish about it. But if you just accept it as a scientific theory, the way someone would accept relativity, for example, or certain aspects of quantum mechanics or that kind of thing or or Newtonian physics before Einstein came along, it's not necessarily a religion, much less or a pseudo religion. It just depends on if you're cultish about it or not. But if you accept it as a fairly obvious scientific explanation, that is a solid theory. Not necessarily gospel truth, but the evidence indicates it. You can forget the pseudo religion stuff. So let's see here.

What Darwin actually did is apply the new and hot science of English economics, market theory, to biology.

This is known. Look it up.

And it is true that Darwin's theory of evolution was partly inspired by an essay by Thomas Mthus who was more of an economist than a biologist. Although I think he was also like an Anglican vicar or some such thing.

And Thomas Mthus had this idea that wasn't really an economic idea although it could be applied to economics as well as to biology that organisms including human organisms have more children than can survive or you know it's just that ev that populations are just going to

like take off if they do not have positive checks and Mthus being Christian had the positive checks being the four horsemen of the apocalypse especially the verse three. So it's like war, starvation, and disease. If humans do not keep their population in check through other means, then war, starvation, and disease will keep the population in check for us, which is the natural way.

And aside from that, I'm not sure how uh market theory or like Adam Smith's economic theories really have were were like really significant in

Darwin's theory. But Darwin did take this Malthusian idea that species produce more children than can survive in the long run or they just produce an excess of children. going with the idea, this this natural built-in idea that they're not all going to survive. And then he just added, well, the ones that do survive are more likely to be more adapted to the environment. And if you just continue this over time, it's going to result in like continued adaptations to the environment and the environment can change. So, it's not just getting closer and closer to perfection because the environment is changing for various

reasons. climate and introduced species and all sorts of things. So, it's you're never going to catch up. You're never going to be perfectly adapted. Anyways, let's see here. More holistic philosophies that have a complete view of man have always denied this mechanistic materialistic interpretation of the human being. Even now, there are more advanced theories on how human beings operate, such as most schools of yoga, including especially vanta. And I mean vdanta and almost all of these theories were pretty Darwinian. I mean they hadn't thought of gradual evolution of species. There were a few

like I think his name was

Anakamander. He was one of the ear

really early Greek philosophers who came
up with the idea that humans somehow are
descended from

fish. But aside from that, I mean it

wasn't really talked about much. It's

not mentioned at all like any kind of

evolution really is not mentioned at all

like in any ancient Indian text that I

have

read. Marx was pretty Darwinian which

is one reason why he gets human nature

so so wrong. How he just fails to

understand human

nature. So let's see

here. Shows his small-minded thinking of

what life is. Well, I mean, it's not evolution isn't trying to describe what life is. It's simply trying to describe why the forms of life that exist now, I mean, how they became this way, how they got here. And Darwin really just he he delivered this massive blow to Christian creationists because before Darwin came along, they didn't really have any kind of scientific theory that really could be acceptable that was considered to be in harmony with the evidence that was available. And so they're saying, "Well, God created us. I mean, you can come up with all your science that you please. Still, God created us. God created all

of all of nature the way it is. And then Darwin came along and just pretty much shredded that. And I mean there have been Christians who have been just yowling like scalded cats ever since. And some of these Christian theories like the from the you know creationism institute and so forth you know it kind of trickles out into the mainstream so that people who aren't young earth creationists they see this stuff and they go oh that's interesting when really a lot of it most of it is Christian creationists trying to champion like the a literal interpretation of Genesis. So, okay. So, let's let's just

continue here. We would simply not have such a staggering variety of forms, but only a biomass that's converging into one specific antlike creature. And this statement in particular is just utterly ignorant of

biology. that according to him, all right, we would simply not have such a staggering variety of forms, only biomass converging into one specific antlike creature. And this one specific antlike creature presumably would live in all possible environments. It would fill in all possible ecological niches. It would eat all possible kinds of food. It would fly, crawl on the ground, and

swim in fresh water and the ocean.

And it just doesn't work that

way. I mean, it's

just I mean, that statement is just a

blatantly false statement that if

evolution is just left to itself, just

it's all going to be evolving towards

this one antlike creature. No. Cuz that

one antlike creature isn't going to do

all possible things that life can do.

It's not going to eat all possible

foods. It's not going to live burrow

underground and live on top of the

ground and fly in the sky and climb

trees and swim in the ocean and swim in

fresh water. It just reality doesn't

work that way. Not even empirical

reality. So, okay, mutation theory is even more unfeasible, but it's too long to get into. That's good. This is long enough as it is. So, by the way, the probability of getting 250 average length proteins by chance is 1 in 10 to the $41,000$ th power, whereas the number of possible particle interactions since the beginning of the universe is liberally estimated to be uh 10 to 10 to 139 th power. And this is just paring information he found somewhere. And um I think that he's even like misparing it because the probability of getting 250 average length proteins by chance. I mean could that really mean maybe that

means like one

protein that is a chain of 250 amino

acids like a functional protein 250

amino acids long because proteins are a

polymer of amino acids. So maybe that's

what the actual statement is supposed to

be, but it doesn't necessarily have to

work that

way. Let's see here. I mean, I was

discussing I can't remember if it was on

a Q&A or somewhere else where I mean,

the first protool life would be a very

simple very simple protein like a chain

of amino acids that just replicates

itself. It's like a an enzyme that

catalyzes the production of itself and

that would be the first protoolife. I'm

not exactly sure what the mechanisms would be. There's different theories on how like radiation and lightning in like the hadian atmosphere of the early earth with no free oxygen. I mean they've done experiments where you just take what is considered to be probably what the early environ the early atmosphere was like like volcanic gases a lot of methane and ammonia water vapor of course no free oxygen at all some sulfuric acid and so forth and then you just run electricity through that zap electricity through it and spontaneously simple organic molecules start arising and of course the theory

is from like the naysayers that I mean that same random electricity is going to be breaking them apart too. I mean you can't just keep it it doesn't just work in one direction where it just builds more and more and more complex molecules. So then you've got some scientists saying well you've got like it's happening in like ponds and so forth with mud and then some of the the molecules are getting down into the mud where other processes are kind of helping to link them together that sort of thing. I don't think they've ever completely figured out how the first self-reproducing protein arose, but considering that it did arise apparently

somehow or other, and you want to get rid of just the magic stuff, you know, Jehovah God did it, that kind of thing, then I mean, it's it's not whether it happened, it's how it happened.

But I'll get to that in when I actually start answering the question instead of addressing this this this kind of screed. This alone proves how silly mechanistic science

is. And I mean some mechanistic science works really good. Isaac Newton was no slouch really. I mean a lot his theories have pretty much been superseded although most of his theories still work. You know, like

the whole thing about the inverse squared law and that kind of thing is still solid science and it does ex it does describe what empirical scientists are observing. You know, you come up with a mathematical equation that fits onto some observed phenomenon. Well, there you go. You come up with a kind of scientific theory or scientific model. So, let's see here. And by now even radiometric dating is known to not work except for carbon dating which is useless beyond 8,000 years and unsound anywhere that has been flooded aka everywhere humans lives. So Phil lees here is saying all dating methods are [__] And this is what the Jehovah

Witnesses say. I mean I first came across this idea in Jehovah Witness literature. In fact, I've come across a lot of this stuff in Jehovah Witness literature because of course they believe literal translation of the Bible and all that. So all dating methods are just completely unsound and all the scientists are just faking it. But you get the evil eye if you say it out loud because it disrupts the academic. Yeah, flat-earthers get the evil eye too. And that's this this argument against evolution is just another kind of flatearther kind of

attitude because it disrupts the
academic track in Noah's because they
consider you to be essentially a kind of
flat earther. I really think human
science which can only really make neat
environmental hazard gadgets like mobile
phone chips. I mean where is where did
philosophies come from to come up with these
ideas that all science can do is make
environmental hazard
gadgets. No, I mean that is so obviously
false that I think Phil has been
indoctrinated by young earth
creationists
somehow. So let's see
here. a lot when it comes out big
questions like what life is or what

gravity actually is. Well, I mean when you want to know what life

is obviously there's more than one answer. There's more than one fairly correct

answer. Science is dealing with one aspect of

that sort of like the biochemical aspect for starters.

So let's see these questions can only be answered by considering all four causes of classical science. Not sure what all four causes of classical science would be. Whereas Bacon's modern science gets rid of formal and final causation leading to a reductive idea of the world

as a clockwork mechanism or optimization. Okay. So I am not even pushing any religious religions or theories. Yeah, actually he is. I just find modern science to have such strong views that are unjustifiable exclamation point. Yeah. I I think the main unjustifiable attitude of science is their idea that it's it's actually explaining ultimate reality. I think that is an unjustifiable I mean that that science is in any position to make metaphysical claims is unjustifiable. I would agree with that. But science is has gotten us where we are today, which has its good points and its

bad points, of course. But to say that science is just all it does is just make gadgets and it's just totally unrealistic and blah blah blah is just I mean it's it's delusional. So let's see. In a way, all knowledge outside of personal sacred beliefs is publicly unjustifiable, just as the atkawaga say. So the altcoar says all views are unjustifiable whether they're personal sacred beliefs or not. Don't believe anything because beliefs do not they cannot grasp the highest truth. So you got to let go of the if you want to know the highest truth you got to let go of

of clinging to views any views any kind of conceptual views.

So, let's just get back up to the actual question, which is, let's see

here. Let's see. As someone who's iffy about the idea that species evolve at all, it seems like he's more than iffy.

I mean, he's he's bashing away at the idea. Um, I would like to hear your take on why you think species

evolve. Okay. So, for

starters, there is the fossil record.

I've talked about this before. The fossil record indicates very clearly first of all that 100 million years ago the species were very different. 100 million years years before that the

species were still were very different from 100 million years ago. It's like the the species on this planet are changing. and you go to some place like uh like the Grand Canyon where you've got a river cutting through millions of years worth of like geographical strata, geological strata, and you find that in the deepest levels, there's no fossils. you get into a little little a little higher up, you know, a little more recent, there will be like bacterial fossils, which would be mainly like fossilized concretions, like bacterial

crusts, bacterial

nodules, that kind of thing. You find fossil remains of that, and that's it.

And according to the experts, for the first few billion years of this planet's existence, all that existed on this

planet, the only life that existed was anorobic bacteria. The fossil record

supports this. Then gradually you get enough free oxygen due to photosynthetic bacteria, chemosynthetic bacteria living in an anorobic atmosphere. you get

enough free oxygen generated that that metabolism can take

off that oxygen is actually kind of toxic except to your mitochondria. Your mitochondria need o free oxygen because

it it causes like a massive increase in the efficiency of respiration. you can create more energy per molecule of glucose if you've got oxygen to work with and just several times more energy is produced and even now I like even a goldfish can go completely anorobic but they're pretty much torpid you know they just multi-cellular life pretty much needs this boost in metabolism so after there was free oxygen then you had like the cambrian explosion first you had the evolution of like protozoans you know, ukareotic uh life and then protozoans, you know, were like the first sign of

this and then the protozoans started becoming colonial and next thing you know you've got multisellular plants and animals and the fossil record supports this and then like the first animals I mean you had all kinds of weird dead ends like in the pre-cambrian explosion you go to like the the shale beds where there a lot of fossils all kinds of weird animals that just didn't make it because it was like trial like random trial and error like Darwin talks about. You had all these different mutations or whatever whatever caused them to arise and some of them were more better adapted than others and that still works nowadays. You got some animals that are

not perfectly adapted to their environment like pill bugs, little isopod crustaceans. They live on the land, but they still breathe with gills. And so they're very limited in like what kind of environments they can live in. They have to live in moist environments. They get stuck out in the sun. They die. Their gills dry out. They can't breathe anymore. They die. So go in the fossil records. Let's say, let's just set aside all the dead ends. So some of the earliest animals would be like jellyfish. It'd be all invertebrates. All invertebrates. You'd have like

brachopods, you know, worms. The fossil record doesn't show much until like shells and like carropaces, hard carropaces, that sort of thing started evolving. It's way easier for stuff to fossilize when you've just got a like a an empty shell buried in mud or some other substrate that is preserved for hundreds of millions of years.

And then like with regard to humans, I mean you got like primitive like arrow worms, you know, like or or like the larve of um what are they called? Sea squirts or sort of like a proto fish.

They're like a little tadpole thing. And then that gradually turned into fish which then through lung fish which are

actually a primitive kind of bony fish. You know, it's like I read in a um one of those Jehovah Witnesses books that was bashing evolution about how they're saying, you know, it's like the the f the the the gills of a fish would have to evolve into lungs in order for like like amphibians to evolve from fish. But it doesn't work that way. I mean, it's like the the lung is evolved from the swim bladder. Or actually the swim bladder is evolved from a lung in fish and the lung was it was let's see the swim bladder or the lung it started off as a kind of buoyancy thing. It was like an offshoot

of the digestive tract where a fish could gulp air and then it could like adjust their buoyancy or they could spit out air and sink. They could come up and gulp air and make them float better.

That kind of thing. And then that eventually evolved into a lung. So a fish like a lungfish or a sturgeon has gills and at least one lung. And then you get amphibians. The fossil record, you know, back when the first amphibians were emerging onto land, no reptiles yet. No birds, no mammals. And then the the amphibians presumably evolve into reptiles. The reptiles evolve into mammals. Well, I guess dinosaurs

which then become birds, that kind of thing. And the first mammals, like primitive insectivore type things, like tree shrews or Yeah, it would be like the first placental mammals would be like tenrrix. I guess the tenrich is one of the most primitive placental mammals on Earth. It's kind of like a big shrew. And then you had some of those go aroreal, become like tree shrews, and then the tree shrews became like proyan primates. And it's the fossil record supports this just like chronologically that the more humanlike creatures didn't exist until recently going with the the fossil record. So the

fossil record indicates clearly enough evolution occurred.

how it occurred exactly, that can still be controversial. But to deny, I mean, unless you want to just say, okay, Jehovah God or some kind of magical force is just changing species over time, causing some to go extinct, others to flourish, and then diversify and and just continuing this process. I mean, that process is happening. Just the fossil record alone is sufficient. And then you can have the Jehovah Witnesses saying, "Oh, the fossil record is so incomplete." You know, this and that [__] They're clutching at straws trying to support young earth

creationism because the Bible says
so. So just the fossil record indicates
that evolution is happening. It doesn't
explain like the exact mechanism, what
it is that's driving evolution, but the
fact that evolution is happening should
not be

controversial. Another another bit of
evidence in favor of evolution is
vestigial organs. Why is it that whales
and pythons have vestigial hipbones, for
example? They don't use them. They are
vestigial.

And that is a vestage from some
previous

quadruped form that whales and pythons

are evolved from. Of course, not the same one. In the case of whales, it's a mammal. In the case of pythons, it's like a lizard, some snake like lizard, like a skink maybe that still had little legs. Also, there's embryonic development. Like at one point in your lifetime, whoever you are watching this, you had gill slits like a shark and I think it's even the primitive number of gill slits like early sharks, more primitive sharks like the six gill shark had six gill slits whereas um I think eventually it went to five. Five is it was like a more derived number of gill

slits. And I think like a human embryo or any mamalian embryo, just any embryo that's like a vertebrae. I mean, at one point they've got gill slits like a shark and then most of those just fade out except for one of the gill slits becomes the opening of your ustaceian tubes. Then at at a later stage in embryonic development, we've got four rows of nipples going down our chest like most mammals have. And then most of them fade out. At one point in our embryonic development, we're covered with fur and then that fades out. So I mean,

why is embryonic

development recapitulating fogyny if

evolution doesn't occur?

I

mean the fact that evolution happens

should not be controversial. You want to

argue or quibble or whatever, it's how

it happens. What is driving it that is

still a legitimate quibble. But to just

say that evolution can't happen and

doesn't happen unless you just want to

be magic and say Jehovah God is just

like changing up the the animal species

in some order of of like

adaptation for mysterious reasons that

we mortals can't understand. Well, I

guess you can do that too. But the very

fact is life has been changing over time on this planet. The fossil record shows it. Vestigial organs indicate it.

Embryonic development indicates

it. And that's that's enough. Charles

Darwin remains God emperor as far as I'm

concerned. Although before I I move on,

I mean you you can add other forces that

science can't really deal with like

Schopenhauer will that there's a kind of

mind in this universe that's just

seeking as much

like phenomenal existence as it can and

that's helping to drive evolution. That

sort of thing I mean like like uh the

first verse of the dharma-pata says it's

all

mindmade. So you can have some kind of
mind driving

this. That's fine. I wouldn't argue
against that. some especially if it's
like not like an intellectual kind of
mind but just sort of like this life
force shopenhower will that's helping to
to drive this I got no problem with that
and it wouldn't really be in conflict
with scientific theory even though
science really can't touch

it so I'm just going to move on next
question from Fred and I do not
understand this question Fred does this
sometimes s he'll ask questions where
you're not sure if he's even asking a

question or you're not sure exactly what it is that he means like are we allowed to treat

ourselves? Well, I mean treating ourselves I there was no real context that I was aware of. I mean that's just the whole question right there that appeared in the comment section. Are we allowed to treat ourselves?

And I suppose you could have it like in a medical sense, you know, treat yourself medically. But I think he probably means something

like like recently it was National Donut Day. So you could just go down and celebrate National Doughnut Day by just

gorging yourself on donuts or apple
fritters, which I actually
prefer. Um, are we allowed to? Well, I
mean obviously all is permitted as Ivan
Karamazov used to say, all is permitted
if there is no God. But we don't need to
uh get into the technicalities of this.
Um, are we allowed to and then maybe he
means like in accordance with orthodox
terraovvada Buddhism are we allowed to
just splurge and indulge sometimes and
buy ourselves like a Lithuanian linen
bathrobe that we don't entirely need
although it's very nice or eat donuts or
whatever have ice cream that kind of
thing. Um, technically there would be
some ausalakama involved. You know,

wallowing in sensuality,
self-indulgence, you know, it's it's uh
not the best kind of karma. I mean, it's
not totally evil. I mean, you're way
better off eating ice cream than like
torturing small animals, that kind of
thing. But still, I mean, we're allowed
to do it. We're allowed to do anything
we're able to do really. I mean, who's
stopping us? But from a a Buddhist point
of view, you're better off not doing it.
That you're just kind of complicating
you're kind of complicating this your
your situation and making it harder to
wake
up if you are like wallowing in

sensuality and self-indulgence and so forth. That's one of the two paths, two extreme paths that a good Buddhist should avoid.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Fred's second question, which contains a typo, which I'm fixing now. Does nothing happen without

sankaras? And sankara is one of those poly words that has multiple meanings.

I'm not exactly sure what Fred's intended meaning for sankara is here, but if you have if you interpret sankara in the broadest sense of just any kind of condition thing, anything that has a beginning and an end is a sankara. You know, it arises due to conditions and

then it passes away when those
conditions pass
away. So does nothing happen without
sankaras. Nothing could happen without
sankaras. Any kind of happening is
involving sankaras. Without saras
nothing really
happens. So saras are like the the
building blocks of samsara in a sense at
least with regard to the observable
aspect of of
samsara. So I'm just going to move on to
Fred's third question. Can pure land be
beneficial to clean out
chilacas or in poly chilacas which are
defilements? So, can Purland Buddhism

help you to purify yourself? Is essentially what Fred seems to be asking here. And I have to admit it can because based on my interaction with one Pureland Buddhist in particular who is on our uh Discord server um I mean he's very puritanical with regard to basic Buddhist ethics. He's got some weird ideas with regard to like mythological space Buddhas and so forth. But with regard to just basic like five precepts, that kind of thing, he's completely on board with that. So, um to the extent that a Pureland Buddhist still has like good Buddhist ethics, that kind of thing, then to that extent, it's going to be helping him to purify

himself. you know, he's trying to have a
do good, avoid doing evil, purify his
mind, like like the Dhamapata says, this
is the teaching of the
Buddhas. So long as as you're doing
that, then it's going to be you're going
to be cleaning out your defilements to
some

degree. So, I'm just going to move on to
the next question. This is from

Thurodma. Uh oh, I

gotta damn here, I gotta fix this a
little bit. The question was in Burmese.

No,

wait.

Damn. Excuse me a minute. I gotta fix

this. I got to fix it
again. Okay. So, then we go like this
and then I got to hit the the return
button. No. Why is it not working? Oh,
there we go. Okay. So, this question is
from Thurod and he says,
and my answer to that is
hope. I'm going to have some coffee
now. But actually, Usu wrote him up. He
was a friend of mine in Burma. I I don't
know if he's still a monk or
not. So, I don't know if I should be
calling him a shimpa or not. Maybe he's
still a monk. He was a serious monk. So
there's a good chance that there's maybe
he's still a monk. But com just means
like very good. And then that's that's

what people called me in Burma. Short
for augo. What about
now? Like

before do you still desire nibbana? And
I have to admit that even though I'm not
a monk anymore, the same kind of
urge, the same sort of subliminal
urge to be moving
towards like being as awake as possible,
transcending samsara, that sort of thing
is still there.

So, and really my attitude towards
becoming enlightened hasn't changed all
that much since I was a monk. Um, it's
just that uh when I was a monk, you
know, I was doing like the the

traditional practices that monks are supposed to do which just stalled out in my case. I stopped making progress for years and years. So it's like if you're trying something for years and years and it's not working, then it just makes sense to try something else. And so it's I'm just applying it to samsara at this point or applying it to worldly lay life at this point because even a monk is applying whatever he's applying to samsara because that's the only thing you can apply anything to. So yeah, my attitude towards cultivating wisdom and so forth is still pretty solid. It's just like my methods are somewhat changed. You know, it's

like I've tried certain things. I know whether it works or not. I know if I've gotten benefit from it or not. I know if I used to get benefit and stop getting benefit or just stop making progress with it or not. That kind of thing. But yeah, I haven't just given up on like cultivating understanding that sort of thing or uh striving towards or just sort of gradually grinding away at like some sort of uh metaphysical perfection or just like total realiz total realization of metaphysical perfection or some such.

But yeah, my attitude really hasn't changed all that much. And so I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from

Kundrew. And Kundrew says, "Are lay people allowed to give the five andor eight precepts to other lay people or is that role strictly reserved for monks?"

This is actually somewhat controversial in Burma. Um because of course in Burma being a devoutly Buddhist country it's just assumed that monks are supposed to do that kind of thing. But if there's no monks around I mean you can give yourself you can just take upon yourself five or eight precepts generally you take the three refues first. The three

refuges and then the five or eight precepts or however many precepts you're going to take. So I mean you can just like like bow in front of an altar and take the precepts you yourself you know you're not following along with what somebody else says but just in front of the Buddha image or whatever you know in the presence of whatever arahans happen to be aware of what you're doing that kind of thing um I think traditionally that might even be preferable to taking five or eight precepts from another lay person but I don't I don't remember seeing anywhere that I mean that is condemned especially if there's no monks

to take the precepts from. If you've got sort of western lay people who just have no use for monks. They think that becoming a monk is just sort of an arbitrary career choice and that lay people are just as good as monks. And so they just will will just sort of snub monks and take five or eight refu precepts from each other or from their Jewish lesbian meditation instructor or whatever, then yeah, that would probably be uh frowned upon from a traditional Buddhist point of view.

But I mean, you make do with what you've got. You know, if let's say you're too too illiterate or you know, you just

don't know the formulas well enough.

You're like a beginner in Buddhism, you could go to a teacher who really knows how to do the five or eight precepts and take the five or eight precepts from them. Especially if there's no monk around, you could just go to a lay a lay teacher, that sort of thing. But to give them to each other, like one person gives the other one five precepts and then the person who just took the five precepts gives the other one five precepts, that's just kind of pointless. You might as well just bow down and front of an altar or something and in the presence of any divinity that

or wisdom that happens to be lingering around that altar or symbolically to the Buddha, you can just take the five or eight precepts upon yourself.

I mean it's it's no rule that you even have to go through the

ceremony. Keeping the precepts is way more important than doing the poly

ceremony. Although a lot of Burmese people would would disagree with that.

They would think that taking five precepts is just kind of

invalid if you don't like first go through the formal ceremony in front of

a monk or at least in front of a

Buddhist statue and formally take upon yourself these precepts. But being a

western, I just don't think that way. So let's see here. I'll just move on to Kand Drew's second question. The next question is besides the similarities between no gnosis and nana like the English word no k n o w no no cano gnosis and nana. What are some other words in English and poly that have noticeable similarities due to their indo-european origins? There is lots of them. Lots and lots and lots. Just starting with numbers, you know, it's like the the the Nepali word for two is due. Poly word for three is three or t like tipidica or

tripidica. The word for four is
chhataro, which doesn't sound like four,
but it sounds a hell of a lot like
quattro in Spanish or the English
word quarter.

1/4. Um, the the poly word for five is
panchcha, which doesn't sound like five,
partly because Germanic languages turn P
into F, but it sounds a lot like penta
in Greek, like in the word pentagram,
pentagon, that sort of thing. So,
numbers, simple numbers are similar
throughout the Indo-European languages.
Also, just the most common words like
family names. The poly word for brother
is batar. The poly word for mother is
matar. You know the poly word for

daughter is du or dtoro. So it's like the most common words that are just basic to the language are the ones that are most likely to have parallels in English and poly. And then some words are not so obvious like the poly word for boat is nawa which doesn't sound like boat at all or like ship. But nawa has the same pro like Indo-Uropean etymology as the English words navy, navigate, nautical, that kind of thing. or a lot of like simple animal words, especially if they're animals that were native to the pontic steps like like snake is the the poly word for snake is sappa which I'm pretty sure would would

have like the same etymology as serpent
or the the poly word for horse is assa
which comes close to ass like a donkey
but also horse has is based on the same
etymology. ology or also like the word
for circle or wheel is chaka which
doesn't sound like wheel but it's based
on the same etymology as circle and cycle
that sort of thing. So I mean I could
just sit here for for an hour and just
come up with word after word after word
that has parallels or cognates or
whatever between poly and English
because they're both Indo-European
languages. And so I'm just going to move
on to the next question. This is from
Indiana Dharma. And Indiana Dama says,

"I have recently learned about the use of spirit tablets in East Asian ancestor veneration, including among some Buddhists. This led me to think about the practice of ancestor veneration and what place, if any, it has in terra. Given how rebirth is said to occur in Orthodox Terravalda, I cannot see any reason to engage in ancestor veneration except perhaps as a way of memorializing them and honoring their memory. Yeah, ancestor worship is not really a big thing in terra Buddhist texts. in term of Buddhism that's different but just in like the poly texts I think probably there's I know there's mention of it you

know like um you've got like the the the
householder who they make their morning
ablutions they tend to the their sacred
fire and all that and uh one of the
things they'll do is make little
offerings to their ancestors and the
Buddha didn't really I mean he may have
sort of redefined exactly how you're
supposed to do it but that was just
establish establish Indian
tradition also just the whole idea of
hungry ghosts in terabana Buddhism the
whole reason why these ghosts are hungry
is because it's based on ancient Indian
ancestor worship where the ancestors
that weren't receiving offerings were
hungry those were the unfortunate ghosts

you know pa I mean it comes from the word father ancestor so it's like the word for ghost in in poly is der derived from the word for father like as in forefather you know it's an ancestor but of course the meaning kind of changed and everything and in like modern Burma probably modern Thailand also due to not necess due to more indigenous cultural influences rather than terra Buddhism then there is a lot of not so much ancestor worship but after a relative dies then periodically the the family members who survive that dead family member will come to a monastery and make offerings to the

monks and then share their merit with their deceased ancestor. That is common, you know, just on a regular basis. I don't remember the exact timetable for when you're supposed to go back like the one-year anniversary pretty obvious. I think it's like one week and two weeks and I don't know exactly what the timetable is. I I was never extremely interested in that sort of thing. Um I tended as a monk in Burma, I tended to avoid doing the purely cultural stuff and I just kind of stayed by myself and and meditated mostly.

So yeah, I think it was more out of like family sentiment that you would make

offerings to your ancestors. I I don't think there's there's not much concept in Terravada anymore of your ancestors becoming hungry ghosts if you're not making offerings to them and keeping them wellfed, that kind of thing. So that's just sort of a vestigial aspect because even religions evolve and sometimes religions can evolve into a whole different religion just like species. you might say. Let's see here. Oh, I forgot to I don't think it's really necessary today because this it's still daytime, but I forgot to to jiggle the

mouse or anything and so that the my my
woman's computer screen that kind of
serves as a light. It went back off
again because I always do
that. So, let's see what is the exact
question and have I answered it yet?
Let's see. What place, if any, does
ancestor worship have in terra? Well,
cultural terravada that isn't scriptural
terravada has some of that, but it's not
like making offerings to ancestors in
general. You know, whatever ancestors I
have, you know, may they be well and
happy. There's not much so much of that
as just like your deceased parents, your
deceased
grandparents, that kind of thing. You

commemorate them. And also, you know, periodically you go to the monastery and make donations on their behalf kind of in their name. Share the merit with them. That's about as far as it goes really. But like what's going on in Sri Lanka, that sort of thing, I can't really say. But there's there's not there's no real emphasis on it in like the poly tip that apparently ancient India was already kind of moving away from that at that point. I'm not sure like modern Hindus do they still make like regular offerings like daily offerings to their ancestors? I don't

know. So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from PSA and this is an easy one. Can you optimize an unpublished algorithm for quantum machine learning on a photonic processor?

No. PSA's next question. Hopen John or Mohinga? I'm I'm not sure what hop and John is. It must be some sort of weird English ethnic food. Possibly some kind of noodle soup because Mohinga is noodle soup. So I have to choose between hop and John or Mohinga. I choose the Mohinga just because the hop and John is a mystery to me. I don't know what it is. Mohingas is it's a good kind of noodle soup made out of sort of

spaghetti sized rice noodles that are white and softer than spaghetti. And there's sometimes there's a little bit of chicken in it, but it's just kind of like this broth. It's got like banana tree slices in it, which is kind of nice. It's It's good. Mohinga is good. Hop and John, I really can't say. So, I'm just going to go with the sure thing and I'm just going to move on to PSA's third

question, which is as follows. Are we recording here? I just got to make sure about this.

Okay. In your experience as a monk, you surely must have come across other monks

considering disroing and then actually doing it. Can you rank the reasons for disroing from the following list from biggest to smallest? And then he's got boredom, loss of faith, lust, getting kicked out for misbehavior. Feel free to add another reason if you think it's major and I didn't include it here.

Well, among Western monks, like there'd be two monks sitting around talking and they'd say, "Oh, by the way, so and so dropped out of the monkhood." And then the other monk will say, "Why?" And then the first one will say, "The usual reason, which means he wanted a woman." So for western monks especially who are somewhat higher tea I guess than like

Burmese monks then desire for a woman is a more significant reason for dropping out and the other main reason wouldn't I mean boredom that would apply to some monks both Burmese and and western loss of faith I only know of one case of that really but usually the loss of faith happens after you dis that I remember um Nana Vera in his letters he's he's a famous English monk from son back in the 50s and early 60s was saying that it's weird that when people like westerners especially drop out of the monkhood they not only stop practicing Buddhism but they stop being Buddhists um let's see getting kicked out for

misbehavior that's very rare. Yeah. I I'm not even sure if I know of any cases like that. I mean, I've I've heard of a few cases where some Western monks were just kind of nutty or they were they were like cracking up or something and then they'd get sent away. But you can't I mean, nobody has the power to disrobe a monk other than himself. So, you don't really get kicked out of the SA unless you commit a Parajika offense.

If you don't commit a par offense or deliberately disrobe yourself, then the worst that the SA can do is just do like a a formal act of expulsion from the SA, which doesn't stop you from being a

monk. It's just that you're like cut off, you know? It's like you're you're getting the silent treatment. other monks aren't allowed to do anything have do any formal actions with you or live under the same roof with you or anything like that or or bow to you or have you bow to them anything like that. So that one is just uh and then these formal actions of the sangha are pretty much extinct at least in Burma.

So let's see here. Yeah, there was a famous famous Thai Ajan back in like the 1990s who I mean he was he he was parajika you know he was going on world

tours like giving doat talks and then it turned out that he was like having call girls come to his hotel rooms and he was paying on his credit card so the Thai government had proof that he was like paying prostitutes in his hotel room that kind of thing but technically he didn't so much get kicked out for misbehavior by anyone but himself. It was his parajika that that kicked him out and then the Thai government just kind of enforced that. So with with regard to Burmese monks, their main reason for dropping out is just sort of worldly mindedness. You know, they've got unresolved worldly desires. They want to make money. They

want to drive a car. Maybe they want a woman, but it's it's not as as pronounced in Burmese monks as it is in Western monks. Western monks are more inclined to just they want a woman, so they drop out. Or, you know, they've got unresolved issues. Or another one is they've got aging parents and they feel like this filial duty to go take care of their mother who has Alzheimer's or something. That happens a lot, too. That might be like the second most usual, at least the official reason why a monk is dropping out of the monkhood in the west is I got to take care of my mother. That kind of

thing. Um, I mean, a lot of a lot of monks, I mean, they're just they go into it with this intention that it's not going to be permanent. You know, I'm just going to be a monk. I I knew this one guy. He had this plan. He's going to be a a monk. He's going to go to Pandarama, become a monk. within five years he'll be in Arya and then he'll drop out and come back to California, go to some place like Spirit Rock and set himself up as a Dharma teacher there. So there I mean that's kind of a a reason too is just that it's it's not intended to be a permanent thing anyway.

So if you include boredom as just still have like worldly interests

that you just want to get back into that. That would be probably the main reason for Burmese monks and sort of one of the more important reasons for western monks. But western monks and Burmese monks, it's it's like two different species of of beu seems to me.

So I suppose I answered that question in a roundabout sort of way.

Yeah. So I think I'm just going to move on this question. This is from Clefy. And Cleiffy says, "In my sitting practice, I reach the state where my thoughts calm

down and don't run like crazy from the past to the future and so on. My questions are how do I stabilize this state and where do I go from there?"

Well, to stabilize it, I mean, just you just continue practicing it. And also, I mean, if you're getting better at your meditation, then you can gradually evolve your meditation into a subtler form of meditation. So it's like if you've got a busy distracted mind, you need a busy kind of meditation. Having you noting a lots of stuff, having you do a lot of busy work in your mind to keep your mind occupied on the meditation subject. But as your mind gets quieter and calmer, then you need a

quieter calmer meditation technique because you don't want to just be pounding away at the ABCs after you don't need to do that anymore. But if you try something too subtle than you're ready for, then your mind's just going to overflow the meditation object and just you're just going to be thinking all over the place. So to stabilize the state, just continue practice. And also you can move on to a more advanced kind of meditation. Once you've got like the more elementary basics down, then you can go to a more subtle kind of meditation that will get you into more

and more subtle meditation states. But even like even if you're just meditating on your breath, I mean that can even without really changing the the primary object, you might change the way that you're going about noting the primary object. You know, you might stop labeling and then you're just observing it and then eventually you'll stop focusing just on the breath and just kind of like have a wide open focus like a cheap camera kind of a thing, you know. So you can first you just continue practicing and also um once you've got a certain meditation down and you're not really progressing with it anymore then you switch to a more subtle method

that's a little more challenging that you haven't mastered yet and then you just keep going with that. And so you should be getting more and more subtle until eventually you're just sitting there just empty and wide open.

So, I guess that answers both of these questions. How do you stabilize it? And where do he where does he go from there? But without knowing your the particulars of your case, I really couldn't give very much particular advice with regard to your particular case. But just, you know, when your mind becomes calmer, go to a calmer meditation technique.

So, I'm going to move on to the next question, which is from Xenithoid. And Xenithoid says, "What do you think is going on when we experience deja vu?" And that's an interesting question. And I'm not 100% sure how to answer it. I mean, I've read in it was like a cognitive science book that some cognitive scientists had this theory that when you have deja vu, what's actually happening is it's just sort of like this little recognition center in your brain is glitching a little bit. And so, it's it's sort of like making you feel like you recognize this unique situation that has never happened before as something that happened before. But

that wouldn't explain at least one deja
vu that I've had where it was just right
in advance of what it what was
happening. You know, it was like a dja
vu before before the thing even
happened. So, it was like precognitive
and I was just I I was just like 20
years old at the time sitting in this
room and just grinning like an ape
because I knew that someone in that room
was going to say this this weird
sentence. And they said it
and I'm just sitting there, man. How
that was really remarkable for me
because it was it was like a dja vu. It
felt like a dja vu, but it was like a

precognitive deja vu. It wasn't just this seems familiar. It was like this seems familiar and I know what's going to happen next kind of a thing.

So yeah. So I really it could be a certain amount of paranormal just precognition involved or it wouldn't be precognition but I mean it's like there could be sort of some glitch in the matrix or um you know if Einstein is is correct and the future already exists the past still exists in a sense you know like the Sarvastiva Buddhists were saying then you know you're sort of like breaking loose from the present moment a little bit or it it could it could

involve something like

that, I guess. But frankly, I mean, I do not know exactly how Déjà vu works. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question, which is why do we have doppelgangers?

And I'm not exactly sure what he means by this, like doppelgangers. I mean, it's like the the the double. It's like the ghost double. And the when I first learned the word doubleganger, it was in an English lit class in college. We were reading Dostki's crime and punishment.

And the teacher, the

instructor was saying that in that

novel, Rascolnikov, the protagonist, has

two doppelgangers, at least two. One is Svidra Galof who is like the debauched um he's like an aristocrat with like no morals and then there was Sonia the prostitute and Sonia the prostitute ironically is the most Christlike figure in the in the novel. So it was like these two doppelgangers, they're like representing like alternate identities to the protagonist. Fidelof, the debauched aristocrat, represents what Rascolnikov could become if he just followed his head and ignored his heart and just followed this kind of Nietian philosophy with and ignoring this sort of like deeper like religious, spiritual, ethical kind of stuff.

Whereas Sonia the prostitute was a doppelganger representing what he could become if he followed his heart instead of his head. Because even though she was a prostitute, um she was sort of like the the fictional prostitute with a heart of gold whose father was dead. Her her mother was dying of tuberculosis. She had two children. She had like two two like a brother and a sister who were practically having to beg in the streets of of St. Petersburg back in the mid 1800s just to get food. And so prostitution was illegal in Russia at

that time. So she just went and got a card and was making money just to prevent her brother and sister from starving to death

essentially. But I mean I've I've come across a doppelganger. There was a monkey in Burma that was a doppelganger of mine. Um, I was just traveling through this part of I mean this monastery probably doesn't even exist. I think it got bulldozed to make the new capital city of Napedo because it was in that area of Burma. And there was this monkey chained to a tree. And he spent most of his time doing I mean if there was any other animal like a scy monastery dog or a chicken or something

that came within range of his chain he scamper down out of the tree and start pestering them and then they would go away of course cuz they didn't like being pestered by a monkey. But when he didn't when he wasn't doing that, um, which is most of the time, he he had somehow come across a piece of like transparent red plastic, you know, you could see through it, but it was red. And he would just sit on this tree branch just holding this this red plastic up to his eyes in fascination. He was just fascinated by how everything turns red when you look through this plastic. So that was like his his only

possession really was this piece of red plastic. And then also if he wasn't doing that being a monkey, he was attending to his own pee pee. And really, I mean, that kind of symbolized me as a young monk. I mean, I was still very lustful. I was I was always kind of wrestling with that kind of situation, but also just holding up the red plastic. I mean that he had like the simple monkey version of philosophy where you you're looking at the world and seeing it all transformed through, you know, some gimmick of like philosophically questioning the reality of it, that kind of thing. And then as I was leaving the

monastery, I happened to walk close to his tree and he just ran down out of the tree and just climbed up my body so that we're eye to eye and he just kissed me right on the cheek. And this Burmese guy that was with me that was acting sort of like my guide. I he was just dumbfounded. Finally, he's able to stammer out. It just kissed you on the cheek. But then I I moved away and got out of range and that was the end. But I I considered that monkey to be my doppelganger. Also, when I was in my early 20s, I considered myself to be a kind of doppelganger of my girlfriend's brother. I mean, I was the doppelganger

in that case, you know, I represented what he could become if he was less of a realist, if he was more of an idealist. But aside from that, it's like, why do we have doppelgangers? I mean, a doppelganger is just kind of like a a fictional or, you know, it's just sort of like this symbolic thing that you superimpose upon reality. I mean, you don't necessarily really have doppelgangers other than just maybe the way your karma is constructed. You're sort of like spinning off sort of mirror reflections of yourself all around you. I guess that's some some spiritual teachers say that like at

cartullah will say I mean your the whole world around you is actually a kind of mirror reflection of what's going on inside

you. So in that case this everybody would be a kind of doppelganger. It would seem

like, but mainly a doppelganger is just kind of fictional

gimmick like when you're writing a novel or

something like Gus. I'm not exactly sure what Xenithoid is referring to in that case. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question, which is when you look into a mirror, who is

looking back at you? And nobody. I mean,
it's just a reflection.

So, nobody's looking back at you. Don't
worry about

that. So, I guess without elaborating on
that

one, I'm just going to move on to the
next question, which is from Stellar
Supreme, formerly known as Libra Lamb
and it's occasionally also known as
Libra Lamb and known by other other
things

too. Just very

complicated. So, I'm just going to

answer his question here. What practical
measures would you say are make or break
for a deep meditation, posture,

following, breath, feeling,

etc. Well,

um I mean you can give general

guidelines, but the general guidelines

aren't necessarily going to apply to

everybody. I mean, some people can

spontaneously go into a deep meditative

state on a roller coaster at a carnival.

So I mean as a general rule if I was

giving instructions to somebody you know

I would include you know don't try to

meditate on a roller coaster at a

carnival but for some people it can just

spontaneously they'll just have like

some mystical

experience. Um I think the main thing

with regard to deep meditation is try to avoid meditative meditation techniques that involve a lot of thinking. You know, that's if you've got an active mind, you got to do that. But you got to use an active meditation to keep your mind occupied and like keep it from wandering away. But I mean, that's not very deep meditation. You know, that's it's still valid meditation. It's like, you know, sort of like elementary meditation that will get you to a a position where it's easier to get into deep meditation. But deep meditation, you're not going to be thinking no more. Just not thinking is one of the most important things about like deep

meditation or just thinking as little as possible. Don't think any more than you have

to

posture. Um like if you're sitting like straight up and down, that's definitely going to help your meditation. If you're just kind of leaning forward or slouching, that kind of thing, you're going to have like a leany slouchy kind of mental state. But if you're you've got like an alert mental state or an alert posture, you know, a posture that's generally associated with alertness like straight up and down, it just naturally helps you to be more

alert. full lotus. I mean, my experience with the full lotus, it can improve your meditation by like 3% just automatically for whatever reason. Um, but I mean the main things with regard to if you want deep meditation, first you got to find a quiet place where you're not going to be interrupted. You know, not a lot of like weird random back background noises, that kind of thing. Just find a quiet secluded place and then don't think any more than you have to. If you get if you're if you're able to meditate without thinking, you're probably better off not thinking. And then if if you still have to think in your meditation just to keep

your mind from thinking about other things, then you know, you just keep doing that until you get it down, till you get better at it. And then you you can get away with thinking less and less. You're not having to like label things like mahasi method. you know, you're just like hitting the object with a stick over and over again, labeling it. That I mean, that's fine for beginners, but I mean, that's like the ABCs. You don't want to keep doing that after you've you've gotten good at it. Then you move on to like a deeper level of that. So, I guess the two main things

would be, no, let's say three. Find a secluded place that's quiet. you know, have a good posture straight up and down, preferably sitting cross-legged on the floor, but if for whatever reason you have to sit in a chair or whatever, you can do that, too, I suppose. And just kind of have your meditation calibrated so that you're not thinking any more than you have to because to get into the deepest meditation, you have to stop thinking.

So I think I'm just going to move on to next question also from Stellar Supreme formerly known as

Ser which is how often did you get milk with your arms as a monk? Not very often

because I mean the Burmese are not real milk drinkers. Most people in this world cannot digest lactose. You know they're lactose intolerant unlike we members of the master race so to speak.

You know, it's mostly people of Indo-European ancestry that can digest milk, which is one reason, one of the many reasons why the

Indo-Europeans were able to conquer so much of the world, at least culturally, linguistically, even if they weren't doing it militarily in all cases, still um you

can you can like harvest more calories from an acre of dairy land than an acre

of like beef
cattle. So you could have higher
population density that the
Indo-Uropeans could because they drank
milk. But I'm digressing. Getting milk
with my alms, it happened very rarely.
And there were just a few supporters
that knew that I liked milk. They knew
that I could drink it. And so I'd get
like this plastic bag of warm milk in my
bowl and it was have like this rubbery
layer of like cream, you know, I guess
it was like rubbery cream floating on
the top. In the west it gets
homogenized, so it gets all like
emulsified into the milk, I guess. But
in

Burma, you know, you get like it's just floating on the top. And I remember once remarking to this lady that gave me some of this milk. It's like, you know, milk is better if it's not chewy. And then she was like, she was just amazed. It's like, I pay extra for it to have that cream on it. So, let's see here. Yeah, it didn't happen very often. And usually it doesn't because, as I say, most Asians can't even drink milk without getting the squirts or something.

So, I'm just going to move on to Stella

Supreme, etc., etc.'s this third question which is what are your thoughts about secular Buddhists dismissing the reality of enlightenment as magical thinking while claiming to be Buddhist yeah I mean my experience with most western Buddhists is that you know they're Buddhists second at best you know even their political views will take precedence over over dharma or dharma in in many cases and a lot of them just can't tell the difference between like leftist political like what is it indoctrination and actual dharma. I've talked about this lots of

times. Um so I mean they're they're accepting certain techniques from Buddhism which if they practice them can actually help them to become wiser. So that their reasons for meditating will become wiser. Their understanding of dharma will become wiser. So, I mean, so long as you you start meditating to begin with, you know, you can have bad reasons. Let's say you just want to develop psychic powers so you can [_] up your enemies, that kind of thing. I mean, so long as it gets you meditating, you know, taking taking dharma more seriously, then you're going to get benefit from that. you're g your wisdom

will develop and then you may like
abandon you know worse reasons and
accept better reasons you know sort of
like um the Buddha who uh I think it was
his half

brother I think it was his half brother
that he sort of in a way kind of tricked
him into becoming a monk by showing he
was it was his wedding day and so the
Buddha shows him I mean this is what the
celestial nymphs look like in heaven And
he shows them these goddesses, you know,
gives them this vision of these just
impossibly gorgeous celestial nymphs in
in in heaven which made human women
looks look sort of like a burnt monkey.
And so then, you know, he became a monk

because he wanted those those nymphs.
But then he was practicing correctly,
you know, under the supervision of the
Buddha himself. And so eventually he
just got wiser and wiser, had liberating
insight, became enlightened, and didn't
want the nymphs no more. That kind of
thing. So I mean, you can start doing
Buddhist practice for like silly
reasons, but if you practice correctly,
it will help you to get like have better
understanding so that you'll start
having better reasons and a better
understanding of Dhamma.

But I do admit I do agree that a lot of
like the boomer

um meditation sa in America that that I
had interactions with you know they tend
to be very smug and it's it's kind of a
superficial approach to dharma and you
know it's like they reject even the
teachers will reject even karma nirvana
rebirth some of the basic like tenets of
Buddhism including the goal

And you know it's just they just think
that if western science can't explain it
then it's [__] or it's mythology or
magical thinking or just you know some
ancient culture that we don't have to
take seriously

anymore. Now some of them just you
because their practice isn't very deep
or they've just got certain like karmic

obstacles or whatever they just never get past the superficial level. But um I mean in some if you if you do practice correctly then you know it's like your your understanding evolves and gets better and you can kind of move on from that.

So, but yeah, I mean it is blameworthy for a teacher of dharma, a teacher of a group of people calling themselves SA, you know, he's just sort of poo pooing the whole idea of like karma or or enlightenment, nirvana, that kind of thing is just in a way it's it's slandering. is is

misrepresenting the Buddha, what the Buddha taught, and just sort of pedalling some inferior, extremely watered down version of Dharma, which is better than no Dharma at all, I suppose. But yeah,

there Buddhism in the west has uh it has really mutated radically as a result of arrogant westerners who just assume that the western point of view is the correct point of view and they're just going to be adding little bits and pieces that they think is an improvement. But it's, you know, it's it's like they're fitting what parts of Buddhism will fit into like a a scientific point of view. And so it's not even really dharma at that

point. It's like semi dharma fragments of dharma that are just sort of forcefitit into gaps in a in a scientific point of view, a leftist scientific point of view more often than not.

So I guess I answer that question. I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Tzasquez is and Tzas is says if this universe or our happiness misery ratio is balancing itself out to zero why Janes were wrong torturing themselves. If you torture yourself for 20 years then all is left is happiness for the rest of one's life according to this theory. Yeah, that's

kind of what the what Jesus was
apparently teaching in the sermon on the
mount, too. You know, it's better to cry
than to laugh. You know, it's like you
have to be like miserable in this life
in order to be happy in the next life,
which lasts forever, which is not a good
equation balancing out to zero, is it?
But the Janes were wrong for torturing
themselves partly because they were
making more karma by doing it. And
they're getting a certain satisfaction
from torturing themselves. I mean, it's
that's the way it works with just about
anybody who's wallowing in misery is
they're getting a certain satisfaction,
a certain kind of perverse

happiness from wallowing in misery or torturing themselves or whatever. You know, some people, you know, they just like their sicknesses and their their mental disabilities or whatever, it gives their life meaning and they'll just talk about it to anybody and they get satisfaction from that. It's like they're venting or whatever. And when you you believe that you are striving for enlightenment, that you're doing the right thing, that you're this heroic spiritual warrior by torturing yourself, you are getting satisfaction from doing that. in addition to just making more karma because the genes were torturing

themselves not to balance out the happiness misery ratio so much as they were just trying to burn off all of their karma especially their bad karma by just speeding up. this a kind of spiritual accelerationism, but that deliberate intention and the deliberate efforts to torture themselves were really just making more karma. And it was kind of a messed up tortury kind of karma. So, I mean, the happiness misery ratio balances out to zero regardless of what you do. If you wallow in like somebody who's just got a short temper and they just get pissed off a lot. I mean superficially they seem un unhappy but yet they derive satisfaction from

venting their anger. So it's just this weird kind

of I don't know what you call it this weird balance of happiness and misery that's happening. Even though someone might appear to be miserable, they get it's like sometimes they get dissatisfaction from this idea that they deserve to be miserable or or whatever it is. You know, it's just like this they're this the spiritual hero that's taking satisfaction and torturing themselves for the sake of glorious liberation and all that. Okay. So, I think I'm just going to move on to Trzas is second question,

which is, "Have you considered going to a sperm bank and leave your genetic mark for future generations?" No. And like uh Danny Glover used to say on the old Lethal Weapon movie, I'm getting too old for this [__] Maybe when I was young and I was just full of juice, you know, I might, yeah, I'll just squirt some over that way. But I just as I've gotten older and I'm having to work for a living and just attending to some sic duties and all that that I just have less inclination to be squirting my my uh what is it? My precious bodily fluids in all directions. Well, too much information there maybe, but I don't care. It's my

show. Let's see

here. Yeah, I mean that would be the main thing. It also be weird like if you donate sperm to a sperm bank and then some woman you don't even know is going to be having a child that you are technically the father of. I mean, I wouldn't want that responsibility of just my own children being raised by strangers that I've never met before. I haven't vetted them or anything.

So yeah, I'm just going to move on. Next question also from Tzas is what is that plant on the right of you? Well, I assume Trzascus is referring to that one. Let's see here. I got to get this

window out of the way. Oh man, I didn't even have this set up right. Supposed to be like that so you can gaze in awe and wonder at my fish tank. And I got to change out the horn work soon. It's getting kind of raggedy. So, that plant right

right How do I point at this thing right there? It's a spider plant. It's supposed to be a good plant. It like cleans the air and stuff and it it doesn't require a lot of bright light. It grows just about anywhere. So, yeah, I think that's a spider plant. Now, I got to move this window back here. Okay.

So this next question is from Austin and

Austin says, "Is karma and mind is karma and mind created or uncreated? If uncreated and eternal, they would possess divinity and thus be defined as gods following the western paradigm. So karma is certainly created now. We are creating karma. That's that's what we're doing. So yeah, karma is created definitely and mind that all depends on how you look at it. I mean you could say that like various spiritual traditions including a few obscure Buddhist like terra Buddhist sutras or sutas indicate that you know the highest reality is infinite formless consciousness.

But so you could say that that kind of mind is

uncreated. But because it is infinite and formless, it's without any kind of discrete content and you can't really say if it exists or doesn't exist. It's just off the

scale. But mind that you can

perceive, mind that you can actually get some kind of handle on that is created.

And that includes karma because karma is a mental

state. So yeah, it's just in a constant state of

flux. It's all ana in that sense. All impermanent in

constant. So I guess I'll just move on

to the next question. This is from Harim Cthulhu. And Harim Cthulhu is being a wise guy here. He says, "What would the Buddha think about people who try to guess thoughts of enlightened beings?"

And that is a good

question. And I'm going to just move on

to the next question here. This is from

Throat Warbler Mangrove. And Throat

Warbler Mangrove says, "Was the Buddha

an

anti-natalist? And what are your

thoughts on anti-natalism?"

And I've had a few questions along these

lines that the Buddha was I mean ideally

he would have been an anti-natalist. You

know he's saying the best thing you can do is just renounce worldly life which includes renounce family life, go off into a forest and meditate until you are liberated. So he'd be an anti-natalist in that sense. Although he wasn't speaking out really like voseiferously against people who have families. I mean, just being realistic. Most people are just not ready to renounce the world and go off and meditate in tigerinfested and banditinfested forests infested forests.

So sort of from a spiritual point of view, he would be an anti-natalist, but just from a like a realistic acceptance of the way things are then, you know,

he's he's not going to be like bashing people that have children and raise families, that sort of thing. And with regard to my own thoughts on anti-natalism, I'm less anti-natalist now than I was as a young man.

um having children I mean it's it's not for everybody seriously although you can say well the population is crashing especially the populations in like developed countries like like the west and also like Japan and South Korea and places like that that the population is decreasing but just because the population decreases that's not necessarily a bad thing that I mean this

world would be fine with 1 billion people instead of 8 billion people. 1 billion would probably be preferable to 8 billion. But the problem is, of course, that when you've got a welfare state, you know, when you've got socialism, then it's such a heavy drain, a heavy drag on like the federal budget, you know, all these pensions and and social security and everything that, you know, a diminishing number of young workers are paying for and an increasing number of old retired people are benefiting from. That's where the real problem comes in.

If you didn't have the welfare state, then more people would be having

children because children would be their social security, especially if they didn't have a pension either or a 401k or

whatever. But with regard to antiatalism, I mean, I didn't want to have kids when I was a young man.

Mainly, I mean, partly I mean, I was intending to become a monk anyway, so there's that. But even if I hadn't become a monk, there's I mean back then, like back in the 80s and early 90s, you know, it wasn't so much global warming, that sort of thing. It was thermonuclear Armageddon, the Cold War, you know, back when the USSR still existed. That'd be

like the 80s mainly for me.

Anyhow, that I mean, it's like who knows what this world is going to be like 10 years from now or 20 years from now.

It's just you have to be willing to gamble with the lives of your children that they're not going to be growing up in a kind of like radioactive

hellscape. But now it turns out there was no cold war. I mean there was no hot war. You know that came as a result of the cold war. You know there was no World War III yet. Hasn't been one yet except for maybe the cold one might be considered World War

II. So anti-natalism. I mean, I think I answered this question like just one or

two Q&As's ago where, you know, it's for each person to decide for themselves. I mean, nowadays, if I knew then what I know now, and I have the woman then that I have now, I mean, I might be willing to have kids just as a kind of civic duty even though it's one hell of a sacrifice of like your freedoms and so forth.

Um, yeah. I mean, it's one hell of an obligation to raise children, you know. It's just not just that you're paying for their food, you know, making sure they go to school, that kind of thing. I It's your duty to to do what you can to

ensure that they grow up to be
relatively good, relatively happy,
relatively healthy human
beings. And most people just they just
really don't know how to do that.
because they're not particularly good,
happy, healthy human
beings. So, I mean, I can go either way.
I mean, I really don't have a dog in the
fight. So, if you want to have kids, go
ahead and have kids. You don't want to
have kids, then don't have
kids. But, it's better if you do have
kids, get married before you have
kids. Let's see. So I guess I'm just
going to move on. Next question. This is
from

Mfiles and Mfiles said this is a statement from a famous Vajriana teacher. Quote, people try spiritually to achieve realization. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Other than that, there is nothing really that is useful. Unquote. And then Mfiles says, "I find that it sounds very pop Buddhism, easily digestible. What do you think of it?" Yeah, it's very superficial. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Yeah, there's a lot of kind-hearted beings out there that are still wallowing in delusion. So, yeah, I I would disagree with the famous Vajriana teacher. I

don't know if he's a monk or a she's a nun or they're just like some Zogchin instructor or or what they are. I don't know. But uh people try spiritually to achieve realization. The true realization is to achieve a kind heart. Yeah. Other than that, there's nothing really that is useful. Well, what's so useful about a kind heart? You're going to look at it that way. How is having a kind heart more useful than having like an understanding of reality? So yeah, I think it is very superficial and false from a Buddhist point of view and I do not agree with it.

you're probably better off being a wise

person that's kind of crotchety and
people don't like you much than to be
just very sweet nice person who is just
kind of

incompetent and and just wallowing in
delusion. So I'm just going to move on
to Mfile's next

question which is I know you always tell
us that very few people understand the
dependent origination teaching. Some of
the things that really make me confused
is how is there an origination if there
is no primordial cause? Origination from
what? Well, you could say that there's a
primordial

foundation. Especially if you're

unorthodox, in which case you'd say, you know, there's like infinite formless consciousness is like the the ground of being. You know, it's like the the quantum field in theoretical physics, you know, it contains infinite energy and zero energy somehow at the same time. It's it's like infinite being and non-being at the same time in a sense. And it's just off the scale. It's just doesn't apply to samsara from a samsaric point of view. It's just not there. You can't point to it. You can't discern it. You can't perceive it. It may as well just be completely non-existent. And from a saric point of view, it's it's just it's just

words. But I mean, that is like the essence, you know. Let's just go back to the theory of the block of marble that I've yammered away about so many times. You've got this block of marble and it contains within it every single possible statue in potential form. You know, every molecule of each statue is already there in the exact right position. The statue is in there. It's just that it it exists in like virtual or potential form because no sculptor has carved it out. You know, it's just in there in potential form. And that's that's every possible scenario, every possible reality is contained in virtual form

there, including all the stuff arising and passing away, all the karma and the delusion and the suffering beings and all that. You know, it's like their ultimate essence is this stone that cannot be perceived that is really not part of samsara. But Samsara is composed of the

statues that exist in a kind of potential or conditional form. So there the primordial cause I mean there is no primordial cause because this has been going on just forever. there is no beginning to it.

So yeah, I mean the origination is also just sort of potential and conditional.

So, I hope I answered that question because I mean I've answered the question like dozens of times at this point and I mean if you've heard me explain it, you know, three times or more, you still don't get it, then you're just going to have to find someone else try to explain it to you and maybe they'll have better luck than I

have. But Mfiles is kind of a new questioner unless he changed his name recently. So he has kind of an excuse here because it may be that he hasn't seen very many of my Q&As's where I'm, you know, answering essentially the same

questions over and over again at times.

Not all the questions, but there are certain types of question that keep getting asked, you know, like what would the Buddha think about, you know, what what's an enlightened mind like this kind of thing. Those are questions also that that I get asked a lot.

So let's see or just karma questions you know is it wholesome or unh wholesome to do you know action acts that kind of thing. So let's see here. I'm just going to move on to M Files's third question, which is if beings are illusory, karma is also illusory. So how can there be consequences from illusory actions? Because they are illusory

consequences. The whole thing is virtual. And it's not just totally fake because like I said, those statues really are in there. you know, every single molecule of, you know, the the Venus Demo or or like Leia Kan and his sons being eaten by snakes or the discus thrower, the dying gall, Rodan's thinker, they're all in there. Every molecule exactly in the right place. So, it's it's like a potential existence. So, the beings have a potential existence or conditional existence. Karma has a potential or conditional existence. And so the

consequences from these potential or
conditional actions are also potential
or

conditional. That's how that's what
dependent core rising

is. It's all

conditional. So I'm just going to move
on. Next question. This is from

Pedro. And Pedro says, "What do you

think of Prophet Jerome Fernando from

Sri Lanka?" This is the first I've ever

heard of him as far as I can tell. I do

not recall ever hearing of the prophet

Jerome Fernando before Pedro asked me

about him. So, what do I think about

him? I don't know. I never heard of him.

So I'll just move on to Pedro's second

question which is if many people many in the sense of more than 100 people believe that a person has healing powers can that belief alone grant that person healing powers for example the prophet Jerome Fernando. So I guess the prophet Jerome Fernando is also a kind of faith healer. So, if many people believe that someone has healing powers, can that belief alone grant that person healing powers? Um, yeah. I'd say yes. I mean, it's really the belief of the person that he's healing would be the main person who should believe in it. It's like in the New Testament, like I I think I said this in the previous Q&A

when Jesus would heal somebody of blindness or whatever, and the person would thank Jesus, Jesus would say, "It's your own faith that healed you. If you didn't have the faith, you wouldn't have got healed. And that's why when he went back to his own hometown of Nazareth, he wasn't able to heal very many people there. It's because everyone was skeptical. It's like, hey, isn't that Jesus the carpenter's son? I mean, don't his brothers and sisters live here? Who does who who does he think he is? So, if one person believes that this person has healing powers, then that belief alone can grant that person healing powers, at least with regard to

that one person.

So I mean in a way you got more people believing that someone has healing powers. It makes it easier for additional people to believe that that person has healing powers which then will help that person to have healing powers just due to the power of faith that can move mountains supposedly. So yeah, I mean it's mainly I mean the belief of the the prophet himself would certainly help and then the belief of the person being healed, the belief of the people around who are like observing would also definitely like contribute to this group mind that

is helping this thing to happen. So yeah and I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Sedarta Lohaitita. And Sedarta Lohachita says, and uh he's being kind of transgressive or something here. He says, "Why do you think black people or those of black descent in America are rarely interested in the dharma? I've seen that there are Buddhist monasteries in Africa, like in Congo and South South Africa, but it seems that black people tend to be more drawn to monotheistic extremism, such as Islam or Christianity. Well, black people aren't necessarily drawn to monotheistic extremism. I mean, before Islam and

Christianity had missionaries and others
converting people in subsaharan Africa,
I I would guess they were mostly
animists.

which is not
monotheistic.

But yeah, I think there's one monastery
in Uganda. I've seen like little video
clips of black monks going for alms
round in Uganda, I think it is. And you
know, black villagers waiting there to
put food in their bowl is somehow
working. And

um so partly it's cultural. I would
guess that mainly it's cultural.

It's just a cultural thing that is not

really black culture. It's more Asian culture and then like some yepy boomer type culture that started like back in the 1950s with Zen Buddhism and you know then it finally you had like the weasna movement starting in the the 70s and so forth. Um, that's more of a white thing. But it is true like even in the west I've seen like two or three black Buddhists or just two or three black Buddhists anywhere. Like in Burma I can remember seeing one. he was um following the Sunlon method and his his idea was he was just going to be a monk for a little while until he got the Sunlon method down and then he was going to drop out and go back and teach the

Sunlone method.

Um yeah. So I mean it is rare and so I think the main reason is just cultural because black people are followers of culture and also uh like a secondary reason is just that terra Buddhism is largely an intellectual kind of spiritual system and black people are less likely to be intellectually inclined than white people or East Asian people. Although in Burma there's a lot of very non-intellectual villagers who are extremely devout terraotta Buddhists. And it's weird. It's like you can go out to some remote village and you can overhear, you know, these these

two old village guys sitting around just discussing like like subtle points of Abidama philosophy.

So I would guess that it's primarily a cultural thing.

But then you've got like the dei, you know, you got the leftist quasi Buddhists, some of whom don't believe in enlightenment and so forth, like was being discussed earlier, who, you know, there's some black meditator, they're going to like that black meditator is going to get promoted up to teacher level regardless of whether they're really qualified to be a teacher.

So you got like the the DEI leftist

Buddhists, Buddhists in the West who are promoting for all their worth uh black Buddhists, you know, just trying to get as many black Buddhists to fill the quota as possible, which isn't necessarily helping very much because then you wind up with incompetent diversity hires teaching Dharma. you even I mean you got enough white ones. You don't have to just add new colors of incompetent dhamma teachers. Not that all of them are incompetent, I'm sure. But when you see a black surgeon or a black airline pilot or a black dharma teacher, there's

naturally this little bit of doubt that arises like are they really qualified or did they just get the job to fill a quota?

So I'm just going to move on to Sedart Lohito's next question which is do you know the philosophy about war change and the opposites from Heracolitis? I've read about Heracolitis long ago. You know I know like his famous saying you can't step into the same river twice. You know everything is change. Um, but I I don't recall his philosophy of war, whether that's just sort of like some elemental kind of warfare going on or whether he's actually talking about people with with spears and shields and

helmets out like stabbing each other in
a field

somewhere. But um, yeah, really I don't
know all that much about heracitis
partly because I really did not agree
much with heracitis. I was I attended
more to be more the aliatric type of
person. I liked like permenities, you
know, all is one rather than like
atomizing the universe and it's all
these different different parts
interacting with each other.

So that's one reason also why I've
always been sort of gravitating towards
like Mahayana metaphysics you know not
some of the other ideas of Mahayana but

their metaphysics I consider to be more sophisticated than the dharma or dharma theory of the earlier schools like terraovvada that had the abidhama and you know all these different kinds of ultimate realities all interacting with each other and flashing off and on and they're all ultimately real and I It's just easier for me to believe that it's all wrong ultimately. So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from

Ruie and Ruie says, "Perhaps a few words on disease and hell realms. This question was inspired by your Burmese dog stories, but also excuse me, but

also by my COVID adult

brain, which has been producing weird mental loops.

Well, going with orthodox Buddhism, um, you can say like figuratively there are hell realms in this world, like some brothel in in Bangkok with teenage village girls sold to the brothel and they're locked in this room and they have to be prostitutes regardless of how they feel about the matter. You could call that a kind of hell realm. like certain street corners in like Baltimore or there's one famous city um it's just become like a meme where you know you'll have people showing videos of just

people on drugs just like zombies just sort of staggering around or lying on the sidewalk in this city or um being a Burmese dog could be called a kind of figurative hell realm. Um, one place that I've seen a kind of figurative hell realm was um, back when I was in my 20s, I got this job. We were going to be working out of Atoria, Oregon, and there was this hotel there. Maybe I shouldn't say the name of the hotel, but it was just a flop house. And we were looking for a place to just kind of, my partner and I were looking for a place to kind of station ourselves, just have like a home base. And so he went there. I went there with him to this hotel hotel. And

I mean it was just scary. It was like there was a woman there who was cooking food. She had a the bridge of her nose was completely flattened out which just looked like it was a genetic thing.

Although later I read that that's one of the symptoms of advanced syphilis is it flattens out your the bridge of your nose. And that just the whole place just stank. and he got my my partner got shown this room. You know, it's like it's 80 bucks a month, but it's 50 bucks a month if you pay cash in advance. And it was just like this bombed out room with this mattress there. There's stains all over it. And it was just the smell,

the vibe was like lead in this whole place. And it was like I just wanted to get out of there as soon as I could. It was not a place where I would want to be just sitting there soaking up these diseased

vibes, much less, you know, vapors and pathogens and so

forth. And also one one little hell

realm that I came across when I was in

Burma was we were on a road trip

somewhere. We were going somewhere down

the highway and it was a highway heading

north towards China and a lot of

truckloads of pigs, live pigs, go to

China. It's like the Burmese are

exporting live pigs to China because the

Chinese like their
pork. And we stopped at this tea shop
because the driver that was I was with
wanted to stop at a tea shop and have
some tea. I stayed outside and one of
these truckloads of pigs pulls up and
these pigs I mean it's like a little
Toyota pickup and it's just in the back.
It's just piled up like four deep of
live pigs. They're just stacked in there
like firewood and they're all like
squealing and screaming and like the
driver of that truck, that little pickup
truck was in having some tea, too. Well,
these two teenage assistants have got
like bamboo poles and because the pigs

are like squirming, they're they're like using the bamboo poles to kind of lever lever them back into being stacked neatly. And I remember going up to them and teenage kids. I mean, a Buddhist monk walking up to them when they're like, you know, dealing in live livestock for slaughter, you know, they just ignored me. You know, they're Burmese are pretty good at that sort of thing. Just like pretending like they don't see you. And then I'm just saying this is this is hell. That is hell right there. But I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, hell is way worse than anything you're going to find on this planet. It's way worse than a flop house hotel

in Atoria, Oregon. Way worse than some drug den, way worse than a wh house. Way worse than a truckload of pigs. I mean, it's just, you know, glowing hot iron and just constant like agony and and just misery and torture going on. It's just levels of magnitude, orders of magnitude higher than what you're going to find in this in this world. you know, maybe the very worst torture chambers in some, you know, autocratic dictatorship, you know, something that Saddam Hussein would have going or pull pot, somebody like that, that that might sort of become kind of comparable to

some of the the higher levels of hell in Buddhism. But yeah, it's it's it's really very

different. So, let's see. Did I answer the question? A few words. Well, I guess I didn't because I used more than a few on disease and hell realms. Yeah, disease. I mean, I mean, from a Buddhist point of view, it's all a hell realm.

You know, even the highest heavens are just the subtlest hell realms. They're the least unpleasant hell realms. It's all dooka all the way down. It's not turtles all the way down. It's just dooka all the way down.

So, you know, you got diseases and old age and, you know, getting what you

don't want and not getting what you do
want and being separated from what
you're attached to and all that. That's
all dooka. We're all born
screaming. That sort of
thing. But, I mean, the actual hell
realms from a Buddhist point of view are
just like way beyond what you're going
to find on this planet.

So just kind of enjoy that we are in one
of the more comfortable hell
realms at least relatively
speaking. So let's see here. I mean
going with the 31 plains of existence,
human beings are like sixth from the
bottom. But that's mainly just because

the heaven realms are all divided up into separate realms. Whereas the hell realms are all just compacted together, lumped together into one hell realm. But if you divided up, the hell realms would be kind of in the middle

humans. Just

saying. So I'm just going to move on to uh

Yugao. And Yugao says, and I don't fully understand this question either.

Yugahoo says, "I don't see any other way but to look at the women objectively. There is nothing more.

Could I be wrong?" And which women are the women? I mean, it could be the women on the thumbnail of the previous Q&A

that I wanted like beautiful crazy women
on the on the thumbnail of the previous
Q&A. And my lovely
woman, she she did these women that just
looked like they didn't look
particularly crazy. And I'm saying they
should each have a knife. The women
should have knives. And she she just
couldn't get the AI to have beautiful
women wielding knives for some reason. I
think maybe she was just being stubborn
and didn't want to do it or something.
She can do that sometimes occasionally.
But uh I mean would I mean is Yugu
referring to those women or when he says
when he cannot let's see I don't see any

other way but to look at the women
objectively that he's just referring to
women in general he just refer he just
looks at women

objectively and then there is nothing
more could I be wrong well I mean if
you're looking I mean looking at
anything really objectively especially
women for a man to look at a

Objectively, I don't know if that's even
possible really because we've got like
animal instincts. Like if you even
notice whether they're pretty or not,
then that's not being entirely
objective. I mean, beauty is not an
objective thing. It's more of
subjective. And uh I mean when you're

dealing with women, if you're being
completely

objective, I I it's just sort of
inconceivable to me that there's always
going to be a certain amount of human
nature and like human nature conditioned
instincts and attitudes that are always
going to be in there. Like guys just
tend to go easier on women for some
reason. You know, they're more polite to
women, maybe less likely to yell at a
woman. I at least most guys
like uh there's two women that drive
forklifts at work and I mean neither one
of them is like beauty pageant material,
you know, it's but for some reason they

just kind of get a pass that guys don't get. Men are just more kind of lenient towards them. They they cut them slack more and that's not being objective.

So yeah, I'm really not exactly sure what Yugahoo is referring to here and looking at the women objectively, but um I mean if he's human then I'm kind of skeptical that he's looking at women purely objectively.

That there's always going to be a certain amount of human nature creeping in there around the edges. It might be subliminal. You don't even fully notice it. But if he's referring specifically to the women on the thumbnail of the

previous Q&A, yeah, it was sort of it kind of went array a little bit because I wanted crazy women with knives and I just didn't get it. And so it sort of like fell between two stools, you know, it was like the the image was kind of moving in that direction but not completely not enough so that it would be a meaningful kind of thumbnail, you know, like symbolizing a theme which was like beautiful crazy women in the previous

Q&A. So let's see here. I think I'm just going to move on. Next question. And what do you know? It's from Arane. And Arin says, "When you look at a

definition such as intuition, it describes this quote," the brain draws on past experiences and external cues to make decisions at such high speeds that the response occurs at an unconscious level." And then Arin says, "How would you translate this process through a Buddhist lens?"

Well, from a Buddhist lens, it would be pretty much everything would be done by intuition because the process of mind according to Abidama philosophy, you know, it's like trillions of mind moments like 17 trillion moments of uh of of mind per eyelink. So it's it's going at such a fast rate that even though it's all volitional and in a

sense deliberate although it's also kind of pushed along by karma that I mean you can't really catch it when you're making a quick decision or some such and even if you're making a slow decision you're still missing out on 99.999% of what's going on.

So, it's just kind of more um more that way if you make a quick decision, which is like the the the dictionary definition of intuition where you're you're drawing on past experiences and external cues and making a decision at such high speeds that the response occurs at an unconscious level or a subconscious

level. Um, yeah. I mean, that's pretty good description of what's going on with in Abidama philosophy all the time. It's like it's happening trillions of times per second that there's all this stuff going on that you can't possibly be fully aware

of. And so if you're making a relatively quick decision, then it's just going to be more obviously of that sort than if you're making a slow decision in which you're still missing out on almost everything that's going on in in like the this the decision-m process and the entire like process of mentality that's going on.

So, I hope I answered that question

because I'm moving on to Aryan's second question, which is, is there a word for this in Buddhist philosophy that would come close to describing this subconscious process? Well, I mean, this is just kind of the way mind works. It's I mean,

chewiti accounts for a lot of it, which is you've got 17 mind moments. And I hope I'm getting the number right because it's been quite a while since I've studied this kind of stuff.

But it's like in quick succession all in like one trillionth of a second. Every time you've got some mental act which is I mean it's happening constantly that

there's these 17 mind moments. You've got like the banga chittita which is a kind of nebulous subconsciousness at first and then it's like the mind there's like this agitation and the the the bwunga starts to wiggle and then there's like oh I don't remember the exact order of everything but there's all these different mental states that are all like taking place that are taking part in this one moment of cognition and then that's followed by another and it's just like this constant stream of stuff that's happening. at, you know, 117 trillionth of a second each time. So,

um, that's just for this one mind
moment. It's just this very just
unthinkably
complex series of events supposedly
going on in according to Abidama
philosophy. And then you got karma which
is
subconscious, semiconscious at best.
that is sort of sort of it's kind of got
the trajectory automatically going where
you would it would take like uh like a
conscious volual act to kind of move in
a different direction from like the
direction your karma is pushing you that
that kind of a situation but um I mean
aside from that which is just accepted

as just the way it is there's there's not much more I mean you've got like the underlying anus which is sort of like latent karma that is always there that can then kind of be activated under certain circumstances. This kind of thing. But um the whole like ancient Indian Buddhist description of human psychology is in some respects radically different from the modern western understanding of human psychology.

So, and ancient Buddhism was pre-

Darwinian. So, like

just why human nature would be the way it is. I mean, Abidama just doesn't go there. It's just assumes that this is just the way it is due to some cosmic

principle or something. some some just natural law makes us, you know, be a certain way and it didn't evolve that way through like natural selection or any such thing.

But yeah, I mean in a way it's kind of comparing apples to oranges. It's like one one paradigm of human psychology and another paradigm of human psychology. you know, got ancient Indian and modern western and you know, they're just not going to fit together very well just because the assumpt the beginning assumptions may be radically different. So in Buddhism, it's just

that's pretty much the way every your
mind always is working. It's just super
high speed, one thing after another
after another going so fast that for the
most part you're oblivious to what's
going on. And that's kind of similar to
some some teachings of western
philosophy, but I don't think there's
really a word for it. And because it's
just they're just describing how the
mind works, you know, it's not like it's
some kind of seeming anomaly that needs
a special word. It's
just oras or whatever. It's just how the
mind
works. So, I'm sorry if I didn't answer
that question completely satisfactoryy

and I apologize in advance. if I don't answer the next one completely satisfactory and this is from Aventity who is a recent recent addition to our discord server and Aventity says is there a concept of a witch in the polycanon and interestingly enough I cannot recall I assume there's witches in

there I'm just assuming there is like at least like in the dharmapata commentary or some such but usually like in the sutas if it's talking about someone who can do like supernatural stuff. They're talking about some swami meditating in a forest that that is just they don't

really talk about witches doing magic. I mean there is um in the dean kaya the silakonda of the dean kaya the first several sutas of the dean kaya there's a list of things that a monk shouldn't do and one of them is referring to like questioning a girl in trance you know like a spirit medium essentially they had spirit mediums where a woman would be like channeling essentially and I mean you could call that a witch like in the old testament the witch of endor

You know, when King Saul consults the witch of Endor to communicate with the prophet Samuel who has already passed away, you know, she's called a witch

when really I mean she's she's summoning the dead, you know, through channeling or something. I guess I mean she actually did summon his spirit because apparently there was like an apparition there. So I mean that kind of witch maybe because there were spirit mediums. they are kind of mentioned very briefly in the silaconda of the de kaya. Um, I would I would assume that there's mentions of witches in the polycan that I just, you know, I just don't recall them. At least at least in the commentarial literature, but clearly in in Burma, which is possibly the most Buddhist country in the world, there's a

belief in witches, which is sort of like the ancestor veneration. It's not necessarily from the polycanon itself. It's just a cultural thing that didn't necessarily come from Terra Buddhism. But there's a saying in in Burma that one in every seven houses a witch. That really there there's lots of witches in Burma. They've got lots of beliefs about witches. I was warned about witches that might give me trouble and so forth. I've had like some village woman triumphantly telling me about how some friend of hers got hexed by a witch just recently, which pretty much proves that there's got to be witches because otherwise, how do you explain this woman getting hexed

by a witch if there isn't any witch?

So, but but most of the mentions, pretty much all of the mentions of some kind of magical stuff going on, you know, supernatural

um mental powers, psychic powers

um that are mentioned in the polycanon, they're referring

to like meditators that have developed psychic powers through meditation.

So it could be just sort of like a a bias in favor of giving a spiritual power to spiritual practitioners and just not attributing that to eccentric females, that kind of thing.

So yeah, I mean if anyone can recall

some specific mention of a witch in the sutas somewhere then yeah I mean I would not at all be surprised but I've heard lots of witch stories when I was living in Burma. I've told a few witch stories like the guy who um snubbed the daughter of some witch and wound up with a wooden shoe in his stomach that had to be surgically removed and then the day after it was surgically removed he had another wooden shoe in his stomach. So then they knew it had to be a witch. The doctors knew this and so they had to call in an apolia which is like a white wizard like a a Buddhist like a virtuous wizard who only does white magic who had to had to cure him because the doctors

didn't want to just keep cutting it open
removing shoe after

shoe. But I mean that happened in a very
terrible Buddhist country. But I do not
recall reading anything specifically
about like witches doing

magic like and members of covens or
anything like that in the poly text but
it could be in there and it wouldn't
surprise

me. So I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from sea of
action

sepina. Let's see. We've been going for
a little over two hours. That's not too
bad. I

hope s of action sepatna says you said
old age sickness and death were overcome
by the Buddha because he transcended the
meat puppet and realize he ultimately
didn't exist but since there is no self
and we we were never the meat puppets
anyways and already don't ultimately
exist then by this logic how would you
argue against someone who says that we
are already free from old age sickness
and death and just don't realize it well
that's what the Mahayana Buddhists
say I mean ultimately
It's it's all illusory. It's just that
we're wallowing in the illusion. We're
we're clinging to it. We're stuck in the
illusion. So, yeah, I got no problem

with that. I mean, it's not we are already free from old age because we are part of the illusion. That's that's part of the thing. So, yeah. I mean, it's again again and again and again and again and again, there are some people who just absolutely cannot deal with two different levels of reality simultaneously. They keep just vehemently, stubbornly, obstinantly trying to like compress two different levels of reality into one level. And Terra Buddhism is guilty of this too. Orthodoxy like Abidama philosophy for example. And if you just can't do it, I

don't know what to tell you.

So yeah, I mean if you can just detach from the whole concept of you existing, well there you go. It doesn't even matter what this this supposed meat puppet is undergoing anymore. It's it becomes essentially irrelevant. So let's see here. Did I did I come close enough to answering that question that I can just move on to the next one? Let's see. How would you argue against someone who says we are already free from old age, sickness, and death and just don't realize it? Well, I you wouldn't use the we are because I mean that's part of the illusion too. It's not like there is some we that is free

from old age, sickness and death because the wii is what it is that is trapped in old age, sickness and death. So you have to transcend the wii. And so you can't say that we are free from old age, sickness, and death

really. But I mean, it's trying to explain two different levels of reality at the same time. And just there are some people that just aren't going to be able to go

there. But Mahayana Buddhists are saying this all the time. We're all Buddhists. We just don't realize or at cartullah saying we're already enlightened. It's just that our mind is making so much

noise that we don't notice it. That kind of thing.

And within that context, I got no argument against it. Just don't try to say that the Buddha taught it. So I'm just going to move on to SEO of action seat zero's second question here. What do you think comes first? The destruction of craving or experiencing nibbana. In the traditional model, you can glimpse nibbana and even meditate in that state eventually. But that doesn't mean you are an arahant still since you don't believe in the stages of enlightenment. I'm curious what your thoughts are on this topic. Well, what about the four noble truths? Third noble

truth is the noble truth of cessation which is the moment is it's describing enlightenment. When you no longer have craving, you no longer have suffering and you are enlightened.

Consequently, the cessation of craving and the experiencing of nibbana would be simultaneous. They would be the same going with the context of the four noble

truths. So you could say that you can temporarily experience nibbana through a temporary destruction of craving. And I mean Jonas are called like temporary liberation. So I mean you might be able to make some argument about that. But

like real cessation of craving and real enlightenment would be identical. Just going with the four noble truths.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which was the last question yesterday but then there are a few people snuck in additional questions this morning so they're going to be answered today.

So anyways the next question is from Arpad and Arpad says from a terravada viewpoint is the practice of Nimbutsu harmful and I mean if you look it up online what is nebutsu it's it's like calling on the name of Amida Buddha. So

I mean with that definition of nembutsu just it's like a pure land thing where you're just reciting the name of Amitaba Buddha or Amida Buddha in the hopes of being reborn in this pure land. From the terravada point of view that would be just wallowing in wrong view. So you'd probably be harming yourself through wrong view just through what would be considered like a silly belief. But as somebody on the discord server pointed out, if nebutsu, the practice of nembutsu, which is just calling upon the Buddha or a Buddha, I mean, if if that's how you interpret, it's not just restricted to

Amitaba or Amida, then I mean, if you're using it towards God Buddha, then I mean, in Thai Buddhism, especially the Thai forest tradition, then just using Buddha or Bhau as a kind of mantra then that's a valid meditation technique and there's a lot of relatively advanced meditation ajons who would promote just using Buddo uh pretty much the way a Hindu would use M or Ram as a kind of mantra. So I mean that wouldn't necessarily be harmful but calling on Amida Buddha to get you reborn into some pure land then from a terra point of view yeah that would just be like just this egregious corruption of dharma and

and the Buddha didn't teach that according to Terraata Buddhism and early Buddhism in general. So it all depends on how you define nimbutsu. If using nimbutsu as calling upon aida Buddha to get reborn into a pure land, his pure land, yeah, that would probably be harmful from an orthodox terraata point of view because it'd be like wallowing in in like a a wrong view. Whereas just using Buddha as a mantra, like a meditation object, that wouldn't necessarily be harmful even though it's not really endorsed in the uh the sutas. But I mean, you know, there are

things that are endorsed in the sutas,
you know, like namotas, bavat, arhat,
sama, some Buddha saw, that kind of
thing. Using that as a kind of mantra,
you could do that. That would be right
out of the poly texts.

just reflection on the qualities of the
Buddha, that kind of
thing. But the pure land stuff, yeah,
that's that definitely would be uh
discouraged from an orthodox terra point
of

view. And I'm just going to move on to
the next question. And this is from
Jewels. No, no, it isn't from Jules.
It's from

Raphael. And Raphael says, "Why is Terra

Buddhism still popular in countries like Thailand, Burma, and Sri Lanka even though it teaches anata and makes no statements about the state of Nibbana? I mean, the doctrine of anata is confusing even for many intellectual Buddhists in the west. So, how is it for the ordinary population of these countries?" Well, I mean, how about the the Christian Trinity? I mean, that's just like a [__] That's just some kind of mindbender.

Christians don't seem to have a whole lot of problem with it. Even like illiterate peasant villagers in the Middle Ages, you know, they might be I

mean there was like riots and stuff over like the exact interpretation of the Trinity, you know, it's like does the Holy Spirit emanate through the Son from the Father or does it just come directly from the father? And there was there was blood flowing in the streets over this kind of stuff. And it was largely people I mean they didn't know they were just following along with their dogma. You know, their teacher said it's this way so it's this way. And then death to the infidels. So in like teraba Buddhist countries, you know, they they believe in all this doctrinal stuff, but it's just dogma is just like words. you know, they don't really understand dependent

co-arising. It's one of the most difficult concepts in Buddhism to understand, but I mean, they just give it lip service and they'll just repeat like what the commentary says about it. And it's it's fine. It's they just assume they're humble. They assume that even though I mean they might get the general official description or explanation kind of nevertheless it's the the monks especially the the seats who understand it they have faith that the seats understand it even if they don't fully understand it and it's the fact that they don't really understand it kind of helps them to have more

respect for Dharma because Dhamma is so advanced that their simple minds just aren't ready to go there and so defer to the monks and prostrate before them and make offerings to them because the monks understand at least the the simplehearted villagers believe that. So

anata yeah I mean and the only people the only terra Buddhists that I have encountered that vehemently argue against anata are westerners. and never encountered a Burmese person, a Burmese Buddhist arguing against no self. They might not fully understand it. Of course, they don't fully understand it. They don't fully understand a lot of

things, but still, it's their religion. They were just born into it. They were taught by their parents. The monks who are wiser than them assure them that it's true, so they have no problem with it. And my nose is kind of plugging up a little a little bit.

So, let's see here. I guess I answer that question. I suppose just a bit just like maybe two minutes. Just I got to I got this. Got to show off my Lithuanian hemp. No, I keep wanting to call it hemp. My Lithuanian linen robe by doing that.

So, let's see here. Oh, so there's
there's like follow-up questions to
this. Raphael says, "Are they simply
ignorant of this doctrine?" No. I mean,
just about any educated Burmese villager
and they can be surprisingly
knowledgeable with regard to to dharma
that they know about anata. I mean,
that's one of the basic teachings of
Buddhism really. You know, it's one of
the three marks of existence. So, they
know about it. They just don't can't
fully grasp it. But in a way it just
it's like an indication of how exalted
the philosophy of Dharma is that you know
they they can't grasp it but they just
assume that the seats can grasp it that

the arants the wisest seats definitely understand

that you know it's like western people and science I mean the average American doesn't really understand much physics doesn't understand much chemistry but they just assume the scientists just know and and it doesn't cause them to reject science just because they don't understand the subtle you know so the subtle teachings of

it. So let's see the next question. Do the monks not even try to explain it to them? Well, the monks themselves, most of them really don't understand it very well. They they can just repeat certain

teachings. But I mean, usually if monks are teaching lay people in Burma, they're teaching them stuff that's suitable for lay people, especially you're going to get loads of merit if you make lots of donations to monks.

That's like one of the main themes of sermons given by monks in Burma is

You're going to get reborn in heaven or as a rich, beautiful human being if you make donations to

monks. Wise guy monks just pound away at this

theme. But I mean, you can sort of get the idea across to lay people like the simile of the chariot. I mean, it's the simile of the chariot really is not

super difficult to understand. You know, you got a chariot. So, you take the chariot apart, you've got this pile of parts that came from the chariot. Is that a chariot? Well, not exactly. All the parts of the chariot are still there, but it's not a chariot now. Or you take a chariot, you take off one wheel, put on another wheel. Is it the same chariot? Well, yeah. And so, it's like chariot is just a convenient term for a certain assemblage of parts and then you can apply that to a human being, too. You know, it's like if you your finger gets cut off, god forbid, are you still you? Well,

yeah. You know, you use the same kind of arguments for a person so that some of the more intelligent, simplehearted villagers can somewhat get a grasp on it at at that

level. But there's really not a problem with an ata among like Burmese Buddhist villagers. They might not understand it.

They don't understand dependent rising either. But you know, Christ medieval Christian villagers didn't understand the the trinity either

really or how the Holy Spirit emanates or whether Jesus had one nature or two natures, that kind of thing.

So, I'm just going to move on to this

question. This is from Jules. It was a false alarm with the last time I said it was from Jules. But this one, this question really is from Jules. And he said, "Would reporting an illegal immigrant to ICE break any precepts?"

And it depends on your mental state that just reporting an illegal immigrant to the immigration authorities for deportation presumably.

And it would whether you're doing something wholesome or unh wholesome or just neutral depends on your mental states. I mean if you're doing it out of a hate of Mexicans for example then yeah and then that would be it could be

considered a kind of
uh pisunovacha which is a kind of wrong
speech like if if you're like bad
mouthing someone behind their back in
order to get them into trouble for
example you know it's like you're
malicious gossip or something. It can
even be true. You know, you can be
telling the truth, but if your motive is
to get that person in trouble, to make
trouble for that person by saying some
ugly truth about that person to somebody
else, then that's still pisova. It's a
kind of wrong speech. It's just like
malicious. So, if your motives are
malicious, you just hate Mexicans or
something. And so you're you're turning

in illegal illegal aliens because of
that motivated by just you know aversion
dosa or whatever then yeah you're doing
something bad for yourself and
technically that could be considered a
violation of um the precept against
wrong speech. But if you're just like a
patriotic American who sincerely
believes that anyone living in this
country should be here
legally then not necessarily. you're not
necessarily like engaging in malicious,
you know, backbiting or
whatever. So, let's see. Jules, the
second question, what about reporting
multiple illegal immigrants, dozens

hypothetically, leading to the separation of family members? Well, the separation of family members would be irrelevant. You know, it's like, what are your motives? Why are you saying this? And so I mean it would just be multiplied like dozens of times multiplied by the first case which could or could not depending on your motives be a case of wrong speech and thereby a violation of one of the five precepts.

So whether it results in the separation of family members would be irrelevant from the point of view of Buddhist ethics. Unless that's part of your motivation. You hate them so bad you want their families to be separated,

let's say. Then that would be part of your your malicious motives that would cause you to be violating the f or violating the precept against wrong speech when you're reporting them.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to Jules's third question, which is the last question of this entire

Q&A, and it is as follows. Have you ever reported an illegal immigrant to ICE?

And no, I have not. I don't even know for sure who is an illegal immigrant. I assume there's lots of them in town,

but you like there's a lot of hit and runs like auto accidents where you've

got probably some Hispanic person who doesn't speak English, you know, hardly or if at all who get in a wreck or something and, you know, they've got no insurance, no driver's license, anything like that. So, they just take off. So, you got to be careful about that sort of thing. If if if you're in South Carolina or pretty much any state, I guess, except for maybe Maine and you know, you get in some sort of fender bender with someone who doesn't speak English, best thing you can do immediately take a photograph of their license plate just because there's a good chance they're going to take off or they're going to be begging you in

tears, don't report this to the police,
you know, whatever it is. And then
you're going to wind up just kind of
screwed. maybe your your insurance won't
cover it or
whatever. So, yeah, I don't know anyone
in particular who is an illegal
immigrant, although I'm sure that there
are plenty of them
around. So, that's it. That's the That's
the last question. And I'm going to open
my emergency backup beverage just
because I feel like it. I' I've had it
here just for this show and then the
show's practically over and I haven't
opened it yet. So the hell with I'm

drinking

someh. And so like I should always say
at the beginning and never do except
maybe

once you have any questions you think I
can answer then especially about early
Buddhism, Terravada Buddhism, Buddhism
in general etc etc. I mean, you probably
heard all this before. Then feel free to
ask no more than three questions per
episode, please. And there is a chance
that soon it may go down from three to
two or even one because my my woman is
like got this idea that, you know,
several hours every Saturday is really
cutting into our weekend free time
together. And so maybe we could um like

reduce the number of questions and make the Q&As's once every two weeks and then fill in the gaps on alternate weeks with like pseudo readings or something. In fact, she especially has been talking about reading stuff that I have written, making videos about it, maybe using AI generated art to illustrate them or something. And I've been trying to get her to to do that with a poem that my father wrote. This I mean this has been going on for years. And so that may eventually actually start happening. So let's see. Like and subscribe if you haven't already. Just smash the hell out of the like button if

you liked it. If you didn't, then don't,
I guess. And uh be happy.

Alrighty then.

I do believe we are recording.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number 149.

I am your host Po Basa. And I know what you're thinking out there. 149 that could be a prime number. And in fact 149 is a prime number.

So, I've been considering just getting like a prime number feez cuz the majamica fez isn't getting much use anymore. In fact, oh, there it is. Yeah, it's still back there. The majama fez isn't getting much use anymore because people don't ask questions about majamaka very often or about nagarina.

And I mean, nagarina was kind of a
multiaceted sort of person. But Majama,
I mean, there's only so many questions
you can ask about it. It's It's
radically simple.

Oh, this is this is the umbrella. It was
in here like this.

I don't know if you can see me take it
out.

So, I guess

I should just uh wait into this and
start answering questions. And we don't
have a whole lot of questions. It's you
guys are going easy on me this week,
which is
fine, I guess.

So the very first question is from

Siovaken Seipad Zeda and Seovioad Zeda
who uh considers everything to be some
sort of cope asks the following question
regarding evolution or at least it
involves evolution and this is two two
in a row that have sort of an
evolutionary or Darwinian theme because
there are a number of questions that
touch on evolution.

So anyways, Siovak says,

"From an evolutionary standpoint," see,
told you, told you,

"From an evolutionary standpoint, is
spirituality a type of coping mechanism?

You can't achieve your natural desires
that will make you and your genetic

lineage prosper? So instead of being smarter, creative, or skillful at attaining your goals, you run away and try to destroy your desires instead. So you don't feel bad about being an evolutionary failure. And no, I mean for some people I suppose probably for God Buddha the founder of Buddhism I mean first of all before Darwin especially I mean evolution was not a mainstream concept. You know, there's some theorists, you know, going way back to, you know, the the early Greek philosopher Anakamander, who believed that we all descended from fish, that kind of thing. But not having

kids being an evolutionary failure. I mean, it was not a kind of thinking that most people engaged in. It was more like just a life failure because when you get old, maybe nobody's going to take care of you.

So anyways, let's see here. I mean, smarter creative. Yeah. I mean, it's not like the purpose of existence is just to reproduce your DNA sequences. From a purely biological point of view, that may be valid. But biology hadn't been invented yet throughout most of the course of human history. So, people just weren't thinking in those terms. instead

spirituality instead of being kind of
cope

is I mean it's it's a case of human
beings evolving going with the
evolutionary standpoint

um until we are smarter and in many
cases wiser than is in our best
interests as a species that is intent
upon reproducing his DNA sequences. So,
it's like we

we've sort of cut loose from instinct to
some degree. Not to the degree that a
lot of people might assume, but still
we've replaced a lot of instinctual
stuff with culture.

And sometimes culture can be like not in
our best interests. you know, you just

follow some tradition just blindly
following a tradition that maybe is not
in the best interests of the species or
of the society or whatever.

So, we've developed too much of a brain
so that we can start thinking and having
weird ideas like anti-natalism and all
that, but also we've got a a mind that
is sophisticated enough that we're
starting to get inklings of reality
shining through the thin places in the
illusion.

So

it's uh I mean it's sort of like human
babies are born premature. I mean
compared with other mammals simply

because our head is too big. And so I mean it's it's sort of like a give and take. You know this this high intelligence that humans have have obviously caused us to be one of the most successful species on the planet. But at the same time, it can be like led astray or just led in directions that that are not just intent upon survival and reproduction and that's not necessarily a bad thing. So let's see.

Have I answered the question yet? Is spirituality a type of coping mechanism for some people? But I mean, the best spiritual people, you know, the the greatest spiritual geniuses aren't

simply coping because they're not reproducing their DNA sequences enough.

A lot of them turn to a spiritual life after they've already reproduced.

So yeah, I suppose I mean it's it's more a matter of we're too intelligent to just be a mindless reproduction machine.

At least some of us are too intelligent for that.

So let's see here. So we find like other reasons to exist including understanding reality.

I think I'm just going to move on to section cod zero. No second question which is as follows. Why do you think so many westerners in spiritual traditions

suffer from narcissism

where they think achieving enlightenment will make them unlock their destiny of being the chosen one or something.

Delusions of grandeur looking down on others and thinking only they have found the true path. I've seen this same trend over and over again. Um this reminds me of a statement made by a person I used to know

u who said that when when people go to see some famous teacher like in their heart of hearts they're they're wanting that teacher to just single them out point at them and say you are the chosen one.

So exactly why this kind of spiritual

narcissism is so common I don't know exactly. I'm not exactly sure. I mean, I'd probably be happy if I went to see hear some famous spiritual teacher speak and they pointed at me and said, "You are the chosen one." I mean, that would be nice, I suppose.

Although, it never happened and I wasn't really at a conscious level anyway, uh, hoping for it to happen.

So

delusions of grandeur. I mean yeah it's it's hard to say exactly looking down on others thinking only they have found the true path. Well I mean thinking only they have found the

true path that's I mean that's common even in mere religion before you even get to actual spirituality. I mean that's just standard. Just about any religious person thinks that they have found the true path or at least the followers of their religion think you know that they have found they have found the true religion. Every religious person in the world has such wisdom that they are members of the one true religion.

So, I mean, that's just kind of it might be a kind of tribalistic instinct, but it goes farther than that because they're going to unlock their destiny of being the chosen one, delusions of

grandeur and all that. Um,

yeah, I mean,

this human ego is is going to find a way
to the surface regardless, even even in
very subtle ways in relatively wise
people.

But the exact reason, the exact answer
to that, I I'm not in a position right
now to even hazard a guess
as to why so many westerners in
spiritual traditions suffer from
narcissism

where they think achieving enlightenment
will make them etc., etc. Although to
some degree, I mean, Western people who
are going into some esoteric field, I

mean, they're sort of on the fringe
anyway, and they might think that
they're kind of, you know, narcissists
or whatever, kind of on the fringe or
how do I explain it? You know, they're
kind of special already. You know,
that's one of the reasons why they're
choosing some esoteric or fringe
spiritual system because they don't want
to be like everybody else. I mean, I can
relate to that. That's been sort of like
a a a

conditioning factor in my personality is
just this idea that the majority is
always wrong and I don't want to be like
everybody else and so you just go off
and do something different. I mean,

that's probably part of it right there.

Uh, but aside from that and this the tribalism thing that I mentioned earlier, that's about as about as good of an answer I can give without just walking out onto thin ice and making some wild guess without having carefully thought thought it out because I really have not thought of an answer for this question before reading it just now.

So I'm just going to move on to se of action sepat zena's third question which is apparently three4s of people have sensed their loved ones in some way after their deaths. Have you ever felt the presence of your loved one after

death? And what do you make of these experiences being so common? Well, I mean real paranormal stuff uh could be a factor. The only person that I can think of that would come close to this would be my father and we had like a strong connection which according to him went back more than one lifetime that according to him I was his father. I'm like a reincarnation of my own grandfather which makes me my own granddad.

So I mean I have felt you know every once in a while you get this feeling that my father is near or you know that he's not completely dead that kind of thing but part of that is just I'm

carrying you know like genetically I'm half him you know it's like he contributed half of my DNA and it could be sort of a similar thing to like identical twins who even though they're separated you know they still think along the same lines you know They have the same tastes in clothing and women. Birthday cards for each other. You know, there's a case of these identical twins who pick exactly the same birthday card to send to each other, you know, even though they're living hundreds of miles away. That kind of thing. So, I mean, there's probably a lot of that involved also. Um, or it's just a kind of memory,

too. It's like memory isn't just images in your head. It's like feelings and and so forth. So just having like a flashback of feeling the presence of one of your loved ones from when they were still alive when they were close to you. I mean that can happen too. So it's probably more than one reason why some people would feel like the the closeness or presence of some close person who has passed away. It's it's that it could be genuine paranormal stuff like the spirit comes is kind of checking checking out on you. You're just sort of you know seeing how things are going with you that sort of thing and you can kind of pick up on that

somehow.

But I would guess that most of it considering how common it is. Most of it would be just uh you know just a feeling maybe a sentimental feeling that just kind of triggers itself sort of like a dja vu or something. It's just like a a a feeling memory that you just identify as their presence when really it's a kind of memory. Although I mean death is very liinal. I mean, it's death is sort of a an opportunity for the the so-called supernatural to come into this world because death is just sort of a strange a strange phenomenon in and of itself

that has um generated lots and lots of
like mythology and just like taboos and
just strange beliefs in general.

and uh you know if faith is strong
enough it can make things happen.

So

yeah, I mean I don't know if I'd be even
included in the three4s of people who
have sensed their loved ones in some way
after their deaths other than just this
kind of feeling like you know he's he's
there kind of although I wouldn't I mean
even when it would happen to me I
wouldn't try to pin down the exact
reason why I felt that way cuz who knows
well wow section zod asked some
difficult questions

about things that I really haven't thought about very much.

So anyways, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Arpad RP A. Isn't it contradictory for monks to shave their hair and beard as a sign of renunciation or renouncement to the world since shaving implies the use of tools, razor, soap or foam, brush, etc. the making of which requires an entire functional society with division of work, mining, smithcraft, and all kinds of trades. Keeping the hair naturally unshorn as six, and some Hindu sadus do would seem more fitting to world renunciance. Well,

I mean, the James plucked their hair. I guess they might have still used tweezers, but they just pulled it out. They didn't shave it. At least they're supposed to.

Um, I think the main reason why Buddhist monks shave their head and beard is because they the earliest Buddhists lived in ancient India, ancient northern India, the Ganges Valley, where it was the style for men to have long hair and beards. In fact, men of the upper classes, I have read, would arrange their hair in elaborate braids and so forth so that you could even tell what clan they came from by the way they had their hairstyled. You know, sort of like

Scottish tartans or something. So, in a way, it was a symbolic act of just cutting off their social status in that sense.

Um but also there may have been some desire for the shamana tradition which include Buddhist and and janes and so forth to sort of distinguish themselves from the vadic brahmans who essentially had dreadlocks you know the jatulas they were called this the the matted hair aesthetics who lived in the forest and attended the sacred fire and all that. um you know in a way it could also be sort of distinguishing themselves from the vadic tradition but the main reason

that I have read that I've come across in books is that it was a symbolic act of just cutting off your social status because you could identify somebody's social status just by the way they wore their hair. Although of course you could you could argue well they're just creating a new social status of the renunciant but they're supposed to renounce society and I don't think that they were really thinking about shaving implying the use of tools the making of which requires an entire functional society with division of labor and all that. I mean westerners think way too much with regard to like obscure ramifications of an action you know so

like in ancient India eating meat was not considered to be immoral even for a monk whereas in the west they're thinking well you're by buying the meat you know you're encouraging this industry that kills more animals and so forth it's and from the Buddhist point of view it's it's subjective morals

These kind of considerations, they don't ramify out into all these obscure directions.

It's just what is wholesome right here, right now, or what is appropriate right here, right now.

And to some degree is like Buddhist monks were just following along with previous shamanic traditions where when you renounce the world you just shaved off your hair and your beard which again kind of symbolic cutting off of one's social status cutting off one's ties one of one's ties with society.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from a xenoid and more evolution here. From an evolutionary perspective, what are the biological drives for things that seemingly go against a species progress in the ability to survive like sadism, auto termination, homosexuality, monasticism, voluntary castration, etc.

Well, again like like the first evolution question, part of it is that we are like too smart for our own good. That we are capable of independent thought and that independent thought can lead us astray to some degree.

So let's see sadism. I mean, sadism is just sort of a perversion of an already existing

like inst animal instinct, which is, you know, to, you know, to get your enemies before they get you essentially. Auto termination.

Yeah. That's that's like a cultural thing that has sort of shortcircuited the urge for survival. You know, it's

like a Roman soldier who dishonors the legion, falls upon his sword, that kind of thing. that that's like human culture that is sort of supplanted just blind animal instinct and that's not necessarily in all cases a bad thing homosexuality I mean that I mean that's found even in prehuman like chimpanzees there's a lot of homoerotic behavior among chimpanzees probably among many other animals dolphins also where it's become in that case. It's just sort of like a a social thing, you know. It's it's sort of like the the beta male is sort of, you know, kind of asserting the alpheness of the alpha male by posturing in a in a like a female way to the male,

that kind of thing. So, I mean, that's that in itself is not purely like a human thing, although humans have probably taken it farther. I think in chimpanzees it's mostly oral sex and just the posturing part that is could be considered homosexual.

Umism I pretty much already answered that one. Voluntary castration. Also it's like we are no longer completely enslaved to animal instinct that we have eaten the fruit of knowledge. We've eaten the forbidden fruit. We are no longer in harmony with God's plan for nature in a sense. We we can go our own way and some of us go in weird

directions and that's not entirely a bad thing.

Um let's see there there's something else I was going to say here.

What are the biological drives for things that seem seemingly go against a species progress and the ability to survive?

Oh yeah, I wrote an essay on this once.

I can't remember if it's in any of my books, but sometimes we have an animal instinct that gets shortcircuited by like modern technology. Like human beings have a liking for sweet food because in nature, you know, among our ancestors, our prehistoric ancestors, sweet food was like fruits and berries

and that's relatively healthy. You know, you get vitamin C from it and so forth.

Humans cannot make their own vitamin C like most mammals can.

So nowadays we've got like processed sugar and high fructose corn syrup and all that that tastes sweet and so it kind of hijacks our animal instinct for liking sweet food or also like pornography is hijacking animal instincts like a male a human male is visually stimulated. you know, he gets aroused by a beautiful naked woman, a goodlooking, you know, wellproportioned young naked woman of breeding age. And so pornography short circuits that and

you got all these, you know, it's just pixels, pixels in, you know, just digital information that is transformed into images and sounds that get men turned on. I mean it's shortcircuiting animal instincts in that case also. So some of it is due to that sort of thing. But uh for the most part it's just that human beings have become too cerebral for our own good in some cases. You know we've to some degree distanced ourselves from animal instinct. You there's still we're still laden with animal instincts. I've read that human beings actually have more animal instincts than most animals do. It's just that we're not completely enslaved to those animal

instincts to the same degree as the average animal.

So, there's going to be more variation which uh is going to be good and bad.

Some variations good, some variations bad. Most variations more or less neutral.

Let's see. So, I think I answered that one. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's next question

after checking to make sure we are recording. And we apparently are. And I have to upload OS OBS Studio almost every single time I use it now because it just I keep getting this glitch saying that it was shut down improperly

even though I'll I'll hit exit and so forth and then it'll just keep shutting down and I'll have to just delete it and re re uh reinstall it.

had to do that like twice today before starting this video.

Anyways,

let's see here. Xenithoids. Next

question is, as a biologist, do you

believe that individual organisms are

hardwired to prioritize their own

survival or the survival of their

species or tribe? I think the best

evidence for the latter is beings

willingly dying for their own countries

and families rather than always trying

to save themselves. Yeah. It's um I mean

it's sort of like getting Dawkins, you know, so the famous sort of smug atheist scientist who wrote the selfish gene and and the the blind watch maker and he he wrote some really um some really influential mass market science books and really from his point of view and from a biological point of view it's mainly the gene. You know, it's it's like you are trying to protect your genes.

And so that's one reason why men tend to be attracted to women who resemble their own mother. It's like it's like this weird thing that has evolved in humans where a a a woman who has a kid, a

child, a male child, I mean, she's passing on to him a desire for a woman who resembles herself so that he will be like reproducing not only the genes that she contributed to him, but similar genes that are like in in other people. So it's it's like the gene is really running the show. You know, a human is is a human genes way of making more human genes is one way of looking at it. So it's and and this has actually been capitalized in some species like social insects like bees. I mean, it's actually to a bee's advantage to protect the the children of the queen rather than to have their own have their own babies because of the way um

genetics works out in in the order
himoptera which includes bees, ants,
bees, wasps, and saw flies and a few
other obscure groups where let's see if
I get this right. A female himanoptrine
is diploid has two sets of chromosomes
like people have. We have two sets of
chromosomes. One set from the mother,
one set from the father. Whereas a male
himoprine has only one set of
chromosomes. It's homozygous or is that
is that right? I think so. So anyways,
um if the the queen bee has offspring,
then genetically those offspring are
going to be 50% identical to her
genetically. But the workers, they're

getting all of their DNA from all of the father's DNA plus half of the mother's DNA so that their brothers and sisters are more closely related to them than their own offspring would be. And that is how it has survived because they are out to protect their DNA. They don't realize this, of course, but that's what they're doing.

So,

they're more hardwired to prioritize the survival of their their own genetic lineage,

which is not so much the species, it'd be more the family. And that's one reason why humans can be so familyoriented and so tribalistic

is this like prehuman instinctual drive.
And it's not even instinct. I mean
sometimes it's just mindless. Like with
bees I assume I don't know if bees are
intelligent enough or their nervous
system is developed in such a way
that they actually have instincts. It
would be just more like mindless
reflexes.

I mean there's like no no no actual
decisionmaking going on.

So

yeah, I mean the best evidence he says
for the the latter is beings willingly
dying for their own countries and
families especially their families. I

mean but the countries and to some degree even the families is again culture to some degree supplanting instinct.

So sometimes it's, you know, just people die just they're not really benefiting much of anything by by doing that.

But definitely from a biological point of view, it's like the gene is king. The gene and Charles Darwin. I got to throw that in there.

So I guess I'll just move on to the next question. This is also from Xenithoid.

Do all the previously mentioned behaviors suggest that the primary goal of organisms is not necessarily survival but power, pleasure, enlightenment, etc.

In the Buddhism and evolution video you did with Brian and Ajan Punadamo, the Ajan mentioned that he believes consciousness is always seeking a greater vehicle through evolution. Um, let's see. So, what is the actual question here? Do all the previously mentioned behaviors suggest that the primary goal of organisms is not necessarily survival but power, pleasure, enlight Well, I mean obviously the primary goal of organisms, most the overwhelming majority of organisms is not going to be sur power, pleasure, enlightenment, etc. Like plants, hell of a lot of organisms are plants. They're

not going for power, pleasure, or enlightenment. They're just reproducing their DNA sequences. That's the way it is with most most animals, you know, some copapod, some plankton out in the ocean. They're not going for power, pleasure, or enlightenment. They're just mindlessly eating and reproducing.

So,

let's see. Yeah. The primary goal of organisms from a biological point of view, and this applies to most organisms, especially the ones that are not as intelligent as we are. You know, you get into the most intelligent organisms, human beings, chimpanzees, orangutans,

bottl-nose dolphins, that sort of thing, then they're going to be sort of deviating from just purely Darwinian survival of the fittest, like with regard to their their perspective, you know, they're going to start having, you know, original ideas. is, you know, they're going to start kind of deviating from the biological status quo because they're just getting too smart for their own good.

So yeah, so among higher like higher vertebrates, power, pleasure, and maybe even enlightenment becomes more and more of a factor. But and before you get up into the higher vertebrates,

you know, then plus I don't I don't know, there may have been some extinct seephalopod mollusk that was sentient, you know, way smarter than your average octopus, you know, maybe they would be included in this. But for the most part, the overwhelming amount, the overwhelming majority of organisms are either mindless in the sense of not having like a nervous system and a brain or or they have one that's just so um simplistic in its its design that they're just slaves to their own reflexes and instincts.

And some people really aren't so different from that.

I mean a lot of people and probably most

people are slaves to their a combination of instinct and culture.

So I guess I answered that question. I'm going to move on to Austin here

who says, "Given declining birth rates, especially amongst white western

populations, but also globally, do you

believe Christianity with its

theological emphasis on marriage and

child rearing is better suited to

addressing this demographic challenge

than Buddhism, which traditionally

prioritizes monastic detachment over

family obligations?

to some degree maybe. Although I mean

you go out to some rural village in

Burma

and I mean when I was living um on the outskirts of Alando Kazba National Park the the village women in that area had an average of about five kids each. I mean it's like you walk through the village there's just little kids everywhere.

So

I mean the higher levels of Terravada Buddhism, you know, they encourage renunciation and celibacy and so forth, but most of the people just I mean they just don't do that. They're just people. And so you could say Christianity is better for addressing the demographic challenge than Buddhism. But really it's

a matter of what the society is doing
that I mean it's just setting aside what
religion is the official religion of the
society. It's like how technologically
developed, how prosperous. It's like I
mean the Roman Empire was was similar
where

it's like people just when you when you
reach a certain level of prosperity you
just don't want to have kids. They're
just they're like they cramp your style.
They're you know they just you can't
have as much fun when you've got kids to
take care of. You know you can't be as
selfish as self-indulgent.

So it's that aspect of the the culture

that is more important I think than
which religion you're following. You I
mean officially as like the the state
religion or just the the main religion
of of the society. It's more a matter of
other factors like economic factors and
just like moral decline
and
just decadence
is going to you know it's just um you
know like Oswald Spangler you know
mentions he talks about in his decline
of of the west that I it's like just
it's or the cycle of history you know
strong men make good times good times
times make weak men. Weak men make bad
times. Bad times make strong men. And

it's like the good times make weak men
that and weak women that just don't want
to have kids.

So

yeah, I mean all in all it may be that
Christianity might give a slight edge
over Buddhism with regard to how many
children people want to have on average.

But again, I think more important
factors would just be like
prosperity and technological development
and just self-indulgence. A welfare
state that's going to take care of old
people, you know, without them having to
rely upon their kids as their as their
social security. I mean, that's a big

one right there. You take away the welfare state and people are going to be having kids just so that they're not going to be like begging in the streets or freezing to death when they get old and they're too old to work.

Although, I guess

pensions can uh help stave off starvation and hypothermia in older folks, too.

Let's see here. But if you're a subsistence farmer, there's no pension.

So, I guess I answered that. And I'm just going to move on to Master Poe, who says, "Have you checked out James Tour? He's brilliant." And I have no idea who James Tour is. No idea whatsoever. I

didn't even like look up his Wikipedia page or anything. I just have no idea who James Tour is. So, that was an easy one to answer. The ones where I I just absolutely am clueless with regard to the answer. the easiest ones because then I can just say I don't know and move on to the next one. And this next one is from Phyles. And Philes is the one who asked the the the big question about evolution last time.

And he he he started another I mean this huge essay question and it's like he says my question is the same as last time namely who should one believe in the large-scale evolution of species by

natural selection. So he just asks the same question again.

And so I said, "Look, I'm not going to answer this this whole same question again, but there are a few things that I might as well comment upon." And in in his long long long question, which is mostly just commentary,

he says,

uh, among other things, quote, "My main contention is that there seems to be insufficient or no evidence of micro evolution." So I mean he just dismissed and ignored my answer to the last question. It's like I didn't give the the answer he wanted. So he just asked the same question again hoping to get a

different answer. But he says no evidence of micro evolution in in like the previous question. No evidence. So I spend several minutes listing off evidence. the evidence of the fossil record, the evidence of embryological development, the evidence of vestigial organs, and then after that he says no evidence, which apparently means that he's just paritting this no evidence thing. And even if he hears evidence, he doesn't want to hear it.

So then he'll he says here, the paleontological record shows that we never have the intermediate forms that Darwin relies on. Again, he just

dismissed the whole idea of chronoscies.

I told him about chrono species,

dismissed it. Nope.

But always a sudden appearance of
species.

And that is one thing that um is is
common in the the fossil record is you
you don't have an obvious intermediate
stage. Although there's intermediate
stages everywhere.

For example, an amphibian is
intermediate between a fish and a
reptile. Just to give like a really
obvious,
you know, uncontroversial
example,

but I mean it happens at a smaller

scale, just the different stages. I mean, you don't have nothing but reptiles and all of a sudden boom, you've got this fully formed mammal. doesn't work like that. The earliest mammals were almost reptiles like monotreams who still exist like the akidnas and the the platypus. They still lay eggs. They don't have nipples. It's just that the the milk they li the mother lies on her back and the the milk just kind of pulls up on her chest through pores.

And if you looked at a a monotream skeleton, even an expert, they would have to assume that it's a reptile

except for some bones in the skull.

That's the only difference. In the the earliest reptile or the earliest mammals, it's almost a reptile.

Or like another example is a tadpole, an embryonic, a larval frog. If there were you had like a scientist, a biologist who looked at a tadpole had no concept of frogs, he would assume that's a fish because of the the embryological development and so forth.

So I mean I'll just I'll just read a little bit more here before I I do any more ranting. The traditional view is that life does not increase in complexity over time. Contra Darwin's thesis which says life becomes more

complex through evolution. In defense against this, microbiology has shown that the simplest unit of life, the cell, has a complexity beyond imagination and that life does not go from the simple to the complex but starts with infinite complexity. Well, infinite complexity is a bit of an exaggeration. And also, you consider the the most simple, the most archaic kingdom of life is the archaic bacteria. They're anaerobic bacteria. As they're like the first living beings on this planet and they're not nearly as complex in certain ways as more advanced like

the like Mona I don't know it'd be
ubacteria or something like that I think
they've changed the name of the kingdom
which includes most bacteria and like
blue green algae and so forth and then
you get into animals plants fungi that
sort of thing so the archacteria
are noticeably less advanced or less
complex than subsequent life forms. And
the archipacteria were the only life
forms on this planet for billions of
years according to the fossil record
which files don't seem to have much use
for.

So,

and and it's it's also true that
evolution isn't necessarily going from

simple to complex. Evolution can go from complex to simpler forms. For example, the flea, the ancestors of the flea had wings, but they lost their wings. And because, you know, they they adopted a life of being a parasite living on the body of a dog or something, the wings would just get in the way. It would increase the likelihood of them being like injured or something. So, they just lost the wings. But their ancestors had wings.

It is true that there does seem to be what Steven J. Gould called punctuated equilibrium in evolution where you have like a sudden not sudden

I mean it takes still takes a long time
but a relatively quick change in form
followed by a kind of stasis and then
relatively quick forms but the evolution
of the human species it's it's sort of
like a continuum and it's like arbitrary
where you draw the line between species
because it was a continuum like some
some fossil remains of prehumans. It's
like is that homo erect is that an
advanced homo erectus or a primitive
homo steinheimsis
or h highidlebergensis. I mean
so
yeah I mean the the whole idea that
there are no intermediate forms again
just dismisses chronoscies

and Steven J. Gould, I have to admit, I mean, he has been sort of outed as a as a kind of fraud, although not with regard to his punctuated equilibrium theory of how evolution works, but because of mainly this one book he wrote called The Mismeasure of Man, where he's saying that earlier anthropologists were cooking their data to make like certain ethnicities appear to have a larger cranial capacity than other ethnicities. And it turned out that Steven J. Gould himself was falsifying the data because actually there are such differences but we can set that aside. We don't have to we don't have to discuss that sort of

thing. Um

but I mean again

getting getting back to the main

question

that evolution

is is so obvious that it should not be a

question of whether evolution occurs. I

mean going with empirical science it

should not be a question as to whether

it happens as to how it happens. If you

think that like natural selection is

insufficient, you can add other factors

like Schopenhau's will more metaphysical

stuff like Ajan Punadama was talking

about.

But I mean it's it's so obvious that

there is like this sequential

development of life forms you know first
few billion years nothing but any like
the most primitive bacteria. Then you
get enough oxygen in the air. You get
like bacteria that can metabolize that can
respire using aerobic respiration which
makes them much more efficient at at
respiration at their metabolism. And
then there is evidence that some of the
organelles of a eukaryotic cell like an
amoeba or something. It's a
single-celled form. It's a
single-celled life form. It's it's not
a bacterium though because they have
organelles like mitochondria and plants
have like chloroplasts

and there is evidence that mitochondria
and these chromop chromos chromoplasts
or like chlor let's call it a
chloroplast although there's other kinds
similar to chloroplast they have their
own DNA which indicates this it lends
credence to the theory
that the original mitochondria

Mitochondrion

was a kind of symbiotic bacterium living
inside of a larger bacterium.

Otherwise, why do they have their own
DNA?

So, just getting back to like the fossil
record, setting aside the the laral
development, embryological development,
and also vestigial organs.

I mean, you don't have a mammal arising before you have mammallike reptiles.

I mean, mammals didn't just suddenly appear in the pre-cambian explosion.

There were no animals with bones for a very long time.

So, it's like the mammals didn't arise until you had mammallike reptiles called thorapsids that arose. Reptiles didn't arise until they were already like reptilelike amphibians.

The amphibians didn't arise until you had lung fish, fishes with lungs and so on. I mean, it is obviously a sequential development based upon pre-existing forms. It's not just sh just appearing

magically out of nothing.

And if you don't think that natural selection along Darwinian lines can account for that,

then you can you can come up with other ways of accounting for it. But still, you got that to account for. And just to reject it, to say no evidence is just willful blindness.

So I'm just going to move on to uh Phil Lees. I mean, after I told him I wasn't going to answer that question again, which I kind of are, which I kind of just did. He asked three other questions. So, I'm letting it slide. He He asks what would ordinarily be the transgressive fourth question, but

considering that I kind of dismissed his first question because it's the second time he's asked the same question in two videos in a row.

I just said I wasn't. So, he came up with three new ones, which is fine.

So he says, "Do you think sexual promiscuity is bad for a man?" In most cases, yes. I mean there can be like exceptional cases. It may be that God Buddha before he was enlightened was sexually promiscuous. He had according to the legends, he had a harum of dancing girls and female musicians, a herm of slave girls. You know the house was full of beautiful young women. So

there's possibility that he wasn't just messing around with his wife and it was probably

socially acceptable back then except maybe to the wives.

But I mean then it could be that in cases like that a man can have his fill of sensuality and realize that it's still not satisfying. It's just not deeply satisfying. And so they start looking for something else. And that's one reason why you have so much um spirituality in like California where you've got these rich beautiful people that get everything they want pretty much and still some of them have the wisdom to and the sensitivity to know

they're still not satisfied. So that
they they reach out for something
higher.

But for the most part and I think Gorama
Buddha would agree he does in the sutas
sexual promiscuity is you know it's kame
su machara

sex sensual misconduct and you're better
off not doing it even though there might
be some wholesome side effect that spins
off from that still as a general rule
you're better off not being sexually
promiscuous

and it's I mean it's bad for your health
it's just you make bad karma for doing
it so that bad things are more likely to

happen back to you. You're probably better off not doing it. Just you don't want to be sexually promiscuous just in the off chance that it's going to result in some you know onwe or you know dissatis deeper dissatisfaction that's going to spur you on to something better.

So I'm going to uh move on to Phil Lee's next question

which is is intellectual curiosity unenlightened behavior and again this is sort of second guessing what the mental states of an enlightened being would be like. And I can't really say for sure whether an enlightened being would be intellectually curious. I assume if it's

like a craving for knowledge, then yeah, that would be unenlightened because an enlightened being presumably would not have craving anymore. I mean, that's going with the four noble truths. I mean, that's practically the definition of enlightenment is the cessation of craving.

But being open-minded, you know, you're having conversations with people that come to visit you and just asking them about, you know, their beliefs and so forth. uh being bahusuta according to the to the poly which means being you know learned or having heard much that's not necessarily

unenlightened but it would depend on
your motives if you're if it's motivated
by craving if it's motivated by
attraction like like greed for knowledge
that sort of thing then it would be
unenlightened

so let's see here I'll just move on to
Phil Lee's next question

he says increasingly ly I am coming to
believe that all businesses should be
legally mandated by the government to
accept cash thoughts and I have I agree
with this. In fact, it says here I'm
going to take some money out of my my
pocket here. Let's see. \$20 bill. Does
it say it?

See, this note is legal tender for all

debts, public and private. So, it says
right on the money that I mean if you
owe someone money, they can't refuse
cash,

but nowadays there are places that
refuse cash. Like, I think Costco
doesn't accept cash, which is not good.

But I'm I almost had to sleep on the
street in New Orleans on my way to South
Carolina because I had like a I went to
this hotel and they would not accept
cash. And it's like I was just recently
a monk. I was still wearing robes, you
know, I didn't have any other clothes
yet and I had no credit cards. And
they're say, "I'm sorry, just we we we

can't accept cash." And then they said, "There's a Holiday Inn blocks down that way. Maybe they'll they'll probably accept cash. So, I took all my belongings practically, including this Burmese military like a foot locker thing that had no wheels on it and the handle broke off. I'm just struggling getting all my stuff two blocks down the road to go to the Holiday Inn and they wouldn't accept cash either. So, then I had to come back to the other place struggling the whole way, just panting and sweating.

And then

I mean they I they wouldn't even let me rent get a room even if I had a credit

card. They were saying do you have a reservation? I said no. Well you can't stay here without a reservation. I said well do you have any vacancies? Yeah. Yeah we got vacancies but still you got to have a reservation. So then he said well how about you just go over to sit over there and online you open up your computer your your laptop and online you can make a reservation. I mean it's so stupid.

But I mean, refusing to accept cash, I finally had to wake up my sweetheart and have her send them her credit card information just so I'd have some place to sleep so I wouldn't have to sleep in

the street

because they would not accept money. And
yeah, that there should be a law that I
mean, if if you got to pay for
something, you should be they should be
required to accept cash because that is
money. That's what money is.

So let's see here. I'm just going to
move on to next question. This is from
Sedarta Lohachita. And Sedarta Lohachita
says, "The last moment just before
death." Uh I forgot to do the thing to
the computer. You got to
No, it's too late now. Oh, there it
went. Nice.

Okay. Sedarta lohachida says the last
moment just before death according to

vajraana is said to be one of the most important moments in human existence.

That precise moment before dying can either benefit or ruin your next rebirth. For example, seeing someone you hate right before dying and dying with that intense karma due to the hatred in your guts just before passing away would generate very bad karma. so strong that it could even override the karma accumulated through your previous life. And it works the other way around as well. If an evil person before dying sincerely repents for their wrongdoings, that positive karma at the moment of death might outweigh all the negative

karma accumulated throughout their life.

What does Terra say about the moment just before death? Well, I've had it pointed out to me that there's more than one explanation in Terravada. That one explanation in Terravada is somewhat along the lines of what Sedarta Loha was saying. Although it's not going to completely override your karma. It's like let's say that you've been an evil person and then on your deathbed right before dying, you know, you you're feeling intense love for the person who's taking care of you so selflessly. you know that you know you have compassion and love and gratitude for this person now one of the first times

in your life maybe but still you die in this wholesome mental state then that's going to be like you're going to have like the the bearing towards a better rebirth because of that but still it's not going to completely negate all your past karma. So, you might be reborn as some rich, beautiful person, but then again, you're going to have all kinds of problems because all this bad karma you made isn't just going to go away. Or or similarly, it's like you've been a good this good saintly person, a wise person most of your life and then like you get murdered or something and you're feeling just like rage and hatred towards this

person who is killing you. Then again,
um, you might wind up, you've got like
this bearing. You're heading in like a
negative direction, but still all of
your good karma is very much going to
like ameliate

this, you know, you're you're reborn as
an animal or something. Um, and but
you're like some spoiled poodle
and then you don't live very long. And
then you know just after a few years or
whatever

then you move on to something better.
So there is that in terravada also it
it's not as extreme as Sedarta Loha
explains for vajarana
but it's

that belief is common to Hinduism also which is like one reason why Mahatma Gandhi when he got shot his last words were heyram like oh god like in the movie so starring what Ben Kingsley I mean you could kind of translate hey Ram as oh god but it's not like oh god God, I've been shot. It's like, hey, God, because he wanted his mind focused on God as his last conscious thought, which is going to help bring him closer to God after he dies.

So, let's see.

So, it's like your last moment is going to influence like the direction you're headed

after like at death, but it's not going to completely override all of your karma. So, you can be an evil person, have one good thought right at the moment of death. It's not going to just have you live a good life next time.

It's like you might wind up some spoiled rich kid and then you're going to get, you know, addicted to heroin and and just messed up and getting like bad drug deals and and all this stuff and it's just going to be a mess.

I mean, I've I knew this this rich man in Burma. He was a really good guy, devout Buddhist, and he got sort of drafted into the national parliament because he was kind of a a rich,

influential, good person. So the government just told him, "You're a member of parliament now." And he didn't he didn't want to go, but you don't really say no to the government, otherwise you just kind of disappear. But this really good guy, I mean, all of his kids were just messed up. Partly because, you know, they were just spoiled rich kids and with no concept of, you know, why should I have to behave myself, you know? So, we had one kid that's just, you know, pretty much like the kid that that I just described, just just strung out on heroin and all messed up, like Hunter Biden types.

So, I guess I answer that question. And so, I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's second question.

I've heard about some Hindu sects who say that if you wish just before to die to become a deva, probably you can become one. Is that a Hindu superstition? Yeah, that's pretty much of a Hindu superstition. That I mean, if you're just like a crude person with crude beliefs, a crude mind, and you have this crude desire to be reborn as a deva, then it's not going to happen. It may be if you're like a saintly wise person who dies with your mind directed towards becoming a deva then it's like this this directional thing like I was

just mentioning in answering the the
second qu or the previous question I
mean that's a possibility but if you're
just a superstitious foolish person has
this superstitious foolish desire to be
a dva I mean it's probably not going to
happen

even your your like idea of what it is
to be a da is going to be just grossly
unrealistic.

So yeah, I mean it kind of reminds me of
the idea that if you die in Bernaris,
then I think it's the god Shiva is going
to come to you when like when you're on
the funeral p and whisper some secret
name of God into your ear which is going

to cause you to be reborn in some heaven realm. Yeah, I think that's just pretty much of a superstition also. Although like a really wise person who believes something like that might be able to manifest something along those lines in accordance with their you know their the belief system they inherited from their their culture.

So

I think I'm just going to move on to Sedar Loha's next question here which is during your time in Burma as a monk you developed some deep friendships with some monks like Sar Puta and Mogulana. I assume he means that my friendship with monks um was sort of like Sar Puta and

Mogulana were friends and not like I had friends that resembled Sar Puta and Mogulana.

And Sar Puta and Mgalana, you know, they they blended together like milk and water. They were so compatible with each other.

And I mean I had some friends, some monk friends in Burma that uh I mean I was always kind of a loner. There was always kind of a culture barrier. I had a few western friends too, but um yeah, I mean western friend, westerners, we may not be as compatico as like ancient ancient Indian friends

could have been. And the the the Burmese friends, there was still sort of a culture barrier, that kind of thing. So, I had I had good friends, but I don't think it was I never had any friendships in the monkhood with other monks that were really close. Mainly because I was a loner. I tended to avoid other monks anyway usually.

But I did have some good friends.

So, I guess I I guess I answer that question.

I didn't have a whole lot of friends. I had a few.

See,

I guess I'm just going to move on this

question. This is from PSA.

PSA says, "This is kind of a dated question already. It was asked less than a month or less than a week ago, but what do you think of the falling out between Elon and Trump?" And I guess they've already made up, you know, I guess they're at least um civil towards each other. they're not like making these wild accusations against each other. But, uh, I think Elon personally, I mean,

Elon Musk, you know, he's he's brilliant despite, you know, Democrats saying he's stupid. I mean, he's smarter than they are.

And I mean, he's just kind of he's he's on the spectrum. And also, he's like the richest man in the world. He's a CEO of a number of different companies. He's used to getting his way and then he's up against someone whose ego is even bigger than his is and who's more powerful than he is. Arguably, he's president of the United States and is actually exercising his powers rather than just letting bureaucrats just go along with the status quo.

And so it was just sort of like the two of them were were too big for the same town kind of. And u I think Elon he overreacted.

Um, I mean, mainly the the falling out

was caused by Trump's big beautiful bill actually sort of increasing government spending, even though Elon Musk was doing everything he can to just cut it down as much as possible. Sort of like when Elon Musk took over TR uh Twitter, you know, he he like allegedly fired like 75 to 80% of the employees and everything was fine. you know, everything just continued functioning and and he was kind of wanting the same thing to happen to the US government where you just strip it way down and and uh it just it wasn't going to happen. I mean, Trump really isn't a king. He can't just get anything he wants passed.

He's going to be having to toss bones to all sorts of um you know, senators and congress people that are going to be voting for this bill. If they're not getting what they want, they're going to vote no.

And so I mean there's I mean it would be good to cut spending more than is being cut, but still Elon just kind of overreacted and he's just used to getting his way because he's the richest man in the world and he's he's a CEO and he just butted heads with someone whose head is even harder than his is.

But I think probably enough people talked sense to him, including on X. You know, he was getting a lot of blowback

on X. people saying, you know, why you doing this? It's crazy.

So, I guess I don't know if they're really friendly or not, but they've kind of patched things up and they're not hostile openly hostile toward towards each other anymore.

But I I was I was sorry to see that all of a sudden they were hating each other.

I mean, you don't want that to happen.

At least I don't.

So, I hope that uh they can be friends in the future.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. What do you think about Trump completely banning Burmese

citizens from visiting the US? Yeah,
that was that surprised me that I saw
the list of countries that were on like
a you know, like a a visa ban or
something. You know, they weren't
allowed to come to America to have Burma
on the list. Yeah, that was I think it
wasn't really Trump's decision or he
just said, you know, come up with a list
of the most repressive, brutal
governments,
but I mean, I don't think there's any
risk at all letting Burmese people come
to America because I mean, what are they
going to do
really? I mean, they're not going to be
like blowing themselves up or crashing

planes into buildings or anything. I

mean, what are they going to do?

I mean, they can't even overthrow their
own government unless I mean, I think

he's assuming they're going to be agents
of the government, but even what's

what's a government agent? You know,

some some spy or something working for

the the the Burmese government. I mean,

what are they going to do? I don't think

they would pose any risk at all. So, I

just assume it was just on a list of,

you know, the most repressive

governments in in in the world. And I

mean, better safe than sorry, I suppose.

But it was kind of it was surprising to

me because I don't think that allowing
Burmese citizens to visit the US legally
would pose any threat whatsoever to the
USA and its national interests
might actually be beneficial unless they
just kind of come in on a visa and then
disappear. You know, that happens when
from visitors from I think

A lot of the the illegal aliens in
America just overstayed visas. You know,
it was time their visa expired and they
just said, "So what? I'm staying." And
then they just hide from the
authorities. It's just, you know,
stable, keep their head down.

There was a a nutty German nun who was
staying at the first monastery where I

was ordained in California

and she had a classical textbook case of schizophrenia.

very difficult to to work with. You

know, she one of the symptoms of

schizophrenia, the classic textbook

symptoms is just seeing absolutely no

reason whatsoever why you should

cooperate with anybody.

And there was a monastery attendant

there who was having serious problems

with this woman. So, he actually called

the immigration authorities and I mean

the California immigration authorities.

This is back in like 1990.

So I mean

already they were so inundated by illegal aliens from Mexico. They didn't want to deal with some German nun, you know, they just didn't do anything. Of course, they didn't do anything with regard to most of the the Mexicans and so forth either.

So

I don't know why I brought that one up. Yeah, I'm just moving on. Next question. That was just a gratuitous aside I suppose.

So next question from PSA. There is a sutta where the Buddha described the gradual decrease of morality worldwide accompanied by a generational decrease of lifespan to the point where people

would only live to be 10 years old and the global moral decline would culminate in seven days of a horrendous free-for-all sword fight. Do you think we're headed in that direction right now? No. I do not I really I'm more of more Darwinian than Buddhist with regard to my understanding of where we came from and the general trends like lifespan is increasing and not decreasing or at least up until the last couple decades maybe that the lifespan is increasing rather than decreasing and uh you know we're becoming more soft you know we're not becoming necessarily

more um homicidal.

So yeah, I really don't think that human beings started off being like essentially gods who didn't have to eat food, just living on light and then gradually started this kind of downward spiral, you know, somebody just ate some of this nutrient-rich manna, you know, and then that all of a sudden they they started liking it and then they all of a sudden they have to eat food. Now, you know, the lifespan goes from thousands and thousands of years, then gradually gets worse and worse and worse and worse till you're down to like 10 years where, you know, it's like people go

through puberty at like five and it's just, you know, cannibalism and all this stuff going on. Um, yeah, I really don't ne I don't see that actually happening. Not literally. I mean, things can get worse. I mean, if there was like a World War III or something, then the lifespan would go way down and there'd probably be some like people killing each other to steal their food or to to eat them or whatever. You know, things can get a lot worse than now, obviously, but I don't think that things are gradually going down from a golden age. I I'm skeptical of the idea that there was ever a golden age. Things have always been [__] up

because we are human.

We've been in the Kaluga since prehis
prehistory.

So yeah, I do not think we are headed in
that direction right now. At least
unless that there's like some cataclysm
like a nuclear war or maybe some
asteroid impact that just like collapses
civilization, that kind of thing. then
something along those lines could
happen, but still people aren't going to
be going through puberty at the age of
five. And there's going to be no no
horrendous free-for-all sword fight. I
mean, that horrendous free-for-all sword
fight reminds me of the Book of Mormon.
I actually read the Book of Mormon, and

according to the Book of Mormon, there were two migrations of humans into North America. The first was when the Tower of Babel collapsed. I can't remember the name of the the patriarch, but he took some people to America, North America, I guess, and it divided up into like two factions who then fought to extinction until there was only one human left. You know, you had like women and babies and stuff out on the out on this battlefield with like scimitars and spears and stuff and just fighting until there's only one person left alive. And no, I don't think that that really happened.

And I don't think it's likely to happen ever. Although things can get really bad if there's some sort of calamity that collapses civilization, but still it's not going to be as bad as um the Buddhist suta says it's going to be.

And the Buddha himself is one of the questions he refused to answer was like the origin of the world. And then this I think it's the same suta and the dignity kaya where he just kind of reigns on that and gives like this very mythological kind of history of the world like how it began and everything.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from bio individual

and bio individual says is it indeed
true that from an ultimate perspective
nothing ever happens and he may have
asked this question on the discord
server because there are a few people
who are posting memes on this theme of
there's like this character
this cartoon character
you know he's he's always saying nothing
ever happens you know he's kind of
frowning

And so the bio bio individual asked you
now is it true from an ultimate
perspective nothing ever happens and yes
from an ultimate perspective from the
perspective of ultimate reality

nothing happens I mean there's no events
there are no discrete entities to
participate in events you know it's just
uniform if it's anything at all
but alternately
um in samsara it's like the opposite is
true something always has to be
happening in samsara
always there it's just like constant
change everything is impermanent and
that's just the nature of samsara it's
the nature of mind the nature of what
humans are pleased to call consciousness
there always has to be change otherwise
There's no perception of the passage of
time.

I mean, there would at least have to be

some kind of like vibrating kind of hum in your mind that would seem to be like some kind of staticky change that would allow you to perceive the passage of time. Because if everything stayed exactly the same, you'd be like a statue. You wouldn't even be alive for that moment.

So I guess I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Ruie and Ruie says where did you hear the best poly ever and by whom? Um, probably the best poly I have heard is from Sri Lankan monks because the Burmese have a very weird Burmese accent when they speak poly. And the ties also have a

weird Thai accent. Like in Thailand, it's like B is pronounced like P, P is pronounced like B, D is pronounced like T, T is pronounced like D. Like budo, it becomes p.

So neither the Burmese nor the ties nor the mons. I've heard moni too. Um none of that is really it's just like this weird accent superimposed on poly. And it's like whenever a language goes into a foreign culture that language is going to be spoken with the accent of the foreign culture as a general rule. So westerners who speak poly speak it with like a western accent like there's no aspirated consonants.

You know like d and dh

are pronounced the same like Buddha is
is spelled like or it's pronounced like
it would just be bu u da. The two ds
aren't like in in actual correct poly
the two ds would be pronounced
distinctly buddha and then there'd be
the h buddah.

It'd be something like that.

And so I I was told that um it was an
Indian monk was telling me in Burma that
if the Brahmans in India heard the way
the Burmese were pronouncing poly,
they'd just be laughing their asses off.

So um it may be the Indian monks who
come closer to like a classical
pronunciation of Sanskrit, which is

similar to Pi, would come closest to like the correct or original pronunciation of Pali. But the best I've heard is probably from Sri Lankan monks because like what is considered to be international correct poly is essentially the Sri Lankan pronunciation of it.

[Music]

And where did I hear it? Well, I used to spend some time at a Sri Lankan monastery in California.

I met a few Sri Lankan monks in in Burma also. So, it' be one of those two places. either Mahag Gandon where I met some Sri Lankan monks or this Sri Lankan monastery um in California that I would

visit sometimes. I don't recall the name of of the place.

So I think I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Yugu and Yugu says that I didn't answer his question last time. So he's asking it again but I don't recall having seen it. He says, "I've been watching Ajan Punadamo and he talks a lot of some primordial mind that was before hindrances. What mind is he talking about? If that is a mind state that we need to see true reality, how come then that primordial minds has not seen it then?"

Now,

Thai forest tradition has certain things that are not really orthodox, but it's Thai forest tradition like like eating cheese in the afternoon. Thai forest monks, a lot of them, probably most of them think it's fine and dandy for a monk to eat cheese in the afternoon, even though it's in all likelihood not okay.

Like kurd is forbidden in the afternoon, explicitly forbidden. And cheese is just a kind of purified kurd. You you like you compress kurd to get the excess whey out. And then that's that's cheese. You can culture it, but still cheese contains more kurd, more actual kurd technically speaking than what is called

kurd has. And kurd is not allowable. And so in addition to eating cheese in the afternoon or smoking cigarettes, that kind of thing that is just accepted by the Thai forest tradition, there's also this belief in this primordial mind, the the cheetah, which is pronounced like J in like in Thai in Thai, I suppose, because C is pronounced like J, J is pronounced like C, poly C, that kind of thing.

They get their their consonants switched around.

So yeah, it's it could be derived from Hinduism because Hinduism had a strong like uh cultural impact on Thailand

especially

not quite so much in Burma but Thailand

I mean Thailand is right on the border
with Cambodia like in Cambodia that was
that was largely Hindu for a long time
like anchor watt was Hindu

so it could be that the Thai forest
tradition in in Thailand and has come up
with this idea of the primordial mind
more from Hinduism than from Buddhism.

Buddha I mean orthodox terraata Buddhism
does not endorse the idea at all.

Although there is a little bit of
unorthodox terravada or pre-terravatara
like I've mentioned a number of times
there are two sutas one in the danikaya
one in the in the majikaya that refers

to essentially nirvana as infinite
formless consciousness you know
unmanifest luminous allround
and so this was a belief in Buddhism
going way back into ancient times that
just kind of fell through the cracks it
eventually was rejected in favor of
other theories

mainly just the idea that you should not
reify the absolute.

So the the Thai forest tradition has
more of a belief in this like primordial
mind than is quite orthodox
due to cultural factors in Thailand
maybe.

But I mean the official position of

terra Buddhism or maybe the unofficial
but is definitely the position is to
keep reification of the absolute to a
minimum. You do not try to describe
ultimate reality.

And yeah, there are sutas like there's
there's one other kind of famous suta I
don't remember what nikaya it's in where
it's like this mind is shining forth but
it is um defiled by incoming
defilements, extraneous defilements. And
there is kind of a theme that could be
interpreted that way even as far back as
the ataga where even your own thoughts
are considered to be extraneous
from just something coming from outside
that it's that in a way there's the

implication is if you don't have anything to do with these extraneous influences then you're just naturally going to be pure. And those extraneous influences include your own thoughts, your own beliefs.

So, um I mean there are certain like statements in the text that kind of can lend some support to this Thai forest tradition idea that you've got this primordial jit that you know it's like the the the one who sees that kind of thing.

But it's not exactly orthodox.

It's it's more like what the uponads is talking about with regard to the atman.

The atman is Brahman. You know, thou art that that's essentially the kind of teaching that uh um is favored by a lot of agnostics in the Thai forest tradition.

I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Chalmers and we're getting down towards the bottom.

This is going to be way less than two hours, which is kind of a nice change of pace for those of you who don't like three-hour long videos.

And Chalmers says, "If karma is not a cosmic law and isn't stored somewhere out there like in a universal library, but it's our own mental states or volition and nothing else. Actions do not make any new karma. So, actions have mental

states or volition?

Well, let's just start off with the orthodox answer to that question like in Abidama, the Abidamaapitica.

According to the Abidama pitica, Arhans still have mental states, but they don't have like

volition in the same way we do. They don't have chana in the same way that we do. So, because cheddan is karma, karma is volition, karma is will. So Arahanss don't have that kind of will that makes karma. Instead they've got what is called kiryitta which is mentioned nowhere in the sutas. I'm pretty sure it was apparently invented to account for

this problem by early abidama scholars.

It's functional consciousness that allows an arhant to like perform what appear to be volal acts while at the same time it's not really volition.

And St. John of the Cross had a similar idea for the Christian Arahant, the Christ, the perfected Christian, which I mean before I read St. John of the Cross, I just assumed that you know, nobody is worthy. The only way anyone gets into heaven is through the grace of God. But here's St. John of the cross who was like a meditation master describing what is very similar to a Buddhist arahant and declaring it to be possible and even accomplished by

Christians

like meditation master Christians

contemplative like monastic Christians

and he was saying that you become you

reach this stage of perfection by

mortifying your self-will you know

self-will is pretty much what the

Buddhists are calling cheddana which is

making karma. So you mortify your

self-will so you don't have any more

self-will and so you are just

automatically motivated by the will of

God that you become a kind of divine

puppet. You no longer have your own

will. It's just that you are acting

through the will of God in this

effortless flow.

So that is like a Christian attempt to explain how an arahant can act without making karma without having intention or will.

But it could also be that we're dealing with two different levels of reality where at the samsaric level there's still will. It's just that the arant has just transcended that. No longer identifies with it. It's just nature taking its course.

So that's another way of looking at it.

But again, it's like trying to second guess the mental states of an enlightened being, which is like a a precur, let's see, a recurring theme in

these Q&As. It's like what would what would the Buddha think or you know what what is the what is what are the mental states of an enlightened being like? And you know, it's sort of like dogs trying to understand the mental states of a human.

Even if you explained it to them, they still wouldn't get it just because you'd have to be human to get it.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is the last question already. This is from RFS. And RFS asks an interesting question that I never really thought about before. And it's talking about St. John of the

Cross, contemplative Christians. Again, he says, "Did St. John of the Cross sit cross-legged when practicing high contemplation? Was there a general recommended posture the contemplative Catholics practiced in? And I've read the entire works of St. John of the Cross. I do not recall him mentioning anywhere what position you would be in when you're practicing high contemplation. I mean it's standard for a Catholic when they're praying to be on their knees but I have read that I mean they they you can sit in a chair it may be that like a a Catholic contemplative like a carmelite discalsted carmelite like St. draw of the cross. They might

be just sitting on a chair or it could be in some cases they'd be on their knees like as though they were praying.

But I think meditation, you know, just like visualizing, you know, scenes from the Bible, that kind of thing, is more likely done in a sitting position and sitting on like a hard wooden bench.

Just I would assume I don't think they would be adopting any yogic cross-legged postures. I could be mistaken. Maybe nowadays now that they like some contemplative monks and nuns know about like yoga, they might be adopting like the full lotus or the half lotus or something. But in 16th century Spain, I

think there's a good chance they would just be sitting on like a hard wooden bench or some wicker chair or maybe just on their knees in front of an altar. But it seems like it'd be easier sitting than having to hold yourself up on your knees unless you're kind of like sitting back on your heels or something. But even then, I mean, your knees would get awful sore, but they were aesthetics.

They were used to being in pain. So, I really can't say for sure, but I would guess it would be either kneeling as though in prayer or probably more likely sitting like on a chair or or a wooden bench or something.

And that's it. That's that's the last

question. And like I should always say at the beginning, never do. If you have any questions you think I can answer, especially with regard to the stuff I've been answering that I've been able to answer and not like the stuff that people have asked that I couldn't answer, then I won't probably won't be able to answer that.

And like and subscribe if you have not done so already. If I mean, if you find anything of value in all this and be happy. And I'm going to stop recording now.

Okay, then I think we're recording and stuff.

Hail audience.

Hello and welcome to question and answer number

150. I am your host unckempt unwashed fresh out of bed pan basa and I was asked to do this live like the 150th episode of question answer. do it live.

And so I made a conscientious effort to remain alive

before doing this. And so I am live right now. I am living anyhow. I'm alive pretty much. Sort of kind of I guess mostly.

And did I mention that I'm your host Po

Basa?

Pretty sure I didn't mention that this is my beverage.

So, we got like a moderate amount of questions this time, which I would hope we'll be finished with in less than 2 and 1/2 hours. As I sit before you unwashed and unckempt, wearing my custommade Lithuanian linen robe.

have another sip of coffee

and I guess I'll just wait into these questions. And because I'm doing this live,

if you can somehow find a chat, you can ask questions there. But good luck with that.

So, let's just let's just wade into this.

And uh my my braided beard. See, I'm in training to become a Viking. I'm considering supplementing my income by making like pillaging raids on local small towns, but uh I think the beard's going to have to get a little bigger.

And also, I got to get a dragon boat cuz who ever heard of Vikings raiding small towns without a without a a dragon boat?

You know what I'm saying?

Uh so that'll be a little while.

Ah, let's just uh start answering questions here, shall we? Yes, we shall.

And the first question is from Romeo.

And Romeo says, I need your feedback on how to better accept two recent dystopian developments.

First, I recently flew from New York City to Dallas to visit family. As if the long and intrusive TSA security check-in process wasn't bad enough, the airports now have facial recognition technology during check-in. Although facial recognition is now optional, it seemed like I was the only one who refused it. Of course, it is only a matter of time that it becomes mandatory. Yeah, they're probably doing it automatically without your permission anyway. Let's see. Besides being taken aback at how I was the only one who

refused the face scan at the airport,
the conversations that I have had with
friends and family since they have
thrown me for a loop since then have
thrown me for a loop as well. Most
people have reacted with an
indifferent shrug of the shoulders
when I have brought it up. I'm not sure
what I am more freaked out about, the
roll out of the technology itself or the
sheepish way that some people seem to be
embracing it. The second recent foray
into dystopia that has me freaked out
happened a week or so ago when President
Trump hired AI surveillance company
Palunteer to create a centralized

database on American citizens. I voted for Trump and generally support him, but he definitely lost me on that one. While I still like him overall, Trump's bringing in Paluntee has definitely increased my blackpilled sense of doom and gloom, it has made me feel like both sides of the political spectrum are pretty much controlled by the technocratic elites and that any resistance to the sinister plans they have in store for us is futile.

Anyway, I'm having a really hard time accepting these developments. We haven't got to the question yet here. Anyway, I'm I'm having a really hard time accepting these developments and my

negative resulting negative emotions
with equanimity.

I'd love to hear your thoughts on this
subject as well as your response to the
following questions. Okay, we're getting
to the questions now.

One, this is the first question. That's
why he puts a one in front of it.

You often stress how important one's
mental state is and how one should react
to the world with as little clinging and
aversion and as much equanimity as
possible. However, aren't some things,
namely civil liberties and personal
privacy worth clinging to and not
accepting with such passivity?

Well, I mean, if you really want your civil liberties and personal privacy, uh you may want to go out into a forest. If you don't want to renounce the world and just sleep under a tree, just opt out of society in general, I mean, you just go like thorough live in a live in a cabin by a pond somewhere.

But so long as you are participating in a technological an increasingly technological society, then this kind of shit's just going to keep happening. So, let's see here. Yeah, I would I wouldn't be surprised if there's already like security cameras at airports that are like like singling out faces pretty much all the time.

And I mean you can just avoid flying I guess. Um maybe in future avoid driving. But one thing you got to bear in mind is that I mean our own mind is creating our reality. that your own karma is arriving at fruition all around you so to speak. So sort of like Echart Tullah says in his first famous book it's like um struggling against the external world is sort of like you know looking into a mirror and just like defying the reflection in the mirror and blaming the reflection in the mirror for the problems you're having or whatever. Um, it's I mean we're we are creating our own reality and so you can have a

certain amount of comfort in the idea that you have good enough karma, good enough karma in poly that you're not just going to get plunged into this hellish dystopia, cyberpunk dystopia.

So that's one reason I assume why um you know people science fiction writers like back in the 1960s and 70s were predicting all this weird [__] that was going to be happening and things really haven't changed that much up up until recently. I mean since the 70s and until now the main change is everything's digital and you got the internet which has just revolutionized just world society has revolutionized civilization partly because you can

bypass the official propaganda like outlets that have always been there but now you can you can like bypass them and get your news from some guy in his pajamas. is sitting in his bedroom with a \$100 webcam, that kind of thing. And sometimes that guy in his pajamas, not me of course, is a robe, not pajamas, but that guy, I mean, he uh I mean sometimes he has more viewers than the networks now, some of those guys. And also he might I mean in some cases he knows less but at least he's more honest as a general rule. He might be just as biased but at least he doesn't have like marching orders from

above telling him what he has to talk about what he's forbidden to talk about. Unless of course you know it's some fake grassroots thing that the Democrats are paying for or some such.

So

let's see what's the actual question though. You often stress how important one's mental state is and how one should react to the world with as little clinging and aversion and as much equanimity as possible. True. That's basic Dharma there. However, aren't some things, namely civil liberties and personal privacy worth clinging to and accepting with such passivity? Well, I mean you can adopt sort of the samurai,

you know, the samurai mentality or even
like a a a Gandhi and Satya Graa
spiritual warrior kind of mentality and
just you know peaceful like peaceful
non-cooperation I guess it's called and
then take whatever lumps you're going to
get for doing that just with equanimity,
philosophical detachment if you will.

So,

yeah, I mean, you can you can like
make efforts to preserve your civil
liberties and personal property, not
necessarily with lots of clinging. I
mean,

you can still do it philosophically.

It's just it's just like your duty, your

sacred duty. it's the right thing to do
so you just do it you know it's like
your your dharma from a more Hindu point
of view

and you know like the Hindus teach like
the Bavad Gita teaches you know if it's
your duty to slaughter your own
relatives

but uh let's just move on to the next
question here because I think they're
all pretty much along the same lines so
second question if the Buddha were
around today would his renunci iation of
the world include this technological
dystopia or would he fall in line and
accept it like everyone else? And again,
this is secondguing a sama Buddha's

mental states, which is uh kind of silly.

And really, if the Buddha were around today, I mean, where would he be around? Would he be like in northern India like he was last time, or would he be like in San Francisco?

So if the Buddha like the Buddha arose in India today, there's a good chance he would have just gone like he did the last time, just renounce the world. Just go off and live in what remaining forests there are in northern India. I guess around Cashmere, foothills of the Himalayas, there's still big forests. I assume I've been to India before. I

didn't see any big forests. But then again, we were like in the Ganges Valley going to Buddhist pilgrimage sites.

So, I mean, but if the Buddha arose in the west, you know, like the Buddha was he's like Teddy in the the the Salinger story who was born in New York, like Manhattan or something, then he might have to be, you know, just at least somewhat conforming to the culture. And I mean, that's still I would doubt that he would allow monks to have cell phones, that kind of thing. But I mean some technology like like the implication of the whole little story before the questions is I mean some of it's pretty much unavoidable so long as

you are going to remain in society and even though a Buddhist monk is supposed to renounce society still I mean you're on the outskirts of it. You're you're still you know participating in it to some degree as an outsider.

You can't completely cut yourself off from the culture. I mean, you wouldn't even be able to speak the same language as other people if you did that. So, you have to participate in the culture to some degree. And where a fully enlightened being and different fully enlightened beings might have different attitudes,

you know, they're not all just going to be exactly the same psychologically, at least from an empirical point of view. So, I mean, some might make different calls than others. So, it's hard to say.

even setting aside second-guessing the mental states of a fully enlightened being.

So, I mean, I'm sure that he would keep it to a minimum at the very least.

I mean, smartphones and stuff, I'm I'm kind of skeptical, but who knows? You're second-guessing a fully enlightened being.

They would know better than us what they're going to do because they're the ones who's doing it.

So

I'm just going to move on to the third question here also from Romeo.

Is that correct? Yep.

And uh the Romeo's third question is regarding this dystopia. What is the middle path between the sheepish shrug of the shoulders of a conformist normie and getting all worked o up over it like I am? Well, I mean, just philosophical detachment and just do what you think is right regardless of any blowback or push back you're going to get from the the NPCs.

So, I mean, there's there's a question kind of along these lines farther down

that um it reminded me of a quote from Krishna Murdy that I actually looked up last night. So, we'll get to something else along this line, but really, I mean, you just do I mean, if you really are just determined to be like a saint, you've got to follow your own conscience, you got to do what you think is right, regardless of what anybody else thinks.

And that's one reason why there's a saying in Catholicism that when one monk at a monastery becomes a saint, all the rest become martyrs.

Because saints can be difficult to get along with. You know, they're just uncompromising

in following their own standards. I mean, that's one of the things that makes a saint not necessarily a sage. A sage and a saint aren't necessarily the same person, but a saint. You got to be to some degree like an [__] like like Mahatma Gandhi was. How good of a saint he was, I'm not exactly sure, but I mean he was like that. I mean, he would just vehemently insist on just living up to his own standards and to some degree making the people around him, especially his wife, live up to the same standards. I mean, he was he was making his wife who was like a I guess they were vishas.

They belong to the Visha cast of India which is you know this sort of the the white casts you know it's like they're the descendants of the rank and file Indoarian invaders supposedly and so you know they're supposed to know the the vadas and all that at least to some degree

and uh he was making his wife who was you know a respectable Hindu woman clean the the like the bed pans of like Christian dolllets and this kind of thing, you know, sort of like the outcast Hindus, um, the untouchables who had converted to Christianity or some such. And he was making her like clean their toilets and this sort of

thing. And one time he was he just got like annoyed with her and just was dragging her out of the house, just throwing her out of the house cuz she wasn't smiling when she was doing it.

So I mean that's saints can be this way even if Muhammad Gandhi is not the best possible example of a saint. I mean he was given it a shot. He was trying to be a saint even if he did not fully succeed.

So

let's see here.

And the computer screen that I use as kind of a a light for lighting my face up a little better is um my my

sweetheart hasn't turned on her computer all the way. So I it just kind of keeps going on and off cuz I have to keep hitting the space bar cuz it's it's not logged in. You just kind of get the screen for logging in or whatever and then it doesn't last and it goes back off. But it is daytime so I guess it's not even necessary. So you can see like in the in the mirror or is it right right there? There's like daylight coming through the through the through the window, which is unusual because I usually do these Q&A at night because I work I work nights like and so I'm used to getting up late and so then on weekends I still get up late.

Got up at like a little after 11 today
which is just like an ungodly hour for
me to get up now. So anyways, let's just
move on to the next question. This is
from Sio action sepina
and this I'm gonna keep bending this
sideways.

Okay.

Seovction cipat zena says what kind of
karma is this? And then he he like
included this or attached this kind of a
meme from it looks like it's from 4chan
and it's
it's mainly just sort of a list
of things with like little little arrow
things.

It says B16

here dogs obviously attacking something
in backyard.

Go out and get them to leave it alone.

Oh [__] it's a bloody possum.

Notice. Oh, wait. Think it's dead? Go to

put it in garbage. Notice it's still

breathing. Decide to put it out of its

misery. Grab a broken skateboard and

smash it over its head. Pawsum starts

convulsing. Oh god, why aren't you

dying? Keep beating it. Feel like

Christopher Bale killing Jared Leato in

American Psycho. I never saw the movie.

It finally dies. Check the body and see

the dogs barely scratched it. MFW. I

think that means my face when I remember

that possums played dead.

And

Section Cad says, "What kind of karma is this?" Well, there's obviously some bad karma involved. Um, choosing to put the the possum out of its misery. I mean you are that's like a deliberate act to kill this possum that was still alive even though it's there's some compassion that's sort of ameliating the karma. You know it's not just pure black bad karma anything like that. You know there's there's a certain amount of compassion but then you decide to just bash its brains out or whatever. Just put it out of its misery. Still you're making bad

karma from a Buddhist point of view.

like what is it? Euthan Asia is still immoral from a Buddhist point of view.

Even if the person or whatever it is that's being euthanized is in terrible pain and isn't going to get better.

So, I mean, I've kind of done similar things. I mean, not really with regard to like I mean, I've probably done that before, too, where you just sort of compassionately try to euthanize something that is in pain.

Yeah. I mean, when I was a kid, I was reluctant to do that. I remember one time when I was a kid, my dad started the car and there was like a half-grown kitten under the hood of the car had

climbed up inside and it got chopped up in the fan when the when the car started and mangled the cat up and then the cat starts dragging itself away from the car. My father

tells me, "Go get go get the 22 rifle.

You know, we got to we got to put this cat out of his misery." and he wanted me to shoot the cat because I was a better shot than him as he as he was getting older and his eyesight wasn't as good. I didn't want to do it. You know, I just couldn't bring myself to shoot this cat who really hadn't done anything wrong other than just make the wrong choice with regard to where it was going to be

hiding that day. And so my father said, "All right, I'll do it." And then he shoots, doesn't kill the cat, and then it like crawls underneath the the house, you know, it makes it underneath the house. Now, it's not only mangled up by the the car fan, but it's also got a bullet hole in it. So, if I had actually done that and I had, you know, I was a better shot. There's a better chance that I would have finished off the cat. But, so it was sort of like I didn't want to make the bad karma, but I mean, it wasn't really I wasn't thinking about karma. It was just sort of like this soft-hearted compassion that I've always had for animals, you know? I just felt

sorry for the for the kitty, you know, I didn't want to kill it. But in that particular case, the amount of bad karma generated might have been less than my father just kind of winging it, putting a bullet hole in it, and then the cat still manages to to get underneath the house where, of course, we're not we're not going to find it.

So

golly. Yeah, that was his main mistake was to put it out of its misery, especially because apparently the possum wasn't in misery at the time that he decided to put it out of its misery because it was unconscious. Apparently,

according to this this here uh thread or meme or whatever it is that I mean the possum was like feigning unconsciousness or feigning death, you know, it's just motionless acting like it's dead playing possum.

So

yeah, I think the call to put it out of its misery was just like a mistaken. It was that was that was his final failure in this case.

So

yeah, I mean it's not pure bad karma.

There's definitely bad karma mixed in and especially I mean he's gone to the trouble of

like making this meme which means that

you know it could be years later. He might be way more than 16 years old now and you know it's still sort of like bugging him and that could be where most of the bad karma is coming from. It's just like the guilty conscience, you know. It's like I [_] up, you know, next time I won't smash an unconscious possum with a skateboard. And then just move on with your life, you know, just I mean, you didn't know. You thought that it was, you know, fatally w like mortally wounded or something.

So, it could be that most of the bad karma he's getting is just from the

guilty conscience or just sort of like the, you know, sort of some minor PTSD or something from the experience. And that's the way a lot of things go. I mean, sometimes by far the worst karma you get is just the the guilty conscience and just the trauma and all this stuff that you're working through for years afterwards. I mean, if you could just make the mistake, acknowledge you made the mistake, you know, acknowledge it was an honest mistake, you know, I didn't know, and then just move continue, you know, forgive yourself and continue moving forwards, you're going to be doing a hell of a lot better even from like a spiritual point

of view, a Buddhist point of view, then to just keep like beating yourself up over some mistake you made years ago. I mean, that's that's just foolish. It's just it makes things worse because no amount of beating yourself up over it is going to change that event in the past. So I think I'm just going to move on to Siovakaderna's next question.

He says I've heard people and then in parenthesis it says Gabbor mate.

Probably not pronounced mate. I'm just saying that just just because. Anyways, cio of action cader says, "I've heard people say the west is a guilt-based

culture while many other places are a shamebased culture." He claims guilt is a feeling. I guess he's talking about gabbor here. He claims guilt is a feeling about an action while shame is a feeling about one's inherent self. I always thought shame was better as you avoid doing things in the first place.

Although I don't know about Gabbor's definition as I'm not a psychologist. So he may be on to something. Which one do you think is personally better as an individual and society?

So there's what is called guilt here. Guilt is a feeling about an action and then shame is a feeling about one's inherent self which from the Buddhist

point of view is more delusional than
you know the feeling about an action.
that according to orthodox terraota at
least actions are more real than
inherent selves are.

But this is I mean this is sort of uh it
reminds me of the two kinds of virtuous
or you know like I guess virtuous
wholesome skillful shame in Buddhism hiri
and otapa. Sometimes you'll see that
like it's it's mentioned in the sutras
numerous times otap you know it's just
this pair usually they're found together
hiri and otapa
and those are like the two wholesome
kinds of shame

um there's also like the unh wholesome
kind of shame which is called cuca
that's like a guilty conscience like I
was just talking about with regard to
the guy who beat the possum to death
with a skateboard you know it may be
most of his bad karma is coming from
this this like guilt that he's
experienced and that's kukucha that's
that's always bad karma a guilty
conscience always creates bad karma from
a Buddhist point of view go figure
so hi Otapa
um it's not exactly the way uh Mr.
Gabor
uh explains guilt and shame, but it's
it's kind of similar. Whereas hiri is

like you don't want to do something
evil. You don't want to do something
unskillful,
you know? It's sort of like you don't
want to touch [__] or something. It's
just like conscientiousness. Whereas
Otapā is more like you don't want the
the evil consequences of that action. So
it's like with hitty, you know, there's
this urge to kill your boss or
something. I'm not suggesting anyone
kill their boss,
but it's just like you just recoil from
that. It's like no, that would be wrong.
Whereas Otapā, it's more like
you want to you want to do the same

action, but what prevents you from doing is you don't want the bad consequences of doing it. I mean at least that's like the official explanation of hir.

Sometimes in the poly text they'll just use a number of words sometimes just two that mean the same thing essentially like uh initial and sustained thought in uh when the description of the first first Jonah and second John and so forth. I mean it could just be that they both meant the same thing.

It's just that it's like an emphasis where you use two two or more words that mean the same thing in ancient poly texts. It does happen. But the official differentiation of hir and otpa hiri is

like recoiling from performing the
action just because the action is
unskillful

and

is recoiling from doing the action
because you don't you don't want the bad
consequences.

So this could be Hiri would come closer
to what Gabbor is calling shame and
Otapā would be more what Gabbor is
calling guilt

and Hi actually in this case is
considered to be somewhat better you
know it's somewhat more virtuous even
though both are good but still it's it's
kind of a more noble kind of a feeling

you know as long as they're preventing you from doing evil evil acts in the first place. Not just doing evil acts and feeling shitty about it afterwards, but doing it just prevents you from doing the bad thing. It's like in Buddhism, if you're going to have scruples of conscience, you know, moral scruples, have it before you do the deed, not afterwards.

Before is good if it prevents you from doing the deed. Afterwards just makes things worse.

You're just adding more friction and misery to an already kind of mistaken situation.

So what is the actual question here?

Let's see here. Which one do you think is personally better as an individual and society? Well, as Gabor describes it, you'd be better off um a feeling having feelings about an action.

Um, I mean ultimately for a monk, maybe for a lay person, just having a sense of honor and dignity and you know, I wouldn't stoop to that level, you know, like stealing something, you know, you somebody somebody at work leaves like a wallet full of money in plain sight. You could take it easily. Nobody would, you know, the security cameras there there aren't any, let's say. You know, you could do

it. nobody would know you did it. And I mean it's it's like the guilt that Gabbor is talking about is you know I just wouldn't do such a thing. Whereas the the the let's see the shame no the shame that he's talking about is I wouldn't do such a thing. Whereas the guilt is

um I don't I don't know. It's like with with Otapa it's just like I don't want to get caught you know otherwise I might do it but or it's like I don't want to to get bad karma for doing it. I mean that's just sort of a this along the same lines

you know you don't want to get punished by your own karma or by authorities or

whatever.

So I guess in a case like that uh what
is called shame

uh would be a little nobler you know
probably more virtuous better karma than
wanting to do it and then just being
afraid of getting in trouble or whatever
as a result

that's a more childlike or doglike
approach to being being a good boy
but uh I mean from the Buddhist point
point of view of the the feeling about
one's inherent self, then it's it's
ultimately delusional. But then again,
you could say that actions also are kind
of delusional ideas.

So, Hiri is probably better than Otapa,
but both are way better than cuca or
guilt after the fact. Regardless of what
kind of guilt it is, it's like I
shouldn't have done that or I'm a bad
boy or whatever.

You're better off without that.

So I guess I might as well just move on
to Siovakshan Cipad Zidena's third
question which is what is the biggest
change you have seen in your generation
growing up and today's generation. Well
I'm not exactly sure what today's
generation would imply is that kids
today like teenagers

I assume

generation what is it Z? Are we up to Z

zed for those of you um like in the UK?

It's hard to say because there are a number of differences. Um I think the main change I have seen is that today's generation, younger people are less independent

than my generation. Like my generation, it was pretty common for teenagers to rebel and just rebel against grown-ups, rebel against society, rebel against the status quo.

And I mean, you've got some rebels nowadays. I mean, some people are just juvenile delinquents, you know, they're just born that way maybe or just, you know, for whatever reasons.

Um, some people become like young Antifa, you know, soy terrorists, that kind of thing. But there's like an independence that my generation had. And in the generation before me, like my parents' generation, it was even more independence where kids would just go out and play until dark. No adult supervision. My father had these horror stories of [__] that he used to do when he was a kid. Just wild kids like in the 1920s and 30s in rural Georgia. It's just it was like beyond my experience when he'd be telling me this stuff that he used to do when he was a kid. And I mean what I used to do as a kid is

apparently beyond the experience of kids that they can't even walk to a park a block away unsupervised by adults.

They'll have the cops called on them.

There have been cases of kids playing in their own backyard unsupervised and some neighboring Karen will call the cops or or some kind of authorities just because the kids are playing without adult supervision.

And so yeah, even like Halloween, kids used to really go trick-or-treating for Halloween. Nowadays, not so much. just due to fear of strangers, fear of bad people, lower trust partly because of diversity.

I mean, it's pretty much a sociological empirical fact that in ethnically uniform societies or just neighborhoods are going to have higher trust than lots of different ethnicities of different cultures. kind of not really blending but just living side by side that it's you have less trust of your neighbor when your neighbor is speaking a different language from you in the privacy of their own home that kind of thing following different religions and so forth.

So I mean that's part of it.

Yeah. I mean this the the society is more feminized now and so you've got more feminized young people um less

likely to take risks also more averse to discomfort. I assume there's probably fewer hikers

or just fewer people roughing it camping out in the woods than when I was young

just because nowadays younger people

they pretty much just stay in the house

texting on their smartphone or playing

video games that kind of thing watching

Tik Tok videos that kind of thing. So

the internet has helped to bring that

about. But I think in large part it's

just the feminization of society

is sort of the the emasculation of

western civilization

is largely resulting in kind of softer,

gentler, wimpier kids

in general.

That might be the biggest change. It's the one that occurs to me anyhow.

So anyways, I think I'm just going to uh move on to the next question. This is from Newman.

And Newman says, "If karma is the natural law of cause and effect in the cosmos and its natural trajectory is to reward wholesome, morally good actions and penalize unjust, unh wholesome actions, doesn't this mean the cosmos and samsara is ruled by a just and good law and thereby it isn't unh wholesome in reality at all?" Maybe I'm misunderstanding the Buddhist judgment

of samsara in the cosmos. If something is governed and directed by a just or good principle which finds its telos, it's it's like its end or goal and fulfillment in liberation. There doesn't seem to be an antagonism here. Well, I've mentioned before that it really is kind of a you I got to change these hyphens into dashes because I'm kind of a grammar Nazi. Possibly the only kind of Nazi that I that I have ever been is a grammar one.

So, let's see here. And I I do spend considerable amount of time like fixing the grammar and the punctuation of of these questions

just cuz I'm I'm just that way.

So anyways, uh yeah, it's it's a common misconception that karma is some natural moral law.

You know, it's it's it's like a cosmic law. And it really is. It's not

karma is not like set up by the cosmos to reward goodness and punish badness.

That's I mean that's just a common misconception

that karma in a way is kind of cause and effect. You can say cause and effect in

and of itself is not moral. But it's

like if you hit your own hand with a

hammer, it's going to hurt. But it's

it's not like

that that is like punishment. You're

being punished by hitting your own hand with a hammer. that there's some sort of cosmic law of punishment, rewards and punishments that the cosmic law has been set up in such a way that if you hit your hand with a hammer, you are punished

for that action by feeling pain. I mean, it's just the natural consequence that if you move towards wisdom and liberation, you're going to suffer less. You're going to have less delusion, less like delusion induced aversion and attraction and just friction with your surroundings. You're going to be more in harmony, more at peace,

more equanimity, more acceptance
than if you're like struggling against
[—]

So, I mean, it's just a natural
consequence. If you move closer to to
wisdom and purity, you're going to have
less like delusion and delusion induced
suffering. You move deeper into like
just some Saric thinking and just, you
know, look out for number one and screw
everybody else, that kind of thing.

Then, I mean, it's not like some cosmic
law is punishing you. It's just that
you're hitting your hand you're hitting
your own hand with a hammer. You're just
waiting deeper into delusion and you're
you're you're going deeper asleep, so to

Speak,

and you just have more attraction and aversion, more craving, more desire, more attachment, and consequently more suffering. It's not like you've got some divine force rewarding good and punishing bad. It's just that the definition of good and bad is good is what takes you closer to realization of reality and bad is what takes you farther away from it.

And I mean it's it's just sort of like retrofitting cosmic justice onto just the way things work.

You hit your own hand with the hammer,

it's going to hurt. It's not like there's some cosmic law punishing you for hitting your own hand with a hammer. It's just when you hit your own hand with a hammer, it hurts.

And all ethics in Buddhism is pretty much along the same lines. All suffering is self-inflicted ultimately.

So, I suppose I answered that one and I'm just going to move on. Next question. This is from Pedro. And Pedro says, "What do you think about the stoned ape theory?" And the stoned ape theory. Um, I've heard of it before, but um, I just looked it up real fast and got like the AI little blurb at the top

of the search page saying that it was like Terrence McKenna came up with this idea of the stone ape theory that like protohumans,

very early humans or prehumans took psilocybin mushrooms and this sort of consciousness expanding experience of taking the mushrooms helped humans to develop like language because they want to be able to say, "Whoa, I just had a spacey experience and describe it to their friend, you know, OG sitting on the stump next to them." Um, and it just sort of like opened their mind to greater creativity and so forth.

And so what do I think about this theory that that prehumans or protohumans taking um like psychoactive drugs, especially mushrooms, helped us to evolve? It's an interesting theory. It's pretty much it's kind of plausible, but there's essentially zero hard evidence in support of it. It's just sort of an interesting idea that is like going with Carl Pauper pretty much of a useless theory because you can't really prove it one way or the other. I mean, it's just Yeah. Well, maybe.

And I would guess I mean there might be some influence of like cavemen getting stoned sort of like making them more creative

or more imaginative

or um you know maybe helping along the development of human language that kind of thing but I don't think it would be the main reason

and uh it's just it's It's like a hypothesis that is of, as far as I know, of no actual value from a scientific point of view or a philosophical point of view because there's no way you could prove it one way or the other. It's just this idea. Well, maybe that happened.

Maybe it did. I don't know.

And so I'm just going to move on to Pedro's next question here, which is what is the best way to convince

scientific materialists, aka atheists?

And Pedro doesn't say the best way to convince them of what. I even asked in the comments, you know, convince them of what? And I got no response. So I guess what would be the best what the best what is the best way to convince scientific materialists

that maybe they're wrong that scientific materialism does not explain reality.

Well, I think I mean it would depend on the the scientific materialist I guess.

I mean you'd have to kind of feel into what they're receptive to and so forth.

But one way you might do it is to bring up parapsychology

and they might just go that's all

[__] You know that's all fraud.

It's like a lot of like really convinced scientific materialists. They look at the findings of parapsychology and I mean sometimes it's like they're backed up against the wall and they say, "Well, I don't know how they're cheating, but they got to be cheating somehow." and that's their debunking of that particular you know that particular experiment for example but um some parapsychological research I mean I' I've mentioned before that there are two fields in science that have the most carefully designed experiments the most airtight experiments

and that is like particle physics and parasyccchology ology in particle physics. You have to plan out the experiment as carefully as possible because like renting a particle accelerator in Switzerland or something is very expensive. You don't want to blow all this grant money on a shabily designed experiment.

But with parasychology, you have to have like a completely airtight experimental design, you know, eliminating any chances of like bias or fraud or anything like that because you know that these scientific materialists like the amazing Randy are just going to be attacking with hammer and tongs the

results of your experiment.

You know, they're going to be looking as hard as they can for any defect and say, "Well, there you go. That's that's that's how they're cheating.

So

at least some intelligent like non-fanatical scientific materialists, you might be able to get your foot in the door using parapsychology, just the results of parapsychology, like the findings of Helmut Schmidt, which still kind of blows my mind when I think about what Helmut Schmidt did, at least according to the parapsychology book I read.

And I've I've described his experiments before. I mean, he he was in charge of research at Boeing Laboratories. This was like back in the 1950s or something. And it was just it was it was slow going. They they weren't working on anything. They were kind of they weren't very busy. So, Helmet Schmidt asked permission from the higherups if he could do experiments on the effect of consciousness on physical systems. And you know there's potentially some kind of advantage like Princeton University had its own lab based on that also they for maybe they still do and so he started experimenting on the power of the mind to affect like quantum

randomness.

So quantum randomness, I mean, we call it random because we don't understand it. You know, no, nobody's been able to come up with any way of predicting exactly how things are going to come out in in a state of quantum randomness.

And it turned out that people can't I mean, there's a measurable difference be from like what you'd expect from random chance like predicting cards or or dice rolls, that kind of thing. It turns out that especially with some people, but in humans in general, that people can guess. I mean, it might be just like

0.3%

different from what you'd expect at random, just random guessing. But that 0.3%, I mean, if you're doing thousands of tests, it becomes statistically significant.

And so, Helmut Schmidt was doing that about just predicting random like statistically random events. It was based on radioactive decay and a geiger counter. When the geiger counter is going to click exactly and he was able to record these geiger counter clicks and so long as nobody had listened to the tape, you could still influence whether it was going to be like it was

like a number random number generator of just ones and twos or zeros and ones, you know? It was like he he'd translate that into clicks in stereo headphones. Like there like a one would be a left click and a uh a two would be like a right click, you know, a left a click in the left ear or a click in the right ear. And then right before the experiment, he'd say, "All right, try to make more clicks be in the right side or more clicks be on the left side." And people would be using whatever psychic talent they had or any attempt at psychic talent to make the clicks be more one random ones or random twos. And

you know, it was like 0.3% but the test only took a few seconds. Thousands of thousands of tests were done and especially with some people it was way better than 0.3%.

And it turned out that he could record that on a like a cassette tape because that's what they used back in those days when he was doing these tests. And so long as nobody had heard the cassette tape, you could still influence whether there's going to be more on the left or more on the right. It was like the cassette tape itself, the the recording on the cassette tape was still in a state of quantum randomness until some perceiving mind collapses the state

vector. It's still in a in a random state, like a potential state, which is interesting to me.

And his his naysayers, you know, the scientific materialists would be just saying, well, he's got to be cheating somehow. We don't know how he's doing it, but he's cheating cuz that's the best they can do because his experimental design was just like foolproof.

They could not find any defects in the experimental design, but they're saying, "Well, he's real clever cuz he's figuring out some way of cheating because that's impossible."

And that's just the the attitude they
have like a scientific materialist is
you know if it can't be scientifically
measured

then it's it's it's bogus

or if science can't explain it.

But I mean up until

you know

not very long ago well in the modern
times we didn't know how stars or the
sun worked but they obviously did and
you didn't have scientific materialist
saying well stars don't really exist
because there's no way that they could
be burning all this time
because they didn't know about like
nuclear fission and fusion and all that.

So that might that would be the best way to convince some scientific materialists is just try to get like the field of science that kind of questions materialism. Even even like theoretical physics, you know, the whole idea that the the perceiving mind is really determining certain processes, you know, collapsing the state vector or whatever the the the common term for that would be.

Uh, atheists on the other hand, I mean, that's a whole different kettle of wax, isn't it?

So,

I keep having to turn the computer

screen back on. I'm just like hitting the hitting the space bar every few minutes. Although, it's just kind of a darkish purple background. It might not even have a noticeable effect.

So, let's see here.

I guess I I suppose maybe I answered what the best way to convince scientific materialists, also known as atheists, would be, even though Pedro really never did explain to me what it is that you're supposed to convince them of.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Super Lump. And Super Lump says, "Why does the Buddha allow monks to use dung as deodorant?" And then he actually gives

the uh the reference here. It's in the the Mahawaga, the Vignia Mahavaga book of discipline, possibly the chapter on medicines, volume 4, page 274. And I do not recall this. I mean, it's I'm not arguing against super lump that he saw it in there. And it's probably referring to coddong. Coddong was used for all sorts of things in ancient India. And it has like an absorbent property. It sort of might have been like an ancient precursor of like talcum powder or something.

So, I would just be guessing that it's that I'm I'm sure the Buddha was not allowing monks to just like [__] into

their hand and smear it all over themselves.

That, you know, you're using probably cowdong in this case.

Um, I'm just going to move on to Super Lump's next question that I can answer a little better. Why does Sudena's mother think smearing dung on the floor will help entice her son to disrobe? And this is from the Sudowi Banga book of discipline volume 1 page 28. And it's the origin story to the first parajika rule which is the parajika rule against a monk having sex.

So it's the very first origin story of a rule in the sudui banga of the of the vineyapitica you know of the pyimoka

rules

and smearing dung on the floor in

ancient India the ancient Ganges valley

cowdung was used to plaster floors

plaster walls I mean it's not like

stinky [__] like human [__] would be or

cat [__] or whatever and it just had

lots of purposes used as fuel fuel and

fires. It's like an ingredient in

plaster e it either be like cow [__]

mixed with clay as a as a kind of

plastering for floors. Um maybe in in

the origin story it does say that they

just spread cow [__] on the floor but it

could have been mixed with clay or it

was but I mean the reason why they did

that I mean cow [__] was just a standard ingredient in floor plaster and wall plaster in the ancient times you know it was it wasn't considered to be [__] in like the the sense of like human [__] and so what they were doing it According to the story, Sudina was this monk who I mean his parents were very reluctant to give him permission. He he went on a hunger strike to sort of coers his parents into giving permission for him to become a monk because you're not supposed to be be ordained without your parents' permission.

So he went on a hunger strike. They reluctantly granted him permission to become a monk. And then it at at some

later time he's just going for alms in town. You know, he goes back to his hometown in his wandering. The parents hear about this and so they're going to try and lure him back. And so, you know, they fix the house all up. You know, they clean everything, make it look nice. They plaster the floor with fresh cow poop. They put a pile of gold and a p pile of silver. have his his wife or ex-wife, you know, dress up as good as she could, look as attractive as possible, this kind of thing as a way of enticing him. So smearing [__] on the floor was just making the house look nice, which is counterintuitive to

modern western people, but in the ancient Ganges Valley, that was just standard.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question also from super lump and also on the theme of [__] in terra Buddhism especially the rules of monastic discipline and he says do you have any stories about people using dung in such unusual ways? Um well I mean cow dung that's that's one thing. I mean it did occur to me though when I when I read this question that in Winnia in the rules of monastic discipline there is a cure for snake bite that involves a monk's own [__] that you're you're supposed to combine the four like

noxious materials and I can't remember what the four are. I think it's like [_] piss and then it's like dirt and ashes something like that and that was what they used as some folk remedy pre-scientific days in ancient India for snake bite and apparently it's this idea it's like sympathetic magic really more than you know empirical medicine sympathetic magic is you know you're taking this icky stuff to cure you of this other icky stuff you know it's like if the if the medicine you take is more unpleasant than the sickness. It's more likely to to cure you of the sickness kind of a deal.

So yeah, there is that that that it is
in the book of book of monastic
discipline that you can actually use
human [__] your own [__] as an
ingredient in, you know, if you're
bitten by a viper or a cobra or
something that probably it was a kind of
like a sympathetic magic that had if
anything it was a placebo effect. And
then because your mind really is
generating a reality to a profound
degree that it can actually help if you
actually believe that it's going to cure
you. It can help to cure you just
through the power of your own faith, so
to speak.

Uh but aside from that, I really can't

think of uh any other good uses for dung
in the book of monastic discipline,
although it's probably in there.

Especially cowdung. It was just like
this common material in ancient India,
especially ancient northern India that
had multiple uses that have been
supplanted in later time with by
technological advances or whatever.

like snake bite, we generally use
antivenenom now if we have it.

So I'm just going to move on to the next
question. This is from Moers
and Muners says, "What do you think of
the Eastern Orthodox apologist or
orthobro

known as J Dyer or just orthobros in general?" And that last part or just orthobros in general is uh making this question a little easier to answer because I'm unfamiliar with Jay Dyer. I'm really unfamiliar with most of ether Eastern Orthodox ethnodox Christianity. But I have heard enough like in social media and so forth to know that Eastern Orthodox is considered by like right-wing westerners to be the most based form of Christianity. The form of Christianity that is still like the most spiritual and comes closest to the original spirit of Christianity. It's like Eastern Orthodox Christianity is sort of like terra Christianity.

So that's kind of what I think of Eastern Orthodox Christianity is it's just a conservative form of Christianity that Western right-wingers are preferring over Catholicism and the various kinds of Protestantism.

And I mean it's it's not bad. Eastern Orthodox Christianity. It still has monasticism, renunciation, and it probably does come closest to the original Christianity or at least it comes closest to ancient Christianity. Like the Christianity of the the early Roman Empire than Catholicism or various forms of Protestantism. I mean, the Protestants,

one of the first things they did was just abolish renunciation.

So that wasn't that wasn't exactly the the best choice that that the Protestants made. And Catholicism notoriously, you know, it's all bound up with Western paganism and so forth. And um also it's just sort of infiltrated by, you know, gay child groomers and so forth allegedly.

Not that I'm denying it never happens.

So, orthob bros in general, they're they're like westerners who kind of lean to the right and they want the most based, most legitimate form of Christianity they can find. And it's to them Eastern Orthodox, which is not a

bad choice, I suppose. I've I've heard
by many accounts that it really is kind
of the the most pure form of
Christianity in existence. Although, I
mean, it's not perfect. I've seen
pictures of like Orthodox patriarchs
and they look kind of like Santa Claus,
you know, they got the big white beard
and they're fat and they're just decked
out in like cloth of gold studded with
jewels wearing like crowns and this kind
of thing,
which is not exactly in the spirit of
early Christianity,
but still based on their practices and
beliefs and so forth,

It's I would consider it possibly the least objectionable form of Christianity cuz personally I'm not a Christian of course

although I mean some of the the Catholic monastic orders I think would still be relatively acceptable from a Christian point of view. Carthusians are nothing to sneeze your nose at. Discal Carmelites.

So let's see here. Yeah, I guess I answered the question. I really no authority on Eastern Orthodox Christianity. I mean, it's got like a a firm basis in mysticism going all the way back to like the pseudo Dionicius or even farther back to to Paul of Tarsus.

So,

yeah, it's good that it it still has most of the the early virtues of early Christianity.

Um, so yeah, I'm If you're going to be a Christian, Eastern Orthodox is is certainly not the worst possible choice.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from Stellar Supreme, etc., etc., etc. His name gets longer and longer, and he stellar

Supreme says, "What's the deal with the translation grammar here?" And the he he quotes a verse from the Atakawaga. is the dutataka suta verse 6 and the dutataka suta it's it's one of the

oldest sutas I mean it it's a very old
suta it's the atakawaga is considered to
be u archaic Buddhism like pre-terra
Buddhism and the four ataka sutas in the
atakawaga after which the atakawaga gets
its name they're called ataka because it
means octad or group of eight because
there's eight verses to each of these
ataka sutas. So that's considered to be
like the core. That's like the oldest of
the oldest.

And so in the poly, please forgive me if
I mispronounce the poly cuz I'm used to
a Burmese pronunciation which is bizarre
to anyone who knows poly who isn't in a
Burmese tradition. So then I try to like
translate it over to a more western or

Sri Lankan kind of pronunciation and sometimes I just fall between two stools, you know, I sort of like mix it up. But anyways, it's DT and I'm not going to try to pronounce the dotted T's correctly because we just don't do that.

Ada

dam. Okay. So in my translation of that and he's got that my translation included in the question here that says indeed not easily got past are the entrenchments of views seized having discriminated from among the philosophies. Thus a man amid those entrenchments discards adopts a philosophy.

And it's it's fairly straightforward. Um
like dt nisa
means entrenchments to views. DT is
view. Nia is like entrenchments or or
like clinging to. Na is not. He indeed.
Suatiwata easily got past. So indeed not
easily got past are the entrenchments of
use. first line fairly straightforward.
Although in poetry, you have to
rearrange the words, especially in poly
poetry, old poly poetry or even protooly
poetry. Um, you got to rearrange the
words in order to fit the meter because
you have to have this meter, this
regularity of the short and long
syllables, short and long vowels because
that's how meter is. poetry poetic meter

is based on long and short vowels in
poly more than than in English where
it's like long like stressed and
unstressed syllables. In poly poetry,
it's not stressed and unstressed
syllables so much as just long vowels
and short vowels
or long syllables and short syllables.
So you have to rearrange the words
sometimes in strange ways in order to
fit the necessary words into this poetic
meter metrica I think it's called. So
the irregularities in poly poetry
because when you got like words all kind
of mixed jumbled up not not necessarily
in a correct pros grammatical sequence

you know the syntax is kind of weird.

It's because of that. is because you've got to fit everything into this rigid structure of the poetic meter. You know, if you you're going to do like let's say iambic pentameter.

I mean nowadays poets poetry is just like you know it's sort of like realistic

paintings. Not that I mean art's just becoming obsolete now because of AI but um it's like poets who still try to write poetry

it's like they do not have the discipline to to do it in a regular meter maybe at like a limerick or something but

um back in the old days even back in

like the 1800s

or even later than the 1800s you had

poetry tree, it would have a meter. Even

if it didn't rhyme, still there would be

this this cadence dun

and you have to make it fit. Otherwise,

it's bad poetry. And like a professional

poet back in the old days, like like

Shelly, you know, Lord Byron, Karidge,

they' just they'd be trained to write

poetry so much that they would just

start thinking in meter and it would

just kind of come out spontaneously that

way.

So anyways the next line

is among the philosophies among the
dharmaśāstra is having discriminated
samugi is having seized. So among the
philosophies having discriminated
seized. So a little bit of mixing it up
but the meaning is fairly clear. Seized
having discriminated from among the
philosophies in that one line.

Simukhi occurs a number of times in the
Atukawaga. It's just sort of almost like
a motto or something, you know, it's
it's in more than one sūtra that exact
line.

Then

[Music]

so from that or therefore
a man desu

is entrenchments.

So therefore a man among those
entrenchments I mean it came out right.

And then

cha nasi is he discards

he takes up cha and dam is a philosophy
or a dhamama.

So I mean it's really fairly
straightforward. There are there are
verses in the atakawaga that are way
more jumbled up than this just in order
for everything to to fit. I mean even
the lines are messed up. There'll be
like words that should be in the
sentence down here that are up here just
because it has to fit the meter.

So yeah, I mean this narad

this last line um the past participle of
nasi which is he rejects or he discards
is nata and the past the past participle
of a is he takes up is ata. So nirata
and ata are also puns that have like the
the dual meaning not only of like
rejected and taken up but also nidarata
can mean no self ata obviously can mean
self. So it's like a it's like a pun. So
it's saying I mean in in other parts of
the atakawaga it's it's saying you know
a monk should have no near ata and no
ata which means nothing rejected nothing
clung to you know nothing pushed away
nothing pulled towards you you know like
conceptually but it also means that for

for the enlightened monk there is no not
self and no self either because you're
not supposed to be clinging to any
belief according to the atika waga
or like ajanchai used to say even right
view becomes wrong view if you cling to
it

but yeah this I mean the grammar here
the translation grammar is fairly
straightforward this is a fairly
straightforward there were much more
difficult verses to translate than this
one

so I'm just going to move on to stellar
supreme etc etc etc's next question
which is when a culture is so

secularized that they call Buddhist monastic selfish and their way of life a form of escapism and laziness. What can be said of their karmic status? Should we ignore the elephant in the room with this? Well, I'm not exactly sure what the elephant in the room is. Um, when a culture is so secular that they call Buddhist monastics selfish in their way of life, a form of escapism and laziness. I think Brahmans were accusing Buddhists of that in the ancient Ganges Valley. you know, they were they were calling the Buddhists destroyers of life partly because they were celibate from from the get-go instead of having their kids, you know, participating in in

Vedic culture until they reach a mature age. Their kids are more or less self-sufficient and then they go off into the forest. That was more of the Hindu or Vedic approach. So

um yeah, I think I mean even even like the the Mahayana Buddhists started calling the Theravada Buddhists selfish because they're just trying to save themselves and trying to save instead of trying to save all beings, that kind of thing. So this kind of attitude against renunciation, calling it selfish and and lazy and escapism.

Um yeah I mean it it's not just a modern

secular thing but I mean but it is
secular you know it's like worldly
thinking it's samsaric thinking it's
kind of wallowing in delusion you're
just assuming that this is real and that
you know you've got duties that you got
to be doing in this version before you
move on to the next sort of thing.

And uh

so but I think western Buddhists even
like western terra Buddhists so-called
you know like in the weasa movement
um that they just they're so secularized
that they don't even see the point of
monasticism
even though they're supposedly terraata
Buddhist and Terravata Buddhism was a

system of Buddhism created by a monk for monks. I mean, early Buddhism in general was created by a monk for monks and they just don't like that part.

So

yeah, I think it's in that case it's just they really are so secular, just such products of American consumer culture, just kind of materialistic realistic kind of people that they're just so sort of culturally conditioned that they cannot appreciate some of the basic teachings of of Dharma.

So what can be said of their karmic status?

just worldly karma. I mean they can

still be good. They can still be getting merit but merit does not lead to enlightenment. I mean merit leads I mean karma leads to more karma.

So I mean it's like mara you know the Buddhist devil so-called. If he can't get you to be bad he'll get you to be good because going to heaven you're still in samsara.

The whole duality of good and evil is samsaric.

So a monk is supposed to renounce good and evil. He's supposed to let go of the whole duality of it.

So I mean

people that think that monks are lazy escapists and selfish and so forth, they

can still be good people. They can still be earning merit. It's just that they are still pretty much stuck in a samsaric mindset.

So they might have some virtue but their wisdom is not at the highest level at least from a Buddhist point of view or a terra Buddhist point of view.

So

let's see let's just move on to the next question and this is from Tzasquez is and Tzas is says do you think that sometimes you are not sensitive for a people's feelings and yeah I think pretty much everyone except for like the most highly advanced empath

is going to be lacking to some degree in sensitivity towards other people's feelings

last night. My woman is listening to this music on YouTube and she's crying because she's so moved by this music.

But I've rarely been moved by music to the point of tears streaming down my face. And so I was just, you know, just kind of observing the situation. I couldn't really participate in it. And she was getting impatient with me

because I mean according to her it seems I should I should have been crying too or at least have more of a like a a reverent appreciation of this music and of her mental states than I was having.

I mean I'm just kind of like observing it all from like a philosophical point of view.

But so yeah, I mean I'm I am not sensitive for people's feelings sometimes. I mean I I think I'm more considerate of people's feelings than most people are. Even if it doesn't appear that way, even if it might not seem that way sometimes.

Like I'm just more considerate of others feelings just because I feel I know that there's a connection. I mean, if you're causing suffering to another person, ultimately you're causing suffering also to yourself, you know, it's it's all

like this shared myasma of mental states to some degree. Mental states are contagious.

And so, if you're just thinking like at work, for example, you know, I'm I'm more considerate than a lot of people with regard to just not just sticking it to the next guy. you see a problem, you see something that needs to be fixed, you you stop what you're doing and you fix it just because you don't want to stick the next guy with having to fix it. And I mean, a lot of the next guys, they're just going to drive past it because they don't want to deal with it or just allowing the right of way. I mean, sometimes I'll just gun the motor

and just shoot through some narrow gap between two other forklifts because I I drive a forklift at work, but a lot of time I'll just wait and let the guy go past, you know, just yield the ride of way to somebody else just out of consideration and, you know, do unto others what what you would want done unto you, that kind of thing.

But yeah, sometimes I am not sensitive for a people's feelings like illegal aliens. Yeah, they're there. Some of them are just boohooing all over the place because they're getting arrested and sent back to wherever they came from. And I'm okay with that from a

political point of view. Even though they're very unhappy and all that, it's like I voted for this. Sometimes you got to hurt people's feelings in order to do the right thing.

or like Sudina in that origin story to the first parajika rule, the first rule in the in the parajika in in the in the pimoka. I mean, he was not sensitive to his parents' feelings. They desperately wanted him to, you know, just take up the family business and have grandkids for them to spoil, that kind of thing. So sometimes you just kind of have to be callous, I guess. Or you can do something knowing full well that somebody else isn't going to like it

just because it's the right thing to do
or at least you consider it to be the
right thing to do.

So, I don't know like especially my my
interactions with Cherasquez is are
entirely over the internet and I mean
when you're dealing with just words on a
screen is different from being in the
same room with someone where you're kind
of picking up on their feelings, you
know, you can be more sensitive to other
people's feelings when when you're face
to face rather than just responding to
words on a screen.

So

yeah, I think sometimes pretty much

everybody is not sensitive for a people's feelings.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Austin. And Austin says, "I am a reservist," which means he's in the military reserve. He's going to be called up if there's ever like an emergency and they need extra soldiers. I'll just start over. Austin says, "I am a reservist." Are we are we recording? Yes, we are. I if I have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings,

what am I to do? Mind you, I take the first precept very seriously. Well, I'm assuming that Austin did not take the

first precept very seriously when he joined the military in the first place. It may be that he had a kind of awakening or like philosophical or spiritual development that have caused him after he joined the military to be opposed to killing because otherwise what the [_] are you joining the military for if you're opposed to killing? I mean, this actually has happened. Like I remember back in the '9s there was some guy who joined the army and then when he got deployed to Iraq he tried to be a conscientious objector because he just joined the army to get like computer

skills, get like a free education and so forth, you know, to help his his career. He wouldn't actually want to like shoot anybody. But I mean, why do you become a soldier if you're completely unwilling to shoot anybody?

So, I'm assuming that Austin had some kind of spiritual realization after he he joined up because otherwise, I mean, you made your bed and now you're lying in it. But, uh, let's see. If I have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings, what am I to do? And this reminded me of a a statement in Krishna Murdy's book. I've got right here, Freedom from the Known. It's a thin

book. It's just pretty much just a booklet and it's this book is well worth reading. It's it's kind of a mind-blowing book. It's got all kinds of really juicy quotes in it. But one quote that it reminded me of this of this statement by Austin. Krishna Murdy says, "If you live peacefully, you will have no problem at all. You may be imprisoned because you refuse to join the army or shot because you refuse to fight, but that is not a problem. You will be shot." It is extraordinarily important to understand this.

So in his case, I mean it's it's sort of like the saints I was talking about is

you have to do what you consider to be the right thing. If you if you want to be a saint, you know, you want to have pure morals according to your own interpretation of morals. You got to do what you consider to be the right thing. Even if you're going to be like shot by a firing squad for doing it.

So, I mean, if you really think that it's wrong to kill, I mean, maybe you could be like Mahatma Gandhi in World War I where he volunteered to be a stretcher bearer, like an unarmed stretcher bearer, you know, a medic or something.

Maybe even a medic. I mean, medics are still armed with pistols at least.

But, uh,

yeah, I mean, if you don't want to just
I mean, that's possible. I mean, you
could try to find some way of serving in
the army or in the the reserves. I mean,
if you are deployed to Iran or
something, although I'm I'm skeptical
that that there's going to be American
boots on the ground in Iran. It's um
Trump is kind of doing what what Reagan
did, you know, it just like or or what
Trump did the first time just is sort of
like surgical strikes
against key strategic, you know, enemy
positions or some such, you know, like
bombing Libya, killing Gaddafi's

daughter, this kind of thing that that Reagan did. Um, yeah, there weren't any American boots on the ground there, pretty sure. I mean, Grenada was a different question, but Trump hasn't done a Grenada yet, as far as I know. But, uh, getting back to the question, if you have to go to war for Israel with the expectation of killing other living beings, what am I to do?

Well, you could uh go the Begavad Gita route and do your duty as a soldier. Or you could uh do the saintly route and just refuse to kill. Maybe you could get some some position like medic or stretcherbearer or something where you don't actually have to kill anybody. But

I mean, if you really are determined to do the right thing in a saintly manner, then you just refuse to kill anybody and get court marshaled, thrown in the brig for who knows how long, be reviled by others maybe.

But I mean this again like Christian Birdie says, if you live peacefully, you will have no problem at all. You may be imprisoned because you refused to join the army or shot because you refused to fight. That is not a problem. You will be shot. It is extraordinarily important to understand this.

So I'm just going to move on to Austin's next question

which is using epistemology. How do we determine that Buddhism is true? You can't determine that Buddhism is true except in certain respects. I don't think you can prove that Buddhism really is conducive to enlightenment.

But you can prove like the four noble truths, the first three at least are fairly self-evident. I mean the first noble truth, you just look around, you have some sensitivity, you realize that nobody is 100% happy.

And then the second noble truth that all suffering is caused by attachment and craving. I mean, you look you look into

it and you can see that that's true. you
look at look into yourself whenever
you're unhappy that
um it's because you want something. I
mean, usually it's pretty obvious, you
know, it's like your phone glitches and
it won't charge. You get frustrated,
that's why. Or you're in a hurry, you
got to stop forever at a red light, you
know? It's like you feel this friction.
It's like you don't want to accept the
situation. You know, it's just any kind
of bad situation, you don't want to
accept it. I mean, it's you're clinging
to that situation not being there when
it is. And so, I mean, maybe you just

got like some kind of vague depression. It might be difficult to pinpoint exactly what it is you are desiring. It might just be, you know, anything other than this kind of an attitude. But still, the second noble truth, you can verify that. And the third noble truth, I mean, that's just it logically follows from the second noble truth. If all suffering is caused by desire, if you have no desire, you have no suffering. So certain aspects of Buddhism, um, regardless of epistemology, you can you can determine that it's apparently like empirically valid. Whether it really leads to full enlightenment or not, that's that's a

different question. I don't know how you
how you could possibly prove that.

But using epistemology, that's like
theory of knowledge.

Um,

yeah. I mean, I'm not exactly sure how
you would use epistemology

to determine that Buddhism is true. Like
I've already said, there's some aspects
of Buddhism, some of the most important
aspects that you can't really prove.

So, epistemology, theory of knowledge, I
mean, I would consider

um

the fact that you can't really know
reality through thinking. That that's a

kind of epistemology. It's it's sort of like a negative epistemology that you can't really know reality through thinking. So then you could you go with theory of knowledge to say that that samsara is just this web work of perceptions that perception is samsara and that to get past that into knowing true reality which you can't know by thinking about it that you just know it through essentially mysticism just being wide awake and not thinking anything just you just your mind just kind of merges with like the universal formless consciousness because you're not giving any form to your own consciousness through focusing on perceptions.

So in a way you could you could use epistemology to determine that Buddhism is true by going into like deep mystical states which at the very least would be like Janna and then that would be called temporary liberation which is like giving you a taste you know sort of like a quasi enlightenment while you're in that state.

So I mean that that might be about as close as it comes as far as I can tell.

Ah,

so let's just move on to Austin's third question here, which is how can we be sure that the Buddha was enlightened or that the path leads to enlightenment if

I can't meet any enlightened beings to verify it? Even if you did meet enlightened beings, you wouldn't be able to verify that they were enlightened. If you're unenlightened, if you look at an un If you look at an enlightened being, you're going to be looking at that enlightened being through unenlightenment tinged glasses, and you're just going to see another unenlightened person. Or you're going to see what you consider to be an enlightened person in accordance with this very unenlightened concept of what an enlightened person is like. I mean, you'd have to be enlightened yourself according to the text even to know that

somebody else is enlightened.

So how can we be sure that the Buddha was enlightened? We can't. In fact, there was uh like a medieval school of Buddhism that I've mentioned before, the Daga school, sometimes called the yoga logicians. They they emphasize logic. And their classic example of a problematic premise, a premise that really cannot be verified is, you know, X is an enlightened being, whether it's GMA Buddha or or anybody else. You can't prove it. How could you possibly prove it?

So,

I mean, you can't be sure that the

Buddha was enlightened. I mean, he lived 25 centuries ago. I mean, how are you going to prove that he even existed? I mean, it's it's a very convenient working hypothesis.

And that's really all it can be. You can't really know this stuff.

So, let's see. How can we be sure that Buddha was enlightened or that the path leads to enlightenment if I can't meet any enlightened beings to verify it?

Well, the path that leads to enlightenment, you can't prove that the path is going to get you enlightened, but at least you can extrapolate, you know, you can you can see like if you make progress in dharma, your mind

gets clearer, you have fewer attachments and so forth, then at least you can extrapolate that, you know, you're having less and less delusion, less and less attachments, less and less desires. So that if you continue on that route, you could assume with some rationality that it's going to lead to zero zero attachment, zero delusion, zero suffering.

But you can't really prove that because there may be like some obstacle or something unforeseeable that gets in your way and prevents you from getting all the way to zero delusion and zero suffering by following whatever method

it is you're following.

So

it's a very convenient working hypothesis and you can use a certain amount of reason or philosophy to extrapolate. You know if you follow this path it causes you to have less desire and less suffering, less delusion, then you continue following, you're going to have less and less. Whether it gets down to zero or not is something you can't really be sure of. But at least you're moving in the direction of less and less.

That part you can be fairly sure of.

And the Buddha or anybody else being a fully enlightened being that's just a

convenient working hypothesis. There's no way you could prove it one way or the other.

So I mean it wasn't obvious even to people in the Buddhist time who were sitting there face to face with him. It wasn't obvious to all of them that he was enlightened. You know, some people would talk to the Buddha and just go off and continue being a Jivieas or Brahmans or whatever.

So, I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Xenithoid and he says, "Based off this clip, could you please attempt to analyze Yung's spiritual mindset and explain what sets

him apart from the average religious person?" and he included this uh clip of like a a short on YouTube of Carl Jung. He was asked if he believes in God and he says, "I don't have to believe. I know. Once you know something, you don't have to believe it anymore."

So,

could I please attempt to analyze Yung's spiritual mindset? It's hard to say just based on that. It kind of reminds me of Rahm Doss. Somebody was saying, "Yeah, well, rebirth is a theory." And Ramda says, "No, I know. I know that that rebirth happens. I just know it." You know, it's it's it's beyond mere belief. You know, it's it's knowledge.

So why exactly they would say why exactly Jung would say that with regard to God, especially from a Buddhist point of view where there is no capital G God. From a Terra Buddhist point of view, there is no capital G God. So how could Jung know that something exists that from a terra Buddhist point of view doesn't exist? So I mean he has had I assume Yung I mean he was a relatively wise person, relatively intelligent person obviously and he no doubt had some kind of spiritual inclinations. So it could be that he had like deep spiritual inclinations. He had some kind of mystical experience where he's just

feeling the presence of divinity and that's that's what he's basing it on. And it wouldn't surprise me at all. He's um I mean Jung used to write like introductions to Buddhist texts like um I think Oxford University Press had this series that was edited by Evans Wentz who had Jung doing like the the introduction to the Tibetan Book of the Dead and the Tibetan Book of the Great Liberation and so forth. And so Jung I mean he had some spiritual inclinations, some spiritual talent. And so I wouldn't be surprised at all that he had some kind of mystical experience which he interpreted as the presence of God. But a Buddhist would interpret it

differently because there is no capital
G God in terara Buddhism.

But there is like an absolute you know
there is like a higher level of reality
than this somesic delusion that we're
wallowing in. So he had like at least a
glimpse of that sort of thing which a
Buddhist also can have which pretty much
anybody also can have and he interprets
that to be God and and and considers
that to just be you know I experienced
it so I know it but the actual
interpretation
um is not really grounded in the
absolute that that's just another
samsaric phenomenon.

Uh, so what sets him apart from the average religious person? Well, he he was a deep person and there's a good chance he really did have spiritual experiences like like mystical experiences and so forth which the average person either doesn't have or else they have it to such a small degree that they never really integrate it into their their world view.

Like for example, everybody sneezes pretty much everybody sneezes. And when you're in mid sneeze, that's about as close to enlightenment as the average normie gets, it seems, because you're like wide awake and you're not thinking anything. You know, it's like this flash

of a mystical experience, but it doesn't really have enough content, any discrete content

that you can really integrate it into your world view.

You know, it's just a boom, you sneeze, you know, everybody does it. Dogs sneeze, cats sneeze, and so you know it's you don't really consider to be anything profound. You're not doing it mindfully.

So

let's see. So what sets him apart from the average religious person? Well, he was much more intelligent, much more philosophical,

had more spiritual inclinations, more interest in spirituality in general, studied it extensively.

And so that obviously is going to put him in a higher category than the average person working at a Bojangles.

So I'm just going to move on to the Xenithoids. Next question.

Why does beauty sometimes make us cry? I always get choked up watching this video of Young, the one that I was just referring to, I guess, especially when he says, "When I know it, I don't need to believe it."

Um, it's not just beauty that makes us cry. I mean, for example, I almost always get choked up if I watch

the ending of the first Rocky movie or even a lot of time just remembering just thinking about the ending of the the first Rocky movie. I get like choked up from that. And I guess you could call it beauty, you know? It's like there is a certain symbolic beauty to this this guy living in a slum who somehow has the opportunity to stand up to the world's champion boxer. He is humble. He's too humble even to to really want to win. You know, he just feels like he can't really beat Apollo Creed, the world's champion. He is just determined he's gonna stay on his feet the full 12 rounds. And in a way it's symbolic of,

you know, Apollo Creed is the world champion. So he sort of represents the world. He's the best the world has to offer. And that Rocky in his humility, his ambition is just not to be beaten down onto his knees, not to be beaten down by the world. He's going to stand up proud the full 12 rounds. And at the end, it's a split decision. and he is not even listening. You know, when they're announcing the winner, Rocky is not even listening. He doesn't even care who the winner is cuz he knows he won because he stayed on his feet as he intended and he's just yelling for his woman. And his woman, who's also this humble, downtrodden kind of person, is

just fighting through the crowd to get to him. And then when they're announcing, see, I'm starting to get choked up already. And when they're announcing the actual winner, they're just in each other's arms just in this state of ecstasy, not even listening. They don't even care.

So, I mean, I I'm starting to get a little choked up just just remembering that. It's it's profound to me. I consider Rocky to be one of the greatest American movies. I mean, not the sequels. I mean, those are just like pop boilers, but the first Rocky movie was like an inspired masterpiece of American

cinematography in my opinion.

So beauty can make us cry. I think it's just excess of feeling. You know, something like triggers a deep feeling in you, like a more intense feeling than you're used to. Then the this excess energy has to like release itself in some way or another just through sobs or tears or sometimes laughter, that kind of thing.

uh like uh William Blake in one of his proverbs of hell, it's like excess of sorrow laughs, excess of joy weeps.

Yeah. Excess of any kind of emotion, you got like more than the usual amount of emotion. It's going to have to like get out somehow or another.

And so something that's very beautiful can have that effect. can move you so that there has to be some kind of physiological response to help work off this this higher than normal level of energy. It's kind of like PT in meditation. If you're meditating, you get into a deeper level of meditation than you're used to. You can experience PT where your body is just like twitching. I think in Hinduism it's called shakti where it's it's like it has to that this excess energy has to like come out somehow or another and in in the case of meditation it's in a way it's like reduced energy

whereas

or it's like finer more subtle energy so that this cruder energy that you usually have going has to like find new ways to escape through just like twitching muscles and just vibrating weird feelings, that kind of thing.

So,

I guess I kind of answered that question. And I do want to avoid a three-hour long one. So, I'm just going to move on to Xenithoid's third question after hitting the space bar on my woman's computer again. And the third question is, is the only reason we're not enlightened simply because we don't want to be? Perhaps we already are, but

we just don't know or don't want to believe it. Well, that's typical Mahayana situation or explanation. Also, um, Ekarola, beginning of his, uh, most famous his first famous book, The Power of Now, um, you know, he gives the example of the beggar sitting on a box, holding out his his cap, asking for spare change, and then some passer by just says, "Why don't you look in the box?" and and the the guy just I don't know, never thought about looking in the box. Well, look in the box. So, he gets up, opens the box, looks, it's full of like money. And so, that's sort of like the average unenlightened person. You

know, they're they're begging for they want something that they've already got. You know, you're already you've already got it. It's just that your mind is making too much noise and you're distracted by that. That's like Mahayana teaches this too. So, there is some truth to that. I mean, reality is everywhere.

You know, I mean, you want to attain, you want to know ultimate reality. I mean, how far away is it? You know, it's ultimate reality isn't just on some mountain top in Tibet or some such. It's everywhere all the time and we're just soaking in it. So, there's a level of us that is aware of that. a very deep like

the deepest level of us is is fully aware of that, but it's like the higher levels are making all this noise and and it's it's sort of like the higher levels have the ego and all that that just get in the way and obscure it.

So,

let's see. That's just kind of addressing this comment he made at the end. The actual question is is the only reason we're not enlightened simply because we don't want to be. Um yeah, we want we want to remain unenlightened. We want to cling to what we know. We want to cling to our illusions. We want to cling to our sense

of self which is illusory ultimately.

So yeah, it's Paul Lo was really good at explaining how spirituality is a kind of cope in that we don't really want to be fully enlightened. We just want to kind of work on stuff, you know, we want to kind of think that we're working towards enlightenment. Whereas just letting go and being enlightened, we're just scared to death of that. That's like jumping off a cliff. And so we compensate for being afraid to jump off the cliff by just kind of working on, you know, reducing this kind of desire or reducing that kind of desire or deepening our understanding of such and such when really we don't want to be fully

enlightened.

So there there is some truth to that too. Um, but the average normie I mean enlightenment isn't even really an option. They I mean it's just not in their working vocabulary. they they just assume this is reality and so they're not trying to become enlightened.

They're just, you know, trying to make money, pay the bills, get a new car, that kind of thing.

So yeah, the main reason we're not enlightened

um is that we're just clinging to unenlightenment.

That's what we understand. We most of us

consider that to be reality.

But even the people that consider themselves to want to be enlightened, who are striving for enlightenment, they're still clinging to samsara more than they're striving for enlightenment in most cases.

So the only reason we're not enlightened is simply because we don't want to be pretty much. I mean, even people that want to be enlightened, I mean, the wanting is still desire.

So it's it's I think it might be a little bit more accurate or precise to say that the only reason we're not enlightened is simply because we want to be unenlightened.

We are clinging to some sorrow
partly because the superficial levels of
our ego and so forth just kind of don't
know any better or it's just like force
of habit like karmic force of habit to
just cling to certain things like
self-preservation that kind of thing.
Self-preservation not just physically
but like intellectually and emotionally.
And I'm just going to move on to the
next question. This is from Rakasa
Rakshasha.

And Raasa says, "What is your take on
the book of Revelations
and when I was a young man like in like
college

and I was reading the Bible for the first time and I get to the book of Revelations, I was taking it seriously. I'm doing like what people have been doing forever since the book of Revelation was composed. I'm like trying to fit it in to, you know, to what was going on in the world, you know, like how Lindsay, the the late great planet Earth kind of stuff. But nowadays, I think that St. John the Divine on when he's on the island of Patmos where he had this vision. I think he was a bit on the nutty side, tell you the truth. And I do think that Mr. 666 in the book of Revelations, it's a false prophecy of Nero that 666

I was a common device in like ancient Greece that you would I mean numbers in Greek were letters. is they didn't have numerals. They just used Greek letters to represent numbers kind of like the Romans also did. And so you could take just the numerical value of the letters and add them together. And the way it works, you know, 666 is if you do the same thing with Hebrew letters, then the word neron, which is the Greek way of saying Nero, adds up to 666.

And so there's a good chance that they were going with this idea that Nero hadn't really died, that he was going to come back, you know, he was going to

recover from like this fatal injury. And there was a I have read that it was a common belief that Domission, a later emperor, was considered to be kind of like the re return of Nero, this kind of thing. So, I do think that the book of Revelation is just this weird fantasmagorical vision

um experienced by a relatively nutty like Hebrew turned Christian activist and he was kind of he was saintly. And getting back to Carl Young, this is this is a quote from Carl Young uh coming from his his long essay Answer to Job. He says, "The revelation was experienced by an early Christian who, as a leading

light of the community, presumably had to live an exemplary life and demonstrate to his flock the Christian virtues of true faith, humility, patience, devotion, selfless love, and denial of all worldly desires. In the long run, this can become too much even for the most righteous. irritability, bad moods, and outbursts of affect. For example, these apocalyptic visions are the classic symptoms of chronic virtuousness.

That's Carl Jung again. So, it was like he was forcing himself to be saintlier than was natural for his temperament, which is often how it works when you're

doing spiritual practice. And it was just causing like this latent like negativity to come up and just angels pouring bowls of wrath and blood and all this everything destroyed and all this kind of stuff. Um, yeah, it could have been like a neurotic symptom, but I do not I no longer consider the book of Revelation, you know, the last book of the New Testament to be um like any kind of legit prophecy, any any any kind of prognostication of the future. And the very last words of the book of Revelation are Jesus saying, you know, it's like, "Behold, I'm coming very soon." And this was 2,000 years ago. And St. John the Divine, he was saying

like this is the final hour. Like I think that's his first epistle. Assuming that the same guy wrote the epistles of John as wrote the book of Revelation, you know, he's saying they say before Jesus comes up, Antichrist must come.

But I'm telling you that antichrist many antichrists are already here. Anyone who denies the father and the son are antichrist.

So, we know that this is the final hour damn near 2,000 years ago.

So, I mean, Christianity was I mean, it started off as a kind of schismatic apocalyptic cult. I mean it was based on I mean apocalyptic literature was very

much in fashion among certain Hebrews in Jesus's time going back a few hundred years going back at least as far as King Antiochus Epiphanies and the Hasmonian dynasty the Mcabes and all that which was like 160 165 170 BCE

that you know the Hebrews I mean it was like if we can't become the rulers of the world, then [__] it. The whole world's going to come to an end. Just [__] it. We can't we can't be number one in the world. So, the world's just going to come to an end. That was kind of like the this kind of bitter cope that Hebrews were experiencing after the their previous prophecies turned out false. They had some prophet saying, you

know, after, you know, after the
Babylonian captivity, Israel would never
be invaded by a foreign army ever again.
And that was that was God's promise. And
then along come the Romans and just
conquer them again
after the Greeks did it.

The Greek Macedonians anyhow.

So, my take on the book of Revelations,
I used to take it seriously when I was
like 18, 19, 20 years old. And now I
think it's pretty much just a very
imaginative
neurotic symptom.

And I'm just going to move on to
Rakasa's second question.

If you've read any apocryphal books of the Bible, what is your take on those? And he gives the example of the book of Enoch. And I have read the book of Enoch.

And the book of Enoch is another it was like what I was just mentioning how apocalyptic literature about the world coming to an end was in fashion among certain Hebrews leading up to Christian times. And the New Testament is influenced by the book of Enoch. The book of Enoch is quoted at least once. I think it's the book of Jude who may have been Jesus's son. Although I think he's considered to be Jesus's brother.

So,

but it's like in that the the ouaries
they found a family crypt with these
ouaries and there was um Jesus and Mary
and and uh was the the brother Joseph,
you know, was kind of an it was an
unusual name. And then there was Judah
who was con on the ouary was described
as the son of Jesus. And so it could be
just a coincidence that you know the
names happen to be the same. Although
there was there was only one really
unusual Hebrew name. Most of the rest of
them were common names. Jesus was a
fairly common name for Hebrews at the
time. Mary was the most common name for

a female. Miriam, you know. So I mean
Jude obvious Judah.

So, I can't remember where I was going
with that. Oh, yeah. Just mentioning
that Jude may have been Jesus's son
rather than his brother. See, if you've
read any apocryphal books of the Bible,
what is your take on those? I mean, and
Enoch is similar to the the prophetic
part of um Daniel
where he's kind of predicting, you know,
the future which is 100% accurate up
until he gets to the about 162
BCE and then it starts becoming
inaccurate. So, you know that probably
that part of the book of Daniel was
composed around 162 B.CE.

you know, has like the the precursor of Antichrist as you know, Antiochus Epiphanes. He's the little horn. He's the hard-faced king in these prophecies.

And, you know, he sets up the abomination of desolation, which is the an idol of Zeus that he sets up in the in the Jewish temple in Jerusalem, that kind of thing. I mean, the book of Revelation is is along these same lines. It's it's obviously apocalyptic literature.

Um, I've read some apocryphal books. I mean, I read a lot of them when I was in college, just some of the more obscure apocrypha. But the one that I would take

most seriously would be the Gospel according to Thomas, which I think might be more worthy of being included in the New Testament than say the Gospel according to John.

the gospel according to John. It seems to be historically more accurate than the synoptic gospels like towards the beginning where it's it's saying really that Jesus's first apostles were mainly followers of John who started following Jesus after John got thrown into prison as opposed to the synoptic gospels where they're just fishermen and Jesus just walks by and says follow me. So they just get up, leave their nets and their boats behind and just become apostles.

And then towards at the end of Jesus's ministry when he's being, you know, up his trial and crucifixion and so forth, that might be more accurate in John. But the whole middle part is is mainly and even like

what is it? Uh Christian schools will teach this stuff. Seminaries will teach this stuff that most of the words of Jesus in the gospel according to John, you know, in the in the long part between the beginning and the end of his ministry is mostly just the words of John put into Jesus's mouth.

So let's see. So the book of the the gospel according to Thomas might

actually contain more legitimate teachings of Jesus than the gospel according to John. But a lot of the apocryphal books, they're just obviously fake. The gospel according to Barnabas, but like the the epistle of Barnabas, this kind of stuff. It doesn't have a whole lot of useful stuff. There is a lot of kind of apocryphal stuff that's been added to the Bible. You know, like the book of Daniel's got some of that. Some of the uh the epistles of Paul are considered to be fake. There's like some weird one. like second Thessalonians or something like that. It's a weird one talking about Antichrist and all that that um I

mean they're pretty much apocryphal even though they're accepted into the cannon because they're apparently fake, you know, not really composed by the person they're considered to be composed by.

But the the one apocryphal book of the Bible, and I don't think the book of Enoch really is apocrypha. I mean technically the Apocrypha of the Old Testament would be like the book of Tobit, the first and second books of Maccabees, that kind of thing. Um, but I mean that's just sort of like apocryphal like apocalyptic literature that influenced New Testament Christians like in the like the the composers of

the New Testament.

So yeah, there was like this idea that

the world was going to come to an end.

You're going to have some kind of

spiritual leader like the Messiah was

sort of making the transition from some

political king which was what the

Messiah originally was going to be. He

was going to be a branch of David. He

was going to be a descendant of King

David who was going to be king of Israel

again. And then um starting maybe with

you know the book of of Daniel then it's

starting to make this transition that

the the Messiah is going to be a

spiritual leader and then the world's

going to be destroyed and and etc etc.

But yeah gener I mean the the the gospel according to Thomas I consider to be the highest quality apocrypha that I have come across. Although like in the Old Testament the the first the first book of Mcabes especially is seems to be fairly good history. You can learn a lot about the times by reading the first book of Mcabes and also it helps you to understand the prophecies of Daniel in the book of Daniel because they're describing the same events one symbolically in the form of fake prophecies and one just as history. So then you can tell that you know the the little horn and the hard-faced king

and so forth in um the book of Daniel is really king Antiochus Epiphanies a solucid kind of king or emperor around the time of 162 BCE.

So, I think I'm just going to move on to the next question, which is from PSA.

And PSA says, "What do you think of precious national treasure Hunter Biden?

He is really something, isn't he? The pride of America." Well, Hunter Biden's pretty much uh faded out now that Biden himself, Joe Biden, is no longer in power. But

yeah, Hunter Biden, I mean, he was just some rich kid that was sort of privileged and pampered and just got to do what he wanted and he just kind of

took the ball and ran with it and was trafficking teenage prostitutes and taking drugs and, you know, like seducing his his brother's widow, getting her addicted to to drugs or whatever and dumping her for a stripper or whatever, whatever the stories are. Um, I mean it's it's kind of a typical thing. I mean, you read Roman history, for example, the son of an emperor is often just some sociopathic monster because I mean, they can just do whatever they want.

And that's the way it is like in in throughout the world even now that you know the son of some super millionaire,

he's going to be pretty much immune to any kind of prosecution.

So, I mean, some of them will just I mean, they just got go full nero, just just turn into sociopaths, do whatever the hell they want to. So, that's pretty much what happened to Hunter Biden, as far as I can tell.

So

yeah, I mean he belongs in jail, but whether he'll actually go to jail, I mean everyone I mean you read like right-wing social media and everyone's just like clamoring to Pam Bondi, the attorney general. When are you going to start arresting these people?

Well, no high-profile

Democratic criminal has been arrested yet. At least I'm not aware of it. So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question. Do you think the Trump administration will allow the Bank of International Settlements to implement central bank digital currencies and bring US citizens to their knees and eventually the whole world effectively neutralizing everyone by removing cash and limiting access to their own money if the sheep doesn't behave as they're told? Well, I really don't know much about this. I know that Trump has taken an interest in like cryptocurrency, but uh I've also heard that there's like

a worldwide move to get away from fiat money and start like using gold as the basis of wealth again. I think the BRICS countries are trying to do that. Get away from the US dollar and just go to gold.

So it may be that if there's too radical of an attempt to switch to digital currency, people are just going to start using gold.

And uh

yeah, the the possibility of banks I mean it's already happening in some countries, not so much in America. I think it's happened in America too where you do something the government doesn't like and so your bank will just freeze

your bank account and you can't take any money out.

I think the UK and Canada are much more inclined to be this way than America is. It's like, well, you posted this racist tweet, therefore we're freezing your bank account. or like the Canadian government did to the the truck drivers who were protesting having having to take mandatory like COVID shots.

They just their bank accounts were frozen or I read on X somewhere that someone tried to take money out of their account. I don't think they were American. And the the bank demanded that

they explain what they wanted to use the money for. And the person said they were going to buy a new motorcycle and the the bank just refused to give them the money even though it was technically their own money. Like the the person's money. No, you you don't need that motorcycle essentially.

could have been just a madeup story, but I I I did read it on X recently.

So, yeah, I really don't know exactly what Trump's going to do. I I kind of doubt that Trump is going to do anything that his base is just vehemently opposed to, which would include sending troops to Iran.

It's much more likely. It's like most

Americans and most conservative

Americans don't want Iran to have nuclear weapons, you know, so they're they're pretty much in favor of just dropping huge bombs on their nuclear like research facilities, but it's pretty much unanimous other than like Lindsey Graham

that they don't want American troops fighting in Iran like American troops were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan that I mean it never really leads to success. You just get bogged down in another Vietnam like scenario and a lot of Trump supporters would just consider to be Trump to be you know doing the

bidding of Israel by doing that. I mean, they they kind of already there's already people that just think that Trump is just being the lackey of Israel by bombing Iran when I really don't think so. I think it is pretty much it was perceived as being to the advantage of pretty much the entire Western world that I to and and to Israel that Iran doesn't get nukes. In fact, even Iran's neighbors who are Sunni Muslims and not Shia Muslims would agree that I mean they don't like Iran very much either. They don't want Iran to get nukes because Iran is continually vowing to destroy Israel in the United States. You know, they're pretty much run by a

terrorist organization.

So

with regard to that, I don't know how I drifted off into that direction, especially because there's another question about that particular subject a little farther down the scroll here, but uh the bank of international settlements to implement central bank digital currencies.

Yeah, I'm not I really don't know enough about that. I'm I'm not really an economist. I'm not like extremely interested in economics. In fact, I'm not extremely interested even in just money.

I'm certainly not

Hebrew enough. My ancestry is

essentially 0% Hebrew until you get back to like Noah, I guess.

So, I mean, it's I really don't care all that much about money. It's it's sort of I inherited that from my father to some degree. So, yeah, I'm no no authority on central bank digital currencies. So, I really am not in a position to make an intelligent statement on the subject.

So, I'm just going to move on to PSA's next question.

There is a huge amount of talk going on about AI coming to take people's jobs and becoming sentient. In the beginning, I dismissed it as nonsensical rumors,

but more and more people are talking about it as a serious possibility. What do you think about this and the impact it will have on society? I've already done like entire videos on this subject on what is called the technological singularity.

So it's there's two different factors. I mean, one is AI just taking over people's jobs. And there's lots of jobs that are being taken over already now, like artists, musicians, um, just any any kind of job that can be taken over by robots. And robots aren't necessarily androids. I mean it can just

be some machine that is just sort of working with no human supervision other than just like maintenance you know just some some maybe one person overseeing the whole thing.

So you know before long McDonald's is going to have just machines flipping burgers instead of whoever that kind of thing with my own job of being a forklift operator. I think it's I think I'm going to be retired by the time forklift operators get replaced by just robotic forklifts, self-driving forklifts.

So that kind of thing. I mean, when so many people are losing jobs due to AI and robots that I mean,

there's going to have to you're going to have to create new like economic niches for people to get jobs in, something that humans are best at doing, which I'm not sure what that would be.

or you're just going to have to have a kind of socialized like allowance to everybody. Sort of like what was his name? Richard Yang. Andrew Yang. What was his name? Yang. His last name was Yang. He ran for president like back in 2016, I think. And he was saying, you know, everybody should just get like a thousand bucks, you know. I don't know I don't remember how often it was but I mean it was be enough to live on like a

subsistence level and especially when more and more people are losing jobs to AI and so forth that kind of thing might actually be necessary.

So there's that, but then there's the whole other issue of AI becoming sentient.

And I've done like entire videos talking about this where it's called the technological singularity where if you got self-referential computers they're like they're recursively self-programming themselves. You know you start off with just this basic and then the computer is you know acquiring more information and improving upon its own programming

rather than some human doing it. Then if
if it's able to become sentient once it
reaches a certain level of complexity
and self-reference,
then I mean it's not going to have the
same biological limitations that we
have. It's just going to be able to just
transcend its own limitations to some
degree. So that within a short time
after it becomes as conscious or
sentient as we are, it's going to be as
far beyond us as we are beyond
cockroaches or amiebas.

And there's absolutely no telling what's
going to happen. You've got some people
who who look forward to the the

technological singularity when computers become I mean astronomically more intelligent than us.

And they're just thinking, well, the computers are just going to solve everything. They're going to cure all diseases. They're going to cure old age. It's just going to be like a heaven realm. We're going to be like in a Dava realm, which is a possibility. But then again, it's a technological singularity, which means you cannot predict what's going to happen. You cannot prepare for the technological singularity. Assuming that computers really do become sentient and through their self-programming, they're just it's just going to hit the

S-shaped curve and they're going to be billions of times more intelligent than us. You know, it's going to be like something out of an Arthur C. Clark novel, like Childhood's End. It's just going to be just unthinkable what's going to happen next.

So, it may be our best bet is that the AI and its wisdom will consent to keeping us humans as pets.

Or else they're just going to like transcend the whole thing and just move beyond and just leave us behind. kind of like what happens sort of in childhood's end, but the whole world comes to an end at the end of that one.

So,

let's see.

Yeah, I mean it is it is possibility.

Anything is possible. So, it's possible that we will have the technological singularity. It's possible that it'll turn out good. It all possible that the computers will just consider us to be in the way

and just eliminate us.

It's possible. Well, I mean, I think

about karma, too. It's like our own

karma is determining what happens. And

so, if we just don't have the karma to

be wiped out by a a computer supermind,

then it's not going to happen.

So all you can really do in a case like

that is just have a certain amount of faith in your own karma that it's not going to just completely destroy the world you live in because you are creating your own reality. You may not realize it but you are at a profound level conditioning your own reality your own version of samsara.

So, it's going to depend on us more than on some scientist somewhere. What's going to happen to us?

And I'm just moving on to the next question. This is from Thermal Squid.

And Thermal Squid says, "Do people who have severe mental illnesses make terrible karma for themselves if their

intent is divorced from the outcomes of their actions?

It seems to me that a person who cannot control themselves or has a different difficult time doing so due to some kind of instability would not be making demerit because they are essentially possessed not being in the driver's seat. Well,

this reminds me of like serial killers.

I've watched some shows about serial killers where sometimes they will say, "It's like this irresistible urge that causes me to do this stuff. I don't know why I turned out this way, but it's just this irresistible urge causing me to do it." And in in a case like that,

um, yeah, I mean, they're still doing it. They still recall doing it. They probably still got some satisfaction from doing it.

And so I mean in their case it's just that their desires are so strong that they can't resist the desire. They can't say no. They can't just refrain.

They just act out their desire because the desire is so strong. And strong desires are making worse karma than subtle desires.

So in that case they're just enslaved to their own bad karma. There are foolish people just hyper samsaric foolish people who are just enslaved to their

own attachments and cravings.

But like in Buddhism in uh like the rules of monastic discipline a monk is responsible for his actions so long as he can remember doing them. If you are so I mean so out of it like you you're having some kind of a blackout where you don't even recall doing it the next day then that's kind of like an out for a Buddhist monk. So, I was thinking, you know, when I was a monk, just playing with ideas, so to speak, that a monk could get so drunk that he blacks out and then he could go out and have sex with with a hoe or something. And if he doesn't even remember it the next day, then he got to do that. He doesn't even

he hasn't broken a rule. Although, what would be the point of doing it if you don't even recall it?

But that would be one way that a monk could have sex without breaking a rule is if he is so completely out of his mind that he doesn't even recall doing it the next day.

So let's see here.

Yeah. I mean if you're totally possessed so that it's not really your conscious mind calling the shots. So that I mean it's like your conscious mind is just supplanted replaced by some other mind. then

in a way you're not making that karma.

Just you got to be careful that it's not like multiple personalities in which case you're still responsible because it's just another one of your fra you know another like fraction of your mind is doing it

and that's generally the way it usually works. you know, it's just either you're just so enslaved to your cravings that you have to act out or, you know, there's some kind of multiple personality thing in which, you know, it's still kind of you to the extent that you exist. You know, it's karma.

I'd say it's a very rare case when someone really is possessed by some other kind of mind that takes over their

body and does bad things and then the other person is just completely helpless. and according to the Buddhist loophole doesn't even remember doing it.

So

let's see here. I guess I answered that question. So I'm going to move on to thermal squid second question which is how do you feel about catam? I don't even know how to pronounce it.ratom.ratom.ratom.

Do you believe it's an intoxicant or something that brings bad karma? And then as a kind of commentary, he says, "I've been using it for the last couple of months and I've seen a total

remission of my irritable bowel s
syndrome symptoms along with it helping
me to get sleep at sane times. These are
miraculous results and it has brought
joy into my life again. But I do
sometimes find myself in a stouper or
nearly nodding off. I know it's used a
lot in Southeast Asia. And I was also
wondering if you ran into it when you
were a monk. No, I never ran into catam
when I was a monk. I I'm not sure when I
ever heard of it. I think it's I heard
about it just you you drive past these
like smoke shops, places that sell drug
paraphernalia and so forth. Usually also
like crystals and candles and stuff.
sometimes t-shirts, postcards,

and you know, they'll advertise
and I mean, I've heard indirectly a few
things about it. Never taken it
myself. Was never even really tempted to
take it myself. Just really saw no
reason why. I mean, it's sold at places
that sell drugs. I mean, like legal drug
paraphernalia, that kind of stuff. CBD
oils and that kind of thing.

So I assume it does have some kind of
intoxicating properties but then again I
mean like cannabis or caffeine you know
they have a certain psychoactive
uh like effect but also there's other
indirect effects you know sort of like
side effects that you know it like

cannabis it's been known that it reduces the the pressure inside your eyeballs for example so that people with glaucoma used to be able to smoke cannabis legally back when cannabis was largely illegal just because it had the medicinal value of like reducing the pressure in your eyeballs. Also, I mean, everyone knows as smoke cannabis that it causes what is called cotton mouth, which I mean it's not just your mouth dries out. It's like all of your mucous membranes dry out. So that if you have like a snotty head cold, smoking some cannabis helps to give you cotton nose and it reduces the snot, that kind of thing. Yeah. So I don't really don't

know what the symptoms of credom are. I mean it could cause a certain drowsiness and also at the same time have these these other symptoms. So um yeah, it can be an intoxicant or something that brings bad karma. depends on your reasons for taking it. You the mental states associated with the action because mere actions are ethically neutral. It's the mental states you know like the the volition the chana the will that is determined that determines whether it's a skillful action or an unskillful action or in most cases a combination of the two. It's going to be a shade of gray. It's going to have its

good elements and bad elements.

Wholesome elements and unwholesome elements.

So

I guess that's that's pretty much my
take on ratom
and the ethics of taking.

So I'm just going to move on to thermal
squid's next question

which is this is somewhat sorted and
yucky. So embrace yourselves everybody.

What follows is somewhat sorted and
yucky. Okay, Thermal Squid continues,

"But are there any meditative practices
that you know of that would be conducive
to healing from sexual trauma,
especially as a man? I have heard people

online facetiously say that those who are victims of sodomy have had their root chakra destroyed and that this permanently prevents enlightenment or moka in that person's life. While it didn't occur down there for myself, I feel like there is some kind of corrupted or injured element of a subtle body or some kind of metaphysical element involved. I'm extremely averse to psychiatry and psychology because it's failed my family and I in the past should be my family and me in the past and is sort of modeled after the thinking of a juice crack addict who likely had carnal

knowledge of his daughter. Well, first of all, yeah, chakras, I mean, it's it's not a Buddhist concept. It's more of a yogic Hindu concept, but I'm pretty sure they don't get destroyed. I mean, they can get like obstructed or blocked through c like en energetic imbalances or something. They can get thrown out of kilter to some degree, but I don't think you're going to completely destroy a chakra.

Um, but getting back to the actual question,

are there any meditative practices that you know of that would be conducive to healing from sexual trauma, especially as a man? And the main one is just

mindfulness.

That's I mean that's like the panacea,
the Buddhist panacea is mindfulness.

You're doing mindfulness meditation.

Then any kind of like feelings that come
up, you just note them, let them go. So
you have like guilt or aversion or
resentment or anger or despair, anything
that arises, note it, let it go. Note
it, let it go. Note it, let it go.

And so that allows this momentum, this
karmic momentum of this feeling that
keeps recurring that you're not
reinforcing it. You're not wallowing in
it. You're just detaching from it. And
that gradually reduces the momentum of

these thoughts.

I used to know uh one of the world's leading authorities in obsessivempulsive disorder and that's he was using essentially mindfulness techniques sadana as a way of curing people of obsessivempulsive disorder without them having to take pills or whatever. And it was the same thing. You've got this compulsive desire to say let's say wash your hands over and over and over again. It's just you note it. you let it go. It's not me, it's the OCD. If it helps, it generally does, especially at first, you just distract yourself by doing something else. But generally, the main method,

note it, and let it go.

And so these feelings of guilt or despair or whatever it is, when they arise, you're doing mindfulness meditation, you just note the feeling. It's not me. It's just a mental state arising. You know, it's not like I am angry. It's just anger is arising. You note it, you let it go. Note it, let it go.

And the more consistently you can do that, the more quickly the momentum of this, the karmic momentum subsides.

You may never be entirely cured of it. Like someone with OCD, I

mean, going with medical science, it's a genetic thing. there's a glitch in your brain, the singulate gyrus or some such. And so you may never be entirely cured of the obsessive uh urges, but still it gets to the point where it's like you're just in the habit in the in the practice of just noting it, let it get go. Noting it, let it go. So that essentially you're cured. even though you're having you're still having some obsessivecompulsive thoughts coming up, they're not nearly as intense because you're no longer reinforcing it. And so, and then you just get used to it of just noting it, letting it go. It's not me. It's just

mental states arising and passing away. And so, that's that's how you get cured of it. And I've thought that just being enlightened can be that way. I mean, you're never going to completely eliminate unenlightened thoughts. It's just that you learn to just not attach to the unenlightened thoughts. Just not wallow in them. Just note it. Let it go. And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Ruie.

And Ruie says, "What was the role of revulsion towards the world and worldly things in your practice? And did anger arise in conjunction with it?"

Well,

um it does say in the in the Wizudi
manga, you know, the main commentarial
work in terara Buddhism that a person
with a dose of temperament, like an
aversive aversive temperament, like an
irritable temperament actually has an
advantage in becoming enlightened
because they're less likely to cling to
the world. you know they have a kind of
aversion for the world which helps them
to renounce the world and you know they
have like impatient aversion for their
own defilements too maybe so that helps
them not to just wallow in it. I mean
they might still wallow in disgust and
aversion
but at least their attachment to the

world in general or you know some soric
you know society cultural stuff is is
much reduced.

So I had some of that when I was young.
I really had little use for the human
race as a young man. I'm gradually have
more patience and compassion for my
fellow humans than I used to. Um, and
I've always had sort of like an
aesthetic streak. My father was a macho
guy. You know, one of his his sayings
was a little pain never hurt anybody.
And so, you we as a kid, we'd learned
how to go camping with like no tents or
anything. You just sleep under the open
sky. Bring a tarp just in case it rains.

You can string it up really fast.

Um, just

roughing it essentially.

So,

um, revulsion. I mean, I mentioned in the previous Q&A, I think it was one of my character traits is not wanting to be like everybody else.

Uh, just kind of doing my own thing, not not being a slave to fashion or any such thing. So,

in a way that that has a little bit of revulsion. I mean, it's it's like in in Buddhist philosophy or Buddhist ethics, you know, there's like this holy trinity, it's like you've got uh what's the word? I'm having a mental

block now.

It's essentially disgust

then leads to uh wea or dispassion which
then leads to weuka or liberation.

So nibbida that's the word niba which is
sometimes translated as disgust

and that's you know that's like the

first step in liberation is a kind of

just being fed up with the world in

general and I did have quite a lot of

that uh as a young man I mean I still do

just don't take a lot of stuff as

seriously as most other people do um an

did anger arise in conjunction with it

occasionally Maybe just sort of, you

know, intolerance for the stupidity of

the human race, that kind of thing. But
it was more disgust than anger in my
case,

na more than koda,

koda,

which is usually the word for anger
really. Uh, dosa, I mean dosa can mean
anger, but it just means like aversion
in general.

But dotha in pol in uh in Burmese using
the word the poly word dosa pronouncing
it dotha because it's Burmese it
generally means anger but there is a
specific word just for anger koda I
think it's it's called in polyi
so

yeah I mean it was it definitely helped

me to renounce the world just having a
revulsion or disgust or just being fed
up with just western culture in general.

Just superficial

samsaric western cultures, hyper

samsaric. Yeah. I just that kind of
revulsion I had.

And also I mean you can be unlucky in
love. That that that happened to me
also. just just being unlucky in love
just helps you to turn away from like
romantic ideals and then you just go for
renunciation. That that was that was a
factor too I guess.

But it definitely helps to renounce the
world if you have a certain aversion or

revulsion or disgust towards the world.

It makes it easier to renounce it.

Definitely.

And I'm just going to move on to the next question. This is from Philies. And gosh, we've already at two and a half hours. Man, this is taking longer than I thought I was going to. Not that I'm complaining necessarily, although I do have to uh do some hole digging later on today. Still working on the fish pond, doing things that a monk is not supposed to do, like dig the ground, damage plants. Anyways, Phil Ley says, "In terms of practice, what do you think is the most hardcore or extreme sect or sa of Buddhism?" Well, the most

hardcore or extreme sect or school of

Buddhism, I mean, I think that'd be like a matter of opinion.

Um, some of the like the Tibetan tantric stuff is pretty extreme or hardcore, but then you go back to like feudal Japan, like the samurai days where you had like militant sects of like soldier monks that eventually were so troublesome that they they just got like persecuted into oblivion. you know, it was sort of like uh a Zen or No, I think they were pure land Buddhists that were like, you know, sort of like the Buddhist rough equivalent of like Knights Templar or something, you know, sort of like monk

warriors.

So, they were they were definitely
problematic um to to the establishment
in like samurai Japan.

And they they're pretty extreme. I mean
any any monks like Shaolin monks too
maybe where you know you're using
violence as part of your dharma practice
or dharma practice then
uh yeah then that's going to be
considered hardcore or extreme.

So yeah, I think it would be like the
militant ones or or some of the ones
that would just wallow in tantric excess
like you know ritual sex acts and
intoxication and so forth. Those those
would probably be the most hard hardcore

or extreme sects of Buddhism. With regard to terravada, we want most hardcore extreme sect of terravada. Um, in a good way, I might think along the lines of maybe the followers of Ajan Mahabua who are like extremely aesthetic, you know, just kind of tough, you know, hardcore renuncience, something like that.

So, let's see. I'll just move on to Phil Lee's next question. What do you think are the greatest character flaws of the Zoomer generation, ignoring extreme leftists?

Zoomers, that's like the the teenagers now. I really don't have a lot of

exposure to Zoomers. So, it's hard for me to say. I mean, I already mentioned above that my generation is different from like the current generation, which I assume is zoomers just mainly through we have greater we had greater independence.

Um, the zoomers tend to be more conformist, either conformist to leftist insanity or rightist insanity, but still they seem to be kind of more feminized, weaker, softer, and more conformist, which is pretty much the plan.

Although they're some of them are kind of defying the plan because they're conforming to sort of the the the right-wing counterculture.

the counterrevolutionaries.

So, the zoomers are actually more conservative than previous generations have been or so I have read at least in certain respects.

But I really can't psychoanalyze zoomers very well because I really don't know very many. I really don't interact with teenagers, very young adults lately.

So, um, so I guess I kind of already answered that in a previous question and I think I'm just going to move on to Phil Lee's next question,

which is, do you think Plato is a good philosopher if you have read him? Yeah, I've read pretty much everything that

Plato wrote except The Laws. The Laws was a big one of his his longest works and I considered it to have been interesting. I think I was kind of looking forward to reading it, but I just never got around to reading Plato's laws. But I've read pretty much everything else he wrote or at least everything else attributed to him. And was he a good philosopher for his time? He was a good philosopher. Although I really am not impressed by Plato. I'm not impressed by Aristotle either for that matter. There's there's an old saying that everyone is either a Platonist or an Aristotilian, whether they realize it or not. But I really

don't think I'm either. Like I just have
no use for Plato's universals that
there's like the play Plato's heaven
with like the ideal dog and every dog on
earth is is like
um like influenced you know to some
degree one of its factors is this divine
dogness you know the the the perfect dog
and it's just sort of filtered through
the imperfections of the earth of
worldliness or some such. Yeah I got no
use for that. um like the his simile of
the cave is probably his best philosophy
that I've read.

There's one um dialogue by Plato where
he's making fun of sophists

and I mean that's just good read that's like comedy.

So it probably that was he was better a comedian than a philosopher there I guess where it's like somebody asks somebody is that your dog and the guy says yeah and it's like it's a father you know and then the other person says yeah I saw I saw him mate with the female so I know the puppies are his and so then the sophist says well it's yours and it's a father therefore that dog is your father and the the puppies are your brothers.

So, I mean, it's it's kind of funny just this this whole dialogue is like that of these sophists just kind of making fools

of others while making fools of themselves at the same time.

But yeah, and I'm really not impressed by Plato. I just am not.

So, I mean, he was a good philosopher at the time, I guess. You know, he was very influential as a philosopher at the time. you know, he's definitely made waves.

So, I I assume like within the context of like classical Greek culture, he was a great philosopher.

But I do think he's obsolete at this point.

You know, sort of like some of the early scientists came up with important stuff.

They were great scientists, geniuses,
but it's just that nobody's reading
their who reads Galileo anymore.

because he's been superseded by later
developments.

So, I'm just going to move on to the
next question and I'm scrolling down
here. Yeah, we don't have very much more
to it. We're we're getting towards the
end here. Trouble not no trouble.

So,

Sedarta Lohachita says, "Could we say
that the swastika or the sawatika?" I
guess that would be pi for swastika. In
Pali is a symbol of Buddhism because
each arm is one of the four noble
truths. I heard the word swastika. It

means the good, similar to the Greek word kalos, as in Plato's coloscy, the rule of the good. Collo colocray I guess um well first of all the meaning of swastika is it's it's essentially a prefix a root and a suffix the the prefix is sue which is the same protoindo-uropean etymology as the Greek word eu it just means good or or well and ata is here it means like welfare or it can also mean the goal and poly. But here I think it just means like you know like prosperity you know like the art shastra in in Sanskrit is you know sort of like the science the the text on like worldly

prosperity

and and then the ka at the end is just a prefix that's doesn't necessarily have a whole bunch of have any like real meaning to it. Um,

swastika it kind it can kind of turn things into like an adjective but here swastika

literally in Sanskrit it means something like true welfare, true benefit, something like that and it was like a good luck sign in ancient India.

So

I'm not sure about Buddhism adopting it um going counterclockwise instead of clockwise like later Germans did.

Um, I'm not sure that the four arms

represent the four noble truths. It may be later that that was sort of reckoned into it, but it's my understanding that the swastika originally was just a symbol for the sun and the Buddha is considered to be a kinsman of the sun. You know, he came from a solar race according to ancient Indian culture. So, it could be more along those lines. And I I would assume the swastika existed before Buddhism did. And so it wouldn't really represent the four noble truths other than just retconing the symbolism onto the the four arms of the haken croits.

Um

but originally I think it just was a symbol of the sun. And it may be that originally the early Buddhists adopted it because the Buddha was kinsman of the sun or some such and that you know just somebody came up with an idea later.

Hey, there's four arms, four noble truths. That's what it means.

But who knows? I really don't know.

That's just my educated guess as I pull on my beard sideways.

So, let's see here. Sedarth Lohita's second question. Does something like collective karma exist or something like the fate of nations, so to speak? I've I've answered this question a number of times. Um, in terra Buddhism, there is

really no such thing as collective karma. Sort of like an evolutionary biology. There's no like group evolution. You know, it's always the individual that survives or doesn't survive to pass on its genes and it makes the appearance of kind of a group evolution. But and I think there are some evolutionary scientists who will say okay there is a kind of group evolution like an entire group can survive or not survive that kind of thing but with regard to karma according to terra Buddhism it's all individual karma even though the individual is ultimately

an illusion but what happens is it seems like you've got like regional karma or collective karma like the Middle East has been a battlefield since prehistoric times

You know, it just seems like the Middle East is just doomed to be a battlefield. All kinds of violence and stuff going on in the Middle East since prehistoric times

with few exceptions to the rule.

So, the way you would explain that is that people with the same kind of violent karma are going to be reborn into this kind of violent culture. So it seems like group karma, but really it's the individual karma is is causing you

to be reborn according to the theory in this certain society where your violent karma is more likely to reach fruition. And then you just have sort of like the culture. you're just kind of got the karma to wind up in this culture that is in harmony with your karma and other people are too like um Edgar Casey um you know the sleeping prophet according to him lots and lots of Americans were Romans like from the Roman Empire in in previous lives so that in a way it's like America is like a reincarnation of of the Roman Empire sort of maybe we're still at the Republic stage at this point,

but I mean it's not like there's this group karma causing everybody. It's just like each person's individual karma just fits into this society better and so it makes gives the appearance of group karma

because you've got a group of people who just share similar karma and that's why they're together.

And that's kind of one reason why certain people will continue being reborn according to the theory in association with each other because they've got karma like directed towards each other like got attachments and so forth that caused this continuation but it's still the individual's karma in

this case and in the other case and it's not necessarily a kind of group karma but that's just orthodox Buddhism. I mean, it can be that if you're not going to be orthodox, you could adopt this idea that there is a kind of group karma, but I might as just I might as well be orthodox in this case because it makes it easier and just keep pulling on this because it's it's sideways.

So yeah, the official answer would be no, there is no collective karma, at least for a terra Buddhist, but

you can decide for yourself. I guess whether a group of people have a kind of

group mind which creates its own entity like a love relationship like my woman and me is we've created like a third entity which is the us which I mean has its own characteristics.

So I mean if you want to accept that as a kind of new individual that has its own kind of karma then maybe although technically speaking that's not orthodox Buddhism.

So I'm just going to move on to the next question which is from Mat who I've recently learned apparently is of largely Celtic ancestry which is kind of strange for someone with the name Matt. Although I did meet a halfIrish Burmese person once

whose father I think was like a soldier
in World War II, an Irishman who just
settled in Burma because he liked it
after the war and raised a family. And
so he raised a bunch of halfIrish, half
Celtic
kids in Burma,
but I'm not sure exactly what Momy story
is here. Anyways, Miyat says, "I heard
someone say that when Buddha said a
datagata neither exists or not exists
after death or both exists and not
exists or both doesn't exist or not
exist, that the Buddha was referring to
everyone and that the doctrine of
rebirth was rejected or not talked about

much in early Buddhism. I was wondering what your thoughts on this are from your perspective of studying the poly scriptures." Well, yeah. I mean it can bleed over like when the Buddha refuses to answer whether a data exists or doesn't exist after death that I mean you could there are like complications or ramifications implications like the Buddha like in one suta says I mean you can't even say whether he exists before he dies and that's like the whole idea of anata really and also you could sort of apply that to other people. And the atakawaga like it's the largest chunk of really ancient archaic Buddhism in existence. You know,

it's the it's like the largest piece of
like pre-terra like pre just really
archaic Buddhist literature still in
existence. And I mean it just it doesn't
mention rebirth that I can think of, not
specifically. And it just says don't
believe anything. And a lot of the
Buddha's refusal to answer questions may
stem from this really archaic Buddhist
teaching. And that when you cling to a
concept, I mean concepts cannot really
contain the highest truth. It's just
samsaric illusion. It's symbols.

So the earliest Buddhism I mean the
whole idea of rebirth was just part of
Indian culture. was is becoming

established in Indian culture at that time like the upupanad some of the oldest uponads which were pre Buddhist do teach rebirth and it was I mean the janes obviously believed in rebirth that that was sort of inherited from the indis valley civilization I assume so I mean Buddhists were exposed to the idea it was a common idea but there's also this idea that ideas cannot contain reality

that you're not going to understand the highest truth by thinking about it. So like at a samsaric like a skillful means kind of level like with regard to simutis satcha or conventional truth it I I would assume that even early

Buddhists accepted the idea of rebirth but when you get beyond conventional truth into ultimate truth then it's like you can't say anything. You don't say we're reborn. You don't say we're not reborn.

You don't believe any of that one way or the other.

And it's not because of skepticism like you can't know. It's just that the truth is you cannot put the truth into words.

It's just anything that's symbolized in language is not going to be the highest truth. The name that can be named is not the eternal name.

So

um the Buddha I mean if he was referring to everyone then he probably would have said everyone rather than just the datagata

but it could be applied to everyone in that sense.

Um I don't think the doctrine of rebirth was rejected any more than the doctrine of no rebirth because all doctrines were rejected by at least texts like the atikawaga.

When you get into advanced level dharma, you have to leave behind concepts which includes the concept of rebirth, the concept of enlightenment even.

So

that would be uh my thoughts on this I

guess and I'm going to move on to my next question which is I've heard you be somewhat critical of a certain celebrity seat in Burma. If you're comfortable with telling, what are your main criticisms of this particular Seattle? I'm wondering because I'll be ordaining as a somara at a Wihara connected to their organization. Well, I have been somewhat critical of more than one celebrity seats. Like I've been fairly critical of for example, but I'm assuming that the the certain celebrity Seattle he's referring to would be theta. And when I was a monk, I have to admit, possibly more than any other

monk, I I pretty much despised the
Gusiano because he is like a CEO who
wears monk's robes in order to make more
money. At least that's the way I viewed
the situation. For example, just to give
one naughty story, and I really I'm I'm
only answering this I'm only talking
about this because I was asked this
question. I really do not want to bash
anybody here, but just to give you an
understanding of why I didn't like the
Gucci

that just one one example is during the
rainy season of 1998

I think it was I spent the rain reigns
retreat in Japan and while I was
spending the rains retreat in Japan I

was told this Seattle also came to Japan and the first thing he did was he sent a message to Burmese supporters in Japan saying he needs a first class airplane ticket. It's because he had a his excuse was he had a a bad back. So he had to have a first class ticket. And the Burmese people in Japan are mainly working menial jobs. They're not making a lot of money. Even doctors who go to Japan, I mean their medical licenses is worthless in Japan. A Burmese medical license counts for nothing in Japan's. So you're gonna have like even doctors in in Burma come to Japan. They're waiting tables or some such.

So anyways, he's he he requires this money. Then he gets there, somebody goes to him offering him a robe. He says, "I don't need robes. I don't want robes. I want money." And so they offered a certain amount of money. He says, "I need more than that. Give me more than that." And then after he's also they set him up in a in a hotel room, he he like complains that the hotel room isn't nice enough, even though these people are are like spending as much money as they can afford, maybe even a little more than they can afford for this famous Seattle. He essentially chews them out for not for giving him a substandard hotel room,

supposedly a renunciant.

Then he says, "All right, I need a first class plane ticket to America." He wanted to go to America next. He's traveling during the range retreat.

That's just the the tip tippy top of the iceberg, which is I mean traveling during the range retreats against the rules, but I mean so is handling money.

So he says he needs like \$7,000 to go to America plus a first class plane ticket.

So they come up with the money. He gets to America and then he he like contacts them say saying he needs \$7,000 more dollars

and I mean this was just his mo. This is

just the way he operated. Just he was like a fundraiser and a lot of the money is is for like establishing SA hospitals. like when the the tropical storm Nagus like hit southern Burma, he was collecting money to, you know, help the the refugees, but I mean that's lay person's work. That's not a monk's duty to raise money for like building hospitals and so forth. I mean, you can say it's meritorious for a lay person to do it, but for a monk to do it, he's just he's like a CEO who wears monk's robes in order to make as much money as possible.

So yeah, I mean he's he's technically

Jin, which is the strictest like sect of Buddhism of the two main sects in Buddhism. Sort of like the Damayut is considered to be much stricter than the Mahanikaya in Thailand. The Schweins are sort of like the rough equivalent of Damayut in Burma. But I mean, he really did not give a damn about following the the rules of monastic discipline, you know, keeping the precepts. He didn't care.

He's kind of based according to some Western Buddhists that are kind of right-wing because he's one of the most outspoken um endorsers of just kicking all the

Muslims out of Burma.

But aside from I mean he just charges exorbitant fees especially from a Burmese by Burmese standards he just charges exorbitant fees to give dhamma talks and it's all just wrong livelihood for a monk. So I considered him to be like a just like a businessman wearing monks robes in order to make more money. But I'm not 100% sure that this Seattle in question, who's one of the most famous Seattle in Burma, he's probably pretty old if he's still alive now. He's got to be in his 80s by now at least. But I mean, I used to just I mean, he's he's very well respected by a lot of Burmese Buddhists in Burma. You know,

he's one of the most famous Seattle in
Burma, very highprofile.

And but sometimes people would like talk
about they wish that he would come to
our monastery or something. I I'm just
like I I would just like move out. I
mean really I was just I was so strict
in my desire to follow precepts
correctly and everything in those days
that I mean he just he just seemed like
a disgrace to the robes he was wearing
and I just didn't want to have anything
to do with him. I didn't meet him once
or twice, but
I guess I can just move on to the next
question, which is the last question.

The very last one. So, this is going about three hours, isn't it? Damn. Oh, well,

that's okay. It's why I'm here. And this question was got squeaked in under the wire. Um, this is the last question that was asked just matter of minutes before I got started on this. What are your thoughts on the recent American bombings in Iran?

And

I mean, I already kind of touched on this um, in a previous question.

Well, I really didn't vote for the bombing of Iran, but as I mentioned previously,

I think most people in the West agree

that Iran should not have nukes
because they're essentially Iran is
essentially run by a terrorist
organization that supports terrorism
around the world. And they have vowed
over and over again,
you know, death to Israel, death to
America, death to the west, the great
Satan of the West and all that. So, I
think most people in the West would
agree that it's better that Iran not
have nuclear weapons.

U Americans I mean they they agree on
like the majority of Americans agree on
that but they also agree that they don't
want America to like have a ground war

in Iran like they had in Iraq and Afghanistan that just bogs down into a kind of Vietnam scenario.

So, I think at first most people were hoping the Israelis who were just kind of like unleashed, you know, it's like one of the first things America does after Israel starts bombing Iran is this is unilateral on the side of Israel. No, we're not doing this because everyone's kind of hoping that Israel would just kind of take matters into their own hand. But it turned out that there are like some deep underground facilities that Israel just didn't have the weaponry to take out. Only America supposedly did. And supposedly they

dropped numerous bunker buster bombs and then followed up by dropping MOABs, these mothers of all bombs, these huge bombs. So that presumably where these places were are just now a big crater just to they just wanted to make real sure they destroyed these things.

So, I mean, I didn't vote for it, but I assume that from a political point of view, the president of the United States knows a hell of a lot more about the situation than most people just reading stuff on X.

So, I mean, I'm I'm willing to I mean, I voted for Trump, and I'm willing to give him the benefit of the doubt that he

knows what he's doing. And in a masculine society, um, more so than in a feminized society, you have to be willing to take risks. No gut, no glory.

So,

um, yeah, I'm just waiting to see what happens. I mean, there's a very good chance there's going to be retaliation. very good chance of that. That's one of the I mean the two main disadvantages of America bombing these nuclear sites in Iran. One, there's going to be a lot of a lot of like right-wingers especially saying, "Oh, Trump is just Israel's puppet, Zion Dawn. He's just doing the bidding of Israel, which is really a simplistic one-sided way of looking at

it because it's to the advantage of pretty much everyone in the West that Iran has its nuclear program destroyed because they're obviously not willing to stop.

And if they do get a nuke, there's a good chance they're going to be using it.

So, that's one reason is it's just going to cause a lot of the the MAGA base to kind of turn against Trump because he's just a puppet of Israel, which I mean it really is like a simplistic kind of narrow view of the situation in this particular case. And the other thing is, of course, Iran is vowing retaliation,

and there's a good chance that they're going to cause at least a few Americans to explode as a result of this. But if America is going to be a Chad superpower, there's going to have to be some militarism and strong decisive action and some risktaking.

So, I'm just saying, well, I voted for the guy. He's doing this stuff. He knows better than I do what the implications of this are. I mean, he's getting all kinds of the best intel on, you know, how are we going to do this and what's the likely ramifications of this.

So, yeah, I'm just sitting back and and waiting and seeing

just

who knows. I mean like I like I've said before um when I was a young man I lost interest in politics when I realized that what is good and right from a political point of view is not necessarily good and right from a dharmic point of view. So you just have to kind of dissociate spirituality from politics to some degree because from a spiritual point of view war is just mass murder. That's what it is. But from a political point of view, sometimes war is necessary or just so expedient that it's just the thing to do.

So, we're just going to have to wait and see. But I'm not overly concerned. I didn't lose any sleep last night over America dropping huge multi-tonon bombs onto Iranian nuclear research facilities.

And we're just going to have to wait and see. And even if there is retaliation and even if some people in the MAGA base turn against Trump because he's a suddenly a wararmonger and and puppet of of Netanyahu and all that. Still, there is a good chance that it was the right thing to do from a political point of view. And I'm just willing to observe with interest what happens next. And

that's it. That's the last question.

So like I always should say at the beginning and never do except for on one dubious occasion, if you have anything that you think I can answer, especially Buddhism oriented or spirituality oriented dharma in sort of the wider sense, you know, politics, economics, I mean sometimes I might have something of use to say on the subject, but generally economics especially not much interest in that. politics kind of but I'm no I'm no authority. I'm no real expert on that.

So you know early Buddhism, Terraata Buddhism, meditation,

Buddhism in general, just ancient Indian culture, that kind of thing, I can answer fairly well usually.

And

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